



## Report to Communities and Localism Select Committee

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| <b>Date:</b>              | 22/11/2023   |
| <b>Title:</b>             | <b>Opportunity Bucks – progress update</b>   |
| <b>Cabinet Member(s):</b> | Cllr Angela Macpherson, Cllr Arif Hussain  |
| <b>Contact officer:</b>   | Matt Everitt – Service Director, Business Intelligence and Community Support               |
| <b>Ward(s) affected:</b>  | 10 wards with people experiencing the most hardship, across Aylesbury, Chesham and Wycombe |
| <b>Recommendations:</b>   | <b>To note the progress of the Opportunity Bucks programme</b>                             |

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Opportunity Bucks is our local partnership approach to levelling up, working in partnership across the county to improve outcomes for people across the county who are experiencing the most hardship.
- 1.2 Outcomes for people across the county are, on average, good. Income is above the national average, educational attainment is high, and the proportion of people claiming out of work benefits is low.
- 1.3 However the county averages mask the challenges that some people, in some specific parts of the county are facing. We have identified 10 ward areas where outcomes are substantially worse for residents, with more people in these wards claiming benefits, having worse health outcomes, experiencing higher crime and having limited opportunities.
- 1.4 Our aim, through the Opportunity Bucks programme, is to ensure that everyone in the county has the opportunity to succeed, that we grow together as a place and

that nobody is left behind.

- 1.5 The programme officially launched on 7th December 2022, and this report provides an update on progress made since the launch.

## **2. Our Ambition for Buckinghamshire**

- 2.1 Buckinghamshire is an affluent county overall, with good outcomes for residents. We have high skills levels, with nearly half of residents having a degree or equivalent qualification or higher. Earnings are high with median resident wages around 12% higher than nationally. Around 2.8% of the working age population in Buckinghamshire are claiming unemployment benefits, compared with 4% nationally. Life expectancy for both men and women is higher than the England average. In 2023, 91% of pupils attended a school rated good or outstanding. Attainment levels for secondary school pupils are above both statistical neighbour and national average.
- 2.2 However, the figures reported at a county level do not reflect the variation within specific parts of the county. Some ward areas within Buckinghamshire have longstanding challenges and a relatively high number of residents in these areas are experiencing significant hardships.
- 2.3 Through extensive data analysis across a range of indicators linked to deprivation and inequality, we identified 10 ward areas where outcomes were lowest for Buckinghamshire residents. This analysis included datasets on unemployment, low-income households, food and fuel poverty, educational attainment, recorded crimes, emergency health admissions, life expectancy and more.
- 2.4 This analysis enabled us to build a comprehensive understanding of where the most challenges are in the county and to ensure that the focus of the programme is into the areas that need it the most. For example, through this analysis we established that the proportion of people claiming unemployment benefits in parts of Wycombe and Aylesbury is substantially higher than it is in Leicester and Durham, which are not areas typically comparable to Buckinghamshire overall. In these same areas recorded crime is relatively high, emergency admissions are high, life expectancy is low and educational attainment is lower than for the rest of the county.

- 2.4.1 The 10 ward areas identified are listed below. A map of these areas is included in Appendix A:

Aylesbury: Aylesbury North; Aylesbury North West; Aylesbury South West

Chesham: Chesham ward

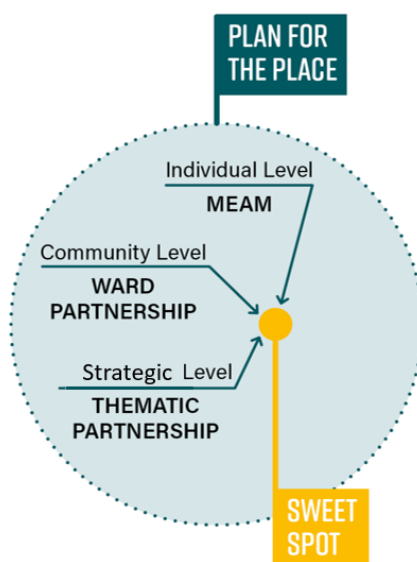
Wycombe: Abbey; Booker, Cressex and Castlefield; Ryemead and Micklefield; Terriers and Amersham Hill; Totteridge and Bowerdean; West Wycombe

- 2.5 The ambition of the Opportunity Bucks programme is to ensure that all residents in the county have the opportunity to succeed. We want to ensure that nobody gets left behind and to reduce the inequality that currently exists within some of the communities in Buckinghamshire.
- 2.6 We recognise that this is not where we are today and that things will get worse if we don't take action, as the issues faced within these communities have developed over a long period of time. Our aim, through the Opportunity Bucks programme is to break the cycle of disadvantage that exists in these communities, improve health outcomes for residents and grow our economy. Residents in these communities tend to have higher usage of services and through tackling the issues these residents face we expect to reduce this usage and deliver longer term cost avoidance.
- 2.7 The framework we have established within the Opportunity Bucks programme has established a shared vision of what Levelling Up is in Buckinghamshire, and will enable us to achieve these aims, specifically through the development and delivery of new and innovative approaches aligned to the particular needs in these communities.
- 2.8 The Government's approach to Levelling Up nationally is focused on improving public services, boosting productivity, living standards, and restoring a sense of community and pride in place, with focus on areas that are lagging behind. The approach we are taking in Buckinghamshire is broadly aligned with this national approach, with a specific focus on the parts of the county where outcomes are worst for residents.
- 2.9 We recognise that this is not a quick fix, and it will take a long time and continued commitment from the Council and partners to address the generational issues that have built up over many years. Through the programme we are aiming to address both the current issues, for example supporting adults to develop necessary skills and attain employment; as well as setting future generations on a path to succeed, for example through raising aspirations and broadening opportunities through schools.
- 2.10 Partnership working is key to making an impact in these communities, and we have established a strong multi-agency commitment to delivering this programme and improving outcomes for residents. This partnership includes statutory partners, the Voluntary and Community Sector, local stakeholders, community groups and resident associations.
- 2.11 The Opportunity Bucks programme officially launched on 7th December 2022, with a launch event held at Adams Park in the Booker, Cressex and Castlefield ward, which is one of the areas experiencing the worse outcomes. This session brought Councillors, partners and colleagues together to clarify the aim of the programme, share learning from other areas, showcase best practice already happening across Buckinghamshire and to discuss priorities for the programme to focus on.

### 3. Structure of the programme

- 3.1 The Opportunity Bucks programme is being delivered in partnership with statutory partners, the Voluntary and Community Sector and local organisations.
- 3.2 To achieve the aims of the programme, we have established three levels of delivery: Strategic, Community and Individual, detailed in Figure 1:
- 3.3 At a Strategic level we have established Thematic Partnerships, across the following five themes which have been identified as the key challenges impacting on the ward areas:
  - 3.3.1 Education and Youth Engagement - recognising that education is fundamental to improving life chances for children and young people and ensuring there is access to these and a good level of aspiration in young people.
  - 3.3.2 Jobs, Careers and Skills – aiming to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to be in paid employment that pays enough money to support a decent quality of life.
  - 3.3.3 Quality of Public Realm – to ensure residents have access to decent quality public realm areas, so recreational spaces are clean and tidy, and people are encouraged to use them to promote positive health & wellbeing.
  - 3.3.4 Standard of Living - recognising that everyone should have the fundamentals of a decent, warm home and good quality food; minimising the impact of poor quality housing, reducing fuel poverty and improving food access.
  - 3.3.5 Health and Wellbeing – health outcomes are worse for people who are living in the 10 target wards and we’re focusing on these areas to improve health outcomes.

**Figure 1: Structure of the Opportunity Bucks Programme**



- 3.4 At a Community level we have established Ward Partnerships covering all of the 10 wards identified, to enable a hyper-local focus on key issues and challenges that residents are facing in these areas.
- 3.4.1 Ward Partnerships are led by local members for the ward areas, who engage regularly with the Community Opportunities, Engagement and Development team to identify challenges and opportunities; with input and engagement from local community groups, Voluntary and Community sector organisations, resident associations and other appropriate stakeholders for each area. These operate on a smaller geography to community boards, covering only one ward each, and updates on priorities, progress and challenges are reported back into the Community Board Chairmen and Vice Chairmen. Engagement between local members and the Opportunity Bucks programme
- 3.4.2 Through these partnerships, we are able to understand what really are the key things that we need to address or improve in each of the local areas, and ensure local communities are engaged and involved in discussions about how we can do this effectively. The Community Opportunities, Engagement and Development team support the Ward Partnerships and ensure that any learning, best practice and opportunities for joint working between partnerships are identified.
- 3.5 At an Individual level we have established Buckinghamshire's Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) team, to enable our approach of targeting support to people in the county who are the most in need.
- 3.5.1 The MEAM network is a national coalition of charities that specialise in working with people who are experiencing multiple disadvantage. The network consists of over 40 other areas, who share expertise and best practice, coordinated through a centralised MEAM partnership team.
- 3.5.2 Our application to join the network was successful and we have now established our team and a Strategic Steering Group, chaired by the Corporate Director from Adults and Health, and with membership including Thames Valley Police, Red Kite Housing, the NHS and the MEAM Partnership Delivery Manager.
- 3.5.3 The team are working with people who are experiencing multiple disadvantage and experiencing poor outcomes, with a goal to improve outcomes for these people, connect them with relevant services and feed learning back into the system of services to address any systemic barriers that may exist.
- 3.6 The work of the Opportunity Bucks programme is overseen by a Programme Board, on which there is broad representation from statutory partners and the Voluntary and Community Sector. The programme board meets on a 6 weekly basis, and reports into the Placed Based Growth Board. The list of partners who attend the

programme board is detailed in Appendix B

- 3.7 The Business Intelligence team supports the programme through the development of data profiles, including Ward Profiles for each of the 10 wards, and through the development of key performance indicators and reporting that will enable us to evidence the impact of this work. Indicators and baselines have been established for the programme overall, and for the 5 themes and initiatives, which are reported to each programme board. We recognise that metrics evidencing the longer-term impact of the programme will take some time to change, for example life expectancy, however by capturing and reporting metrics at programme, theme and initiative level we can evidence the activity taking place and link this through to the impact it has within the target areas.

#### **4. Monitoring and Evaluation**

- 4.1 We recognise the importance of evidencing the impact of this targeted activity, and have developed a performance dashboard through which we monitor key indicators at a programme, theme and initiative level. This enables us to track the delivery of specific initiatives as well as the impact of these for residents in the target ward areas.
- 4.2 The key performance indicators established for the programme enable us to evidence the volume of activity that is taking place, as well as ensuring we can evidence the impact on resident outcomes that this activity has. There is linkage through initiative, theme and programme level indicators to ensure that we can identify not only the amount of work that is taking place, but also that the effect of this is for residents to be better off as a result.
- 4.3 Key performance indicators are held in a Power BI dashboard enabling oversight of latest outturns, trends and direction of travel across each theme and the programme as a whole. Performance is reported monthly.

#### **5. Progress to date**

- 5.1 The programme is still at an early stage, and much of the focus to date has been on embedding the structure and governance required, along with identifying priorities to be delivered through the programme which will improve outcomes for people in the target ward areas.
- 5.2 The Council has committed to providing funding for the programme, at £1.5m per year over 3 years of the programme. To date, £672,340 of the year 1 funding has been allocated to support and enable initiatives including Community Days of Action, Community Clean Ups, the Chesham Jobs and Apprenticeship fair and resourcing to deliver the programme including the Making Every Adult Matter Team.

- 5.3 We've engaged extensively with partners and across Council services to raise the profile of the programme, including through the Voluntary and Community Sector Partnership Board. This engagement has focused on clarifying the aims of the programme and identifying opportunities to work together or to target existing initiatives into these areas.
- 5.4 The ethos of the Opportunity Bucks programme, and focus on the 10 ward areas, is now well established across partner services in Buckinghamshire, which has enabled the targeting of interventions into the target wards including the promotion of volunteering opportunities that will impact in these areas through Community Impact Bucks, the development of targeted food provision and cookery courses from a range of voluntary and community sector providers, targeted promotion and design of Multiply initiatives to improve adult numeracy and the delivery of the Bucks Skills Show in Aylesbury in March. Further detail of specific initiatives delivered are provided in subsequent sections of this report.
- 5.5 We have also established mechanisms to develop a better understanding of the challenges in these areas, through deep dives on specific topics and through tours of the ward areas.
- 5.6 A rolling programme of deep dives has been established to investigate key topics in detail. These deep dives aim to:
- 5.6.1 Explore local and national context, including relevant policies and frameworks
  - 5.6.2 Establish the current state of play in the target wards within Buckinghamshire
  - 5.6.3 Review existing data and KPI's, trend analysis and impact analysis of previous changes
  - 5.6.4 Identify areas of strength
  - 5.6.5 Identify any challenges or areas for improvement
- 5.7 To date, deep dives have focused on education performance, identifying specific challenges and best practice in schools within the target areas, pupil characteristics, performance and opportunities for improvement; on youth engagement and participation, identifying the broad range of initiatives in place for young people, best practice and any gaps that need to be addressed; and on the quality of housing in the target wards, evaluating the physical structure, setting and external factors that impact on this and how this varies across each area. Specific actions resultant from the findings from these deep dives are underway to drive improvement.

## **6. Strategic Initiatives**

- 6.1 Opportunity Bucks aims to deliver long-term change for residents in the target areas

who are experiencing the most hardship. Through the initiatives that we are delivering, we are aiming to build sustainable improvement that can create a legacy for the future and mitigate the challenges in these areas.

- 6.2 The Council has established a programme of work to implement traffic calming measures in Castlefield, in recognition of the road safety improvements required in this area. This is an area of significant investment from the Council, which is being delivered through the Opportunity Bucks programme, to make improvements for residents living in this part of the county.
  - 6.2.1 This programme of work will deliver a comprehensive scheme of improvements to address the road safety issues around the Castlefield estate area, informed by a road safety audit in the specific areas identified at Rutland Avenue, Middleway, Spearing Road, Cross Road and Whitelands Road. Consultation events with the local community took place in September. Feedback was positive and is being used to inform the proposed approach, with activity on-site expected to commence in early 2023/24.
- 6.3 Through our partnership within Opportunity Bucks, we have established a policy change with Buckinghamshire's main Registered Social Landlords to improve living conditions and reduce financial challenges for residents. This change will enable incoming tenants, to social rented properties, to purchase carpets for a nominal fee, whereas the previous policy was to remove carpets when tenants changed over. This change will improve the living standard of tenants in these properties and reduce expenditure on carpets and energy costs.
- 6.4 We've established the Horizons scheme, which is Buckinghamshire Council's programme to help individuals overcome multiple barriers to employment with a focus on individuals who are resident in the Opportunity Bucks wards. This programme will provide job matching support and ongoing development and career progression advice to support employees and managers to establish sustainable employment and mitigate any challenges. Additional work, in partnership with Adviza and the Oasis Partnership, is underway to support people who are economically inactive into work through the Building Futures programme.
- 6.5 We recognise that to successfully deliver the programme we will need to make best use of the collective resource we have across our partnership, and to identify additional funding and resources that can support us to deliver this. To date we have also been able to secure and target additional resource to support the aims of the Opportunity Bucks programme including:
  - 6.5.1 Use of the £2.1m Multiply funding made available from Government alongside the Shared Prosperity fund, to enable adults to improve numeracy skills, is being targeted specifically into Opportunity Bucks target wards.
  - 6.5.2 £2.2m of Health Inequalities Funding to target provision to improve health outcomes for residents in the target wards including through community outreach services, and targeted accelerated smoking cessation initiatives.



- 6.5.3 £160k from the Bucks Capacity Fund awarded to a partnership of Connection Support, Age UK Bucks, Carers Bucks, Citizens Advice Bucks, Community Impact Bucks and Youth Concern as 'Charities Together - tackling Financial Insecurity in Bucks' which will focus on providing practical support for residents experiencing poverty in three towns where inequality is prevalent, aligned to Opportunity Bucks.
- 6.5.4 Ongoing support and consultancy from the Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) network, which we have joined and have established a MEAM team in Buckinghamshire. The support includes advice around best practice and guidance when working with people experiencing multiple disadvantage.

## **7. Local Initiatives**

- 7.1 Ward Partnerships have been established in each of the 10 target wards involving Ward Councillors, local stakeholders, resident associations, community organisations, partners and Council officers to identify key challenges and priorities within each of the ward areas.
- 7.2 The Ward Partnerships have also enabled us to raise awareness in these communities of the Opportunity Bucks programme and the aims we are seeking to achieve. In addition, we have engaged with community groups and residents through existing networks and via additional targeted engagement activities in each of the areas, including face to face discussions and via an online survey, to further capture the opinions of residents on the priorities where they live. The feedback captured has been fed into the relevant Ward Partnership to inform the local action plans.
- 7.3 A rolling programme of ward visits has also been developed to include all target wards, with sessions to date taking place in parts of Aylesbury, Wycombe and Chesham. These ward visits bring together Councillors, Council officers and partners to visit the target areas, see some of the challenges, issues and strengths of these areas first hand, and to engage with local partners and community organisations. Information gathered through these events has been used to inform the programme's priorities at a local and programme-wide level.
- 7.4 Further information on initiatives delivered in each local area are detailed below.

## 8. Initiatives within Chesham

# Chesham

OPPORTUNITY  
BUCKS | SUCCEEDING  
FOR ALL

**Established a Greggs Breakfast Club at the Ivingswood Academy**, enabling approximately **50 children to have breakfast** before school each day

Door-knocking of **750 properties in 12 streets** to attempt to identify unlicensed HMOs

Delivered **food support schemes and cookery workshops** with partners to help **upskill vulnerable residents and students on how to cook healthy meals on a budget/using foodbank items**

Delivered numerous **targeted community engagement activities to identify challenges and priorities**

Targeted intensive employment support for economically inactive people via the **Building Futures initiative**

**12 cookery course sessions** with the Oasis Partnership delivered, to teach people how to cook **nutritious meals using foodbank items**

Visits from the **'Multiply Bus'** to promote opportunities for adults to **improve their confidence with numbers** and sign up to courses

### 8.1 To date within Chesham we have:

- 8.1.1 Established a Greggs Breakfast Club at the Ivingswood Academy, enabling approximately 50 children to have breakfast before school each day.
- 8.1.2 Delivered the Jobs and Apprenticeships fair at the Elgiva, which was attended by more than 400 residents and 25 exhibitors promoting their jobs and apprenticeships opportunities.
- 8.1.3 Established a cookery course with the Oasis Partnership to teach people how to cook nutritious meals using foodbank items (12 sessions delivered to date in Chesham, more planned during the next 2 months).
- 8.1.4 Delivered an Adult Literacy pop-up event in Chesham library in July to promote literacy courses, identify challenges and sign residents up to courses available including a programme of literacy courses provided during the summer.
- 8.1.5 Targeted the Multiply bus within the Chesham area to promote opportunities for residents to sign up to courses and delivered courses at Chesham Adult Learning Centre to individuals who had signed-up.
- 8.1.6 Targeted the Building Futures initiative – intensive employment support for economically inactive people – within the Chesham area.

- 8.1.7 Conducted a targeted door-knock of properties in 12 streets to attempt to identify unlicensed HMO's – 750 properties covered in 12 streets, which identified issues to resolve.
- 8.1.8 Delivered numerous targeted community engagement activities to identify challenges and priorities within the Chesham ward, including at the Community Board engagement event in April, the Hats Off Festival in July and the Chesham regional partners forum in July. Also attended specific groups including the Hope Church pop-up café, Mama Bee and the Family Hub Community Network meeting for Chesham.

8.2 Activities in Chesham that are on the horizon include:

- 8.2.1 Developing initiatives based on local priorities and feedback following the Ward Partnership workshop delivered on 5<sup>th</sup> October, chaired by Cllr Gareth Williams.
- 8.2.2 Targeting of the Home Upgrade Grant phase 2 to improve energy efficiency of eligible properties in Chesham will commence in November.
- 8.2.3 We will designate a new smoke free park/playground in Chesham following commencement of the new school term.
- 8.2.4 The community Day of Action for Chesham is scheduled for 13th December.
- 8.2.5 The Council's Waste team are liaising with Paradigm Housing regarding hot spot areas as most of these are within Paradigm's area of responsibility.

## 9 Initiatives within Aylesbury

# Aylesbury

OPPORTUNITY BUCKS | SUCCEEDING FOR ALL

|  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
|  <p><b>Community 'Days of Action'</b> offering communities <b>engagement, support and advice</b> in multiple areas</p> <p><b>50+</b> visits to properties for fire safety checks</p>  <p><b>23</b> blood pressure checks taken</p>  |  <p>Providing support to local groups and organisations to enable communities to <b>access free non-perishable food or to provide emergency food to those at risk of homelessness</b></p> |  <p>Financial support and advice via <b>debt surgeries, engagement activities</b> and attendance by <b>Helping Hand</b> at the <b>Cost of Living event</b> held at Aylesbury DWP office</p>                |  <p><b>Targeted community clean ups</b></p>  |
|  <p>Resident support and <b>tuition for literacy, maths and / or digital support</b> at Adult Learning Centres and libraries throughout the summer</p>  |  <p><b>Anti-Social Behaviour Action Groups (ASBAG)</b> to cover town centre areas have commenced</p>  |  <p>Delivered <b>food support schemes and cookery workshops</b> with partners to help <b>upskill vulnerable residents and students on how to cook healthy meals on a budget / using foodbank items</b></p> |  <p>Visits from the <b>'Multiply Bus'</b> to promote opportunities for adults to <b>improve their confidence with numbers</b> and sign up to courses</p> |

## 9.1 To date within Aylesbury we have:

- 9.1.1 Delivered Community 'Day of Action' held in Aylesbury North, Aylesbury North West and Aylesbury South West to offer engagement, support and advice for the public and community in multiple areas, including Energy Doctor - energy efficiency advice and promotion, ASB, Public Health advice and Housing advice. 50 + visits to properties were arranged for fire safety checks and 23 blood pressure checks taken.
- 9.1.2 Carried out a targeted clean up in Aylesbury North on 29th August. Operational teams (grounds maintenance and cleansing) cleared a long meterage of public footpath adjacent to Walton Street.
- 9.1.3 Delivered Debt surgeries and engagement activities (DWP offices, VCS events, libraries etc) and the Helping Hand team attended a recent Cost of Living event held at Aylesbury DWP office.
- 9.1.4 Delivered a cookery workshop at Aylesbury Library was held which aimed to teach residents how to cook healthy budget meals.
- 9.1.5 Targeted the Multiply bus within the Aylesbury area to promote opportunities for residents to sign up to courses.
- 9.1.6 Supported the Care Leaver Hub on the 1st Tuesday of each month and establishing a food pantry enabling care leavers to access free non-perishable food.
- 9.1.7 Provided funding to Aylesbury Homeless Action Group to stock their food cupboard to provide emergency food to those at risk of homelessness.
- 9.1.8 Delivered Adult Literacy pop-up events in Aylesbury in June and July to promote literacy courses, identify challenges and sign residents up to courses available including a programme of literacy courses provided during the summer.
- 9.1.9 Developed a summer school programme for residents in Adult Learning Centres held throughout July and August to book or drop into to access support and tuition for literacy, maths literacy and/ or digital support.
- 9.1.10 Commenced the Anti-Social Behaviour Action Groups (ASBAG) to cover town centre areas in Aylesbury. Feedback from the meeting coordinators indicates that they have been positively received by partner agencies and town centre issues are being discussed and actioned.

## 9.2 Activities in Aylesbury that are on the horizon include:



- 9.2.1 'Aylesbury Northwest' - meeting with Fairhive to plan a joint initiative to tackle fly tipping in Brenda's Way, Aylesbury, including preventative measures such as improved lighting and fly tipping signage.
- 9.2.2 Working with the new Health on the High Street Hub to develop a community fridge to reduce food waste and support residents in need of fresh food support.
- 9.2.3 Developing provision with the Caribbean Lunch Club in Aylesbury to provide meals to people in need, including families during school holiday periods.
- 9.2.4 Targeting areas for Home Upgrades Grant Aylesbury North, North-West and South-West (estimated target month Dec '23).
- 9.2.5 Working with 2 Opportunity Bucks Primary Care Networks (Aylesbury Central and Dashwood in Wycombe) to target smokers who are inpatients and on patient on surgical waiting lists will be targeted to support them to stop smoking, manage their long-term conditions and be healthy for surgery. Staff recruitment is in process through Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust.
- 9.2.6 The Thomas Hickman School will run a 'design a sign' competition for smoke-free parks and playgrounds in the autumn term and the signage will be used at Vale park (Aylesbury North), Yellowstone Park (Aylesbury North West), Riverside Walk (Aylesbury North West) and Meadowcroft Park (Aylesbury North West).
- 9.2.7 The peer support in schools programme is an additional offer for schools and 5 schools in Opportunity Bucks wards have been recruited for 2023/24. These are: Highworth Combined (Terriers /Amersham Hill), Haydon Abbey (Aylesbury North West), Oak Green School (Aylesbury South West), Wycombe C of E (Abbey) and Wycombe High School (Abbey).



## 10 Initiatives within Wycombe

# High Wycombe

OPPORTUNITY | SUCCEEDING  
BUCKS | FOR ALL

**Community 'Days of Action'**  
offering communities **engagement, support and advice** in multiple areas

**Anti-Social Behaviour Action Groups (ASBAG)**  
to cover town centre areas have commenced

Formal consultations and engagement to **address road safety issues** around the Castlefield Estate

Plans in place to **improve public spaces** in High Wycombe

Resident support and **tuition for literacy, maths and / or digital support** at Adult Learning Centres and libraries throughout the summer

**3 Play Street events** established

Installed signage for **smoke free parks and playgrounds**


Delivered **food support schemes and cookery workshops** with partners to help **upskill vulnerable residents and students on how to cook healthy meals on a budget/using foodbank items**

Visits from the **'Multiply Bus'** to promote opportunities for adults to **improve their confidence with numbers** and sign up to courses

### 10.1 To date within Wycombe we have:

- 10.1.1 Delivered Community Action Days in Totteridge and Bowerdean and in Ryemead and Micklefield, with attendance from key partners including Bucks Fire and Rescue, Thames Valley Police, Red Kite Housing, One Can Trust and Buckinghamshire College Group. Clearance of litter and bulky items throughout wards as well as operational team support with mechanical sweeping and clearance teams.
- 10.1.2 Developed an action plan for Landales Road to improve cleansing and environment. This includes duty of care checks for commercial waste, increased litter picking activities by cleansing team, maintenance of adjacent car park and weed removal and letters to all domestic properties concerning bins, abandoned vehicles and other waste/cleansing matters.
- 10.1.3 Commenced Anti-Social Behaviour Action Groups (ASBAG) to cover town centre areas in High Wycombe. Feedback from the meeting coordinators indicates that they have been positively received by partner agencies and town centre issues are being discussed and actioned.
- 10.1.4 Worked with Buckinghamshire New University to develop a scheme for financially vulnerable students to upskill re healthy cooking on a budget.

Including a proposal for a monthly free recipe bag and online cookery session to produce meals under £3. BNU are capturing data to understand where the residents are accessing this support are residing – launched September 2023.

- 10.1.5 Delivered targeted food support schemes including the One Can Trust Food Bank Supper Club (4-week programme) held at The Avenue Church (Cressex and Castlefield Ward) and Hills Café (Ryemead and Micklefield ward). This enables families to learn how to cook a three-course meal from scratch whilst on a budget.
  - 10.1.6 Delivered a cookery course at Micklefield Library – residents were upskilled on how to cook healthy meals whilst on a budget.
  - 10.1.7 Conducted engagement to progress phase 1 works to address the identified road safety issues in and around the Castlefield Estate in High Wycombe and the formal consultation has now launched.
  - 10.1.8 Made progress with the public realm improvement plans in High Wycombe (White Hart Street) and a separate programme of works to address some of the public realm maintenance issues in the town centre.
  - 10.1.9 Delivered Adult Literacy pop-up events in Wycombe in July to promote literacy courses, identify challenges and sign residents up to courses available including a programme of literacy courses provided during the summer throughout Wycombe market, libraries and the Eden Centre.
  - 10.1.10 Established three play street events (July, August and September) held at Ryemead and Micklefield ward with further events planned.
  - 10.1.11 Installed signage for smoke free parks and playgrounds at the Desborough Recreational Ground. A public-facing launch with the High Wycombe Community Board is being developed. The same signage will be installed at additional parks.
- 10.2 Activities in Wycombe that are on the horizon include:
- 10.2.1 Establishing a dedicated family worker to work with three primary schools in the Cressex cluster, providing more intensive support and intervention.
  - 10.2.2 Additional Community Action Days covering all target wards in Wycombe.
  - 10.2.3 Utilisation of the Home Upgrades Grant phase 2 will be targeting Totteridge and Bowerdean and Booker, Cressex and Castlefield wards (estimated target month Nov '23)
  - 10.2.4 Working with 2 Opportunity Bucks Primary Care Networks (Aylesbury Central and Dashwood in Wycombe) to target smokers who are inpatients and on patient on surgical waiting lists will be targeted to support them to stop smoking, manage
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their long-term conditions and be healthy for surgery. Staff recruitment is in process through Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust.

10.2.5 The peer support in schools programme is an additional offer for schools and 5 schools in Opportunity Bucks wards have been recruited for 2023/24. These are: Highworth Combined (Terriers /Amersham Hill), Haydon Abbey (Aylesbury North West), Oak Green School (Aylesbury South West), Wycombe C of E (Abbey) and Wycombe High School (Abbey).

## **11. Summary & Next Steps**

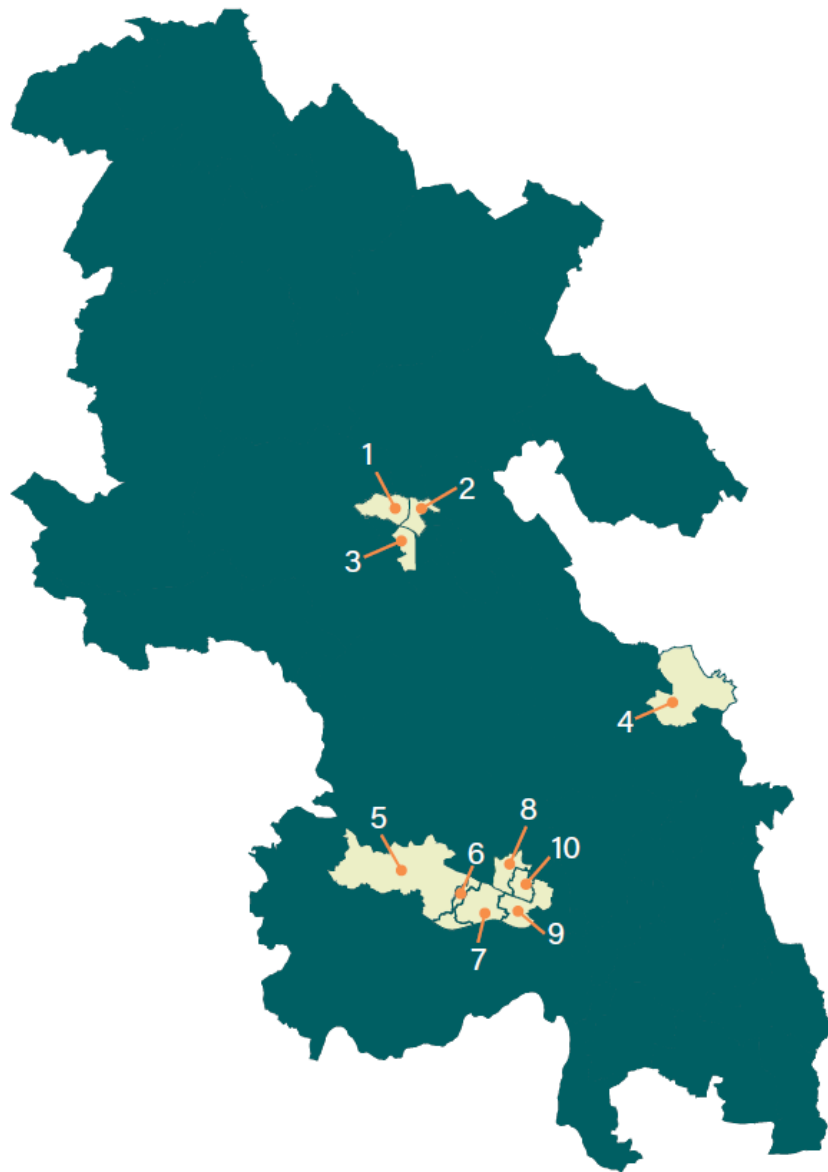
- 11.1 To date the focus has been on establishing robust governance for the programme, raising the profile of the programme and it's aims, and identifying priorities that will improve the lives of our residents.
- 11.2 This has taken time to set up, and it is important that the approach to this engagement and identification of priorities was allowed sufficient time to ensure that colleagues, partners and local communities are brought on the journey and share the ambition and goals of the programme. This engagement will help to clear a path for the ongoing delivery of the programme.
- 11.3 The primary focus going forwards is on delivery. Ensuring that the new initiatives identified at a theme and ward level are delivered as planned, with measurable benefits; and ensuring that the MEAM team continue to progress work with residents in the target wards who are experiencing multiple disadvantage.
- 11.4 The progress of the programme will continue to be reported through the Opportunity Bucks Programme Board and to the Place Based Growth Board.





## Appendices

### Appendix A – Target Wards



#### Ward areas

- |                         |                                    |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Aylesbury North West | 6. Booker, Cressex and Castlefield |
| 2. Aylesbury North      | 7. Abbey                           |
| 3. Aylesbury South West | 8. Terriers and Amersham Hill      |
| 4. Chesham              | 9. Ryemead and Micklefield         |
| 5. West Wycombe         | 10. Totteridge and Bowerdean       |

## **Appendix B – Opportunity Bucks Programme Board Membership**

- Buckinghamshire Council
- Buckinghamshire Local Enterprise Partnership
- Action4Youth
- Buckinghamshire College Group
- Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
- Buckinghamshire Business First
- Red Kite Community Housing
- Buckinghamshire New University
- Thames Valley Police
- Department for Levelling Up Housing & Communities
- Buckinghamshire NHS Healthcare Trust
- Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board

