



Welcome to the latest edition of our Health Equity Town newsletter! Dive into our highlights, updates, and stories that showcase the incredible work happening across Luton to reduce health inequalities and promote a healthier, fairer town.

Highlights from the Second Annual Marmot Town Conference



On 21st November 2024, over 100 participants attended the second annual Marmot Town Conference. This year's theme, "Tackling Structural Inequalities: Social Responsibility for Improving Health Equity", brought together diverse voices to discuss systemic changes in health and well-being.

Highlights included:

- Edwin Ndlovu, Chief Operating Officer & Deputy CEO East London Foundation (ELFT) opened the event, sharing insights into how ELFT is addressing health equity through systemic and community-driven initiatives.



- Keynote by Helen Goulden, CEO of The Young Foundation, inspired attendees to collaborate, measure impact, and amplify the voices of underrepresented groups.
- Workshops on “Sparkling, Connecting, and Grounding” helped participants identify actionable ways to spark change in their communities. Themes that came up:
 - Transform the culture by listening to community voices
 - Share how Luton is performing
 - Don’t need to be an expert about health inequalities, passion is needed!
- Exciting announcement: We launch our new **Health Equity Town Microsite** which has been developed with the Mary Seacole Housing Association. This is an inviting, informative and interactive website with topical HET information to keep you up to date. This will be live in January 2025. We will be in touch with the live link.

If you attended the conference we would love to hear your feedback on the event by completing this short [evaluation form](#)

Frameworks Workshop: Transforming Communication on Health Inequalities

Maria Castellani from Frameworks UK first presented at the Health Equity Town Conference in November 2023, introducing transformative approaches to communicating health and health inequalities. Since then, she has led a series of workshops and seminars for senior managers and professionals across the wider system. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with many describing the sessions as an *eye-opener*.

These workshops emphasise moving beyond simply presenting facts and data, instead focusing on imaginative narratives that engage audiences. The goal is to adopt an understanding and inspire action by making complex issues relatable and compelling.

On 19th November 2024, participants from health, research, and community organisations attended the Frameworks UK Champions Workshop, diving deeper into strategies for effective communication.

Key takeaways:

- Exploring the “building blocks of health”—secure jobs, quality homes, and good education—and how they shape life expectancy and health outcomes.

- Learning techniques to frame messages that resonate with diverse audiences, ensuring clarity, relatability, and impact.
- Gearing up for the second workshop in February 2025, which will focus on tailoring health equity narratives to different contexts.

Participant feedback:

- *“Really useful insights into framing health inequalities for varied audiences.”*
- *“Interesting to learn how to balance urgency with actionable solutions.”*

These workshops are strengthening Luton’s collective ability to address health inequalities by equipping leaders with the tools to communicate effectively and inspire change.



Health Equity Town Online Prize Winners Showcase

Celebrating Innovation: Health Equity Town Prize Winners

The Health Equity Town Prize competition, launched in 2023, attracted over 40 submissions from a diverse range of sectors. A dedicated panel evaluated these proposals and selected three standout projects based on their innovation, inspirational leadership, and potential to make a meaningful impact on tackling health inequalities. The winning projects were awarded funding and began implementation in early 2024 and showcased early findings at key events throughout the year.

August Presentations and Showcase Session

In August 2024, we hosted the Health Equity Town Prize Showcase Session, spotlighting the three winning projects that have been driving change across Luton:

•**Grow Your Potential:** A youth empowerment initiative fostering life skills and promoting healthy behaviours. Watch the [Grow your potential video](#)

•**Hatters PCN Analysis:** A data-driven project identifying patterns in frequent healthcare usage to develop preventative care strategies.

•**Prevention and Enablement Pathway (PEP) for Young Adults with Learning Disabilities:** A multidisciplinary approach enhancing employment opportunities and supporting independence.

The feedback from the showcase session was overwhelmingly positive:

“Very informative and inspiring to see the impactful work happening across Luton.”

“It’s clear that these projects are making a real difference in addressing health inequalities.”

Next Steps: The 2025 Health Equity Town Prize

Building on the success, the next round of the Health Equity Town Prize will be launched in 2025. This exciting opportunity aims to encourage innovative projects that address health inequalities and create lasting change.

Stay tuned for the official announcement and application details in future newsletters!

Councillors Round Table Discussion: Advancing the Healthy Weight Initiative

On 25th September 2024, Luton Council hosted a Whole System Approach to Healthy Weight round table discussion, chaired by Chimeme Egbutah, Public Health Service Manager. This session brought together councillors and officers from Planning, Public Health, and Business Development to tackle the challenges of promoting healthy weight across the town. The initiative has gained strong backing from senior council leaders, including the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, and key portfolio holders, who emphasised the importance of engaging local members to support this strategic approach.



Key Challenges Identified:

- Planning limitations: Restricted control over town centre developments due to permitted development rights.
- Hot Food Takeaways (HFTs): A growing number of HFTs in high-traffic areas, including Luton Mall, exacerbating access to unhealthy food.
- Post-program motivation: Difficulty in sustaining family engagement after completing healthy weight programs.

Proposed Action Areas:

- Incentivising healthier food options: Encourage takeaway businesses to provide healthier menu items through financial or promotional support.
- Piloting healthier food sales: Introduce healthier food vendors in public spaces, such as George Street, as a visible alternative.
- Strengthening policies: Collaborate with planning and health teams to develop evidence-backed policies that address the root causes of unhealthy weight.

This collaborative approach is designed to drive community-led solutions that make healthier choices accessible and appealing. The next phase will focus on operationalising these ideas through the Health and Built Environment sub-group, chaired by the council's Project Design & Delivery Manager, Luis Cadet.

What's Next?

Stay tuned for updates as Luton Council works closely with its Planning and Development teams to bring these innovative solutions to life. Together, we aim to create a town that supports healthier lifestyles for all residents.

Talk, Listen, Change Community Event at Chaul End Community Centre

On 28th September 2024, Chaul End Community Centre hosted the Talk Listen Change (TLC) Community Health Day, bringing together health information, entertainment, and community spirit. Over 130 attendees enjoyed a day filled with interactive stalls, health advice, and fun activities for all ages.



Highlights:

- Health information stalls: Total Wellbeing, Adult Learning, Healthwatch, Family Hubs, and more.
- Children's oral health session and engaging activities like the smoothie bike and face painting.
- Luton Mayor's keynote: A powerful message about the importance of organ donation. [Watch video about organ donation](#)

This vibrant event showcased the power of community engagement in promoting health and well-being.

Community Initiatives Making a Difference

- **Black Health Equity Steering Group:** Chaired by Dr. Trevor Adams and supported by Rev. Lloyd Denny, this group is tackling mental health challenges and social isolation among Black African and Caribbean carers and older adults.
 - **Luton Muslim Health Alliance:** Partnering with BIMA and the Luton Council of Mosques, this group focuses on reducing health inequalities within Muslim communities. Look out for a feature on their work in our next issue!
 - **Navigating Health Systems Video Series:** Reverend Lloyd Denny is creating accessible videos to improve understanding of mental health, stroke prevention, and general health awareness. Stay tuned for the launch of these videos coming soon!
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Talk, Listen, Change (TLC) Training Offer



As part of the Talk, Listen, Change initiative, we are developing a comprehensive training program to empower wellbeing champions, social prescribers, and frontline staff in Luton. This initiative aims to equip participants with essential knowledge and skills, enabling them to act as ambassadors for public health within their communities.

Achievements so far:

- Five training sessions delivered, each with over 139 attendees from diverse organisations.
- Participants have gained valuable insights into various public health topics, fostering their capacity to advocate for health-related issues effectively.

Upcoming opportunities:

This training offer continues to expand, with a focus on building a network of informed and proactive health advocates. Through these collaborative efforts, we aim to create a sustainable impact on community health outcomes in Luton.

Keep an eye on our Eventbrite link for upcoming events. Notable sessions include:

- January 9th: Understanding Primary Care Networks – Helen Smith – Worthington, Workforce Transformation Project Manager, Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board. See [Eventbrite](#)
- January 13th: Drug and Alcohol Support in Luton – Ben Corke, Resolutions, Harm Reduction Senior Practitioner See [Eventbrite](#)

Partner Spotlight: East London Foundation Trust (ELFT)



ELFT continues to play a pivotal role as a key partner in delivering the goals of Luton's Health Equity Town. Recent activities highlight their commitment to addressing systemic inequalities and fostering collaboration:

- **Webinar on No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF):**
ELFT hosted an informative webinar featuring Stephanie from Luton Citizens Advice Bureau, exploring the challenges faced by individuals with NRPF and highlighting solutions to improve access to health and social services. [Learn more about the webinar.](#)
- **Healthier Wealthier Families Learning Event:**
A collaborative event aimed at sharing best practices and strategies to support families in need, this session has informed partnership work in Luton. More details will follow, but initial information is available here: [Join Our Healthier Wealthier Families Learning Event.](#)

ELFT's dedication to improving population health through innovation and partnership continues to drive impactful change across Luton.



Spotlight on Health Inequalities in Luton

Life expectancy in Luton remains lower than the national average, with stark disparities between different areas. For example, men in the most deprived wards live up to 10 years less than those in wealthier neighbourhoods. Our Marmot Town approach is tackling these inequalities head-on by addressing root causes like housing, education, and employment.

Learn more about our strategies and progress by exploring our [JSNA Infographic and data](#)

Core20PLUS5: Focused Action for Health Equity

The **Core20PLUS5 framework** is a vital part of our commitment to tackling health inequalities in Luton. This approach identifies the 20% most deprived populations and prioritises targeted efforts for reducing disparities in health outcomes.

Alongside this, we are excited to announce the **Core20PLUS5 Ambassadors across BLMK**, featuring colleagues who are driving innovative projects across the community.

Congratulations to:

- Kathy Nelson, Deputy Programme Director | Mount Vernon Cancer Centre Programme Team
 - Lee O'Neill, CNWL Trust, Business & Transformation *Manager*
 - Dr Rahhiel Riasat, King Street Surgery Bedford
 - Erum A Khan, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist at Milton Keynes University Hospital
 - Michelle Ncube, Lead Cancer Nurse Milton Keynes Hospital
 - Chimeme Egburah, Public Health Service Manager, Luton Council
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Core20PLUS5 Project Highlights

Name of Project	Project Summary
Menopause Community Course – Caroline Dawes, Luton All Women's Centre	Piloting community training in different languages on menopause, with plans to expand the approach to other health topics.
Enhancing the Local Food Supply Chain – Deniece Dobson, Luton Council	Creating partnerships with businesses and schools to distribute surplus food to voluntary groups quickly and safely, alongside a food waste reduction toolkit.

Family Food First (Early Years) – Luton Early Years Team	Engaging early years settings and their communities to foster learning and application of healthy food practices.
Transport for Health – Joanne Robertson, Cambridge Community Services	Addressing transport barriers to health appointments, initially focusing on cancer and respiratory patients.
Warm Healthy Housing – Joanne Nelson, Private Sector Housing	Enforcing warm and healthy homes by identifying privately rented properties with substandard EPCs, ensuring compliance with legal standards.
Local Area Coordination (LAC) – Ann Munroe, Luton Council	Strengthening community connections and inclusivity by increasing Local Area Coordination capacity to understand and support individual needs.
Outreach Workers in PCNs – Stephanie Simeon, Luton Citizens Advice	Embedding debt and welfare advisors in GP surgeries to assist patients with health conditions who face financial challenges.
Community Hubs & Networks – Luton Social Justice Unit	Establishing warm spaces and community hubs through a dedicated two-year coordination role to support neighbourhood working.

These projects reflect the incredible breadth of innovation and commitment within our community to address the root causes of health inequalities.

Stay tuned for our next issue, where we'll provide in-depth learning from these initiatives and showcase further opportunities to engage with Core20PLUS5 efforts.

What's Happening and Coming Up

Park Gardening and Groundwork Opportunities

Discover how volunteering in the community can improve your well-being and enhance Luton's green spaces. Get involved with:

- **Luton Park Volunteer Gardeners:** Join the effort to beautify local parks and contribute to a greener Luton. [Learn more and sign up here.](#)
- **Groundwork East:** Participate in environmental projects that make a difference for the community. [Find out more here.](#)



Playstreet Session Dates

Are you interested in hosting a Playstreet session? Playstreets provide children with safe, traffic-free spaces to play and strengthen community bonds. Here are the upcoming timelines and application deadlines:

- **First session:** 1 April – 30 June 2025 | **Submit by:** 1 January 2025
- **First session:** 1 July – 30 September 2025 | **Submit by:** 1 April 2025
- **First session:** 1 October – 31 December 2025 | **Submit by:** 1 July 2025
- **First session:** 1 January – 31 March 2026 | **Submit by:** 1 October 2025

For more details on how to apply, see [Play streets](#)

Over 50's Black Men Forum

Mission is to fight against Health, Economic and Social inequalities, by

- Reducing Health Inequalities; Increasing Social & Economic Equality
- Advocating for Members Issues & Concerns
- Fighting for Fairness in Research & Usage.

See the latest newsletter:

[Over 50's Black Men Forum newsletter](#)

Big thank you and Goodbye to Sally Cartwright

End of December 2024 Director of Public Health Sally Cartwright will be moving to Cambridgeshire County Council to become their Director of Public Health.

Sally has worked in Luton public health for 5 years, and as Director of Public Health for three and a half of those years. We are sad to see her going, though wish her all the best. A big thank you to Sally for your energetic leadership in driving Luton Health Equity Town forward!



Stay Connected

We'd love to hear about your work on making a difference in our community. Share your stories and projects and connect with us:

 **Email:** HealthEquityTown@luton.gov.uk

 **Website:** [Public Health](#)

Let's continue building a healthier, more equitable Luton together.