



Impact Report 2023

If not now, when?

PPL

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01 A message from our co-founders



Claire Kennedy

Our journey

Every 12 months, we take a moment to reflect on what we wanted to achieve together as a team. Last year, we talked about ‘enjoying the journey’ – and what a journey it has been!

Connecting with new clients and sectors, growing the team, developing the Mill Street and Bristol offices, establishing “Mill Street Nights”. The list goes on. We are a team that has really proven that it can, and will, go far beyond even its own ambitions to deliver outcomes it believes in.

Two thoughts come to mind when thinking about what we have learnt this year about ourselves and the way we work, and what it might point to next.



Simon Morioka

The dolphin

The first is an analogy around Magic Eye paintings that one of our team members, Vish Valivety, shared with us. You can look and look at a Magic Eye picture, but no matter how much someone tells you there is a dolphin in there, you can’t see it, until you do.

And once you have seen the dolphin, you can’t unsee it.

We talked at the outset about 2023 as a ‘year of communication’ but we think we all realised early on that the challenge wasn’t around communication, as much as it was around confidence – having the courage to stand up and talk about who we are, how we work and why we believe it is both different and better.

Back in June of this year, on the night of the opening of our new offices at Mill Street by Baroness Armstrong, we brought together an incredible group of clients, partners and fellow travellers and we all took the opportunity to reflect on the PPL story – how we have got here, who we are today, and why we are proud to be different. The PPL dolphin, if you like.

The power of belief

For us at PPL, saying proudly that we work differently is about realising that only by doing this will we continue to deliver better outcomes for our clients and for our society.

That brings us to our second reference point – again from a PPL-er – this time from one of our directors, David Segal. David pointed out that this year, we've focused on managing in a way that maximises the chance of "good" happening, rather than trying to minimise the chance of stuff going wrong.

David's statement on the power of positive belief really struck me, and planning for things to go well has been a key factor in our success over the past 12 months.

The last year feels like a year of developing our confidence and self-awareness as an organisation, learning how to grow, take risks, build on things that go well and make the best of when things don't go as planned.

That is where the two versions of 2023 cross over, and where the course for 2024 is set. The value and the energy comes in moving forward. We have already proven that creating an idea and just keeping going to deliver it can create something genuinely different and genuinely special. We are excited to see where that takes us in 2024.



PPL is management consultancy with a difference

PPL is more than a management consultancy. We are also an organisation that is creatively and positively exploring what the future of public service delivery might look like, and what a business can be and do.

We are testing some really big ideas about value and proposing a radically new way of thinking about investment and return. On public service reform, we are an apolitical organisation but very committed to the idea and values of public service. We understand at a deep level that public services are fundamentally about people. Above all, we have a proven philosophy and approach to enabling our clients to deliver sustainable, impactful change in an extremely challenging environment.

We are great partners, and we value partnership – our insights in this space about what works and what doesn't are hugely important. We don't look away from complexity, we move towards it with the curiosity and resilience that is needed to help others to operate within it. All of

these are valuable and precious insights at any time but within this particular period of volatility, they are essential.

Taking the thoughtful approach

When they partner with PPL, people aren't just buying an ordinary consultancy – they are buying management consultancy with a difference and that difference isn't just our business model, it's the whole approach.

One client said to me this year: "The thing about your team is that you actually think about what you are being told by people, rather than just accepting everything at face value".

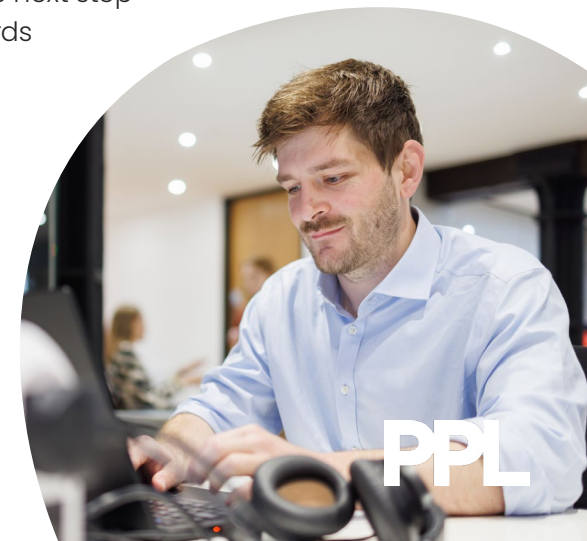
We would like us to really build on that idea of being a thoughtful consultancy. We think about who our clients are, what they need and how to enable the outcomes they are trying to deliver. We think about the challenges our clients are facing, understanding what is possible in helping them to move forward, supporting them with insight, project management, organisational development, analysis, strategy, engagement – everything that will help them to succeed.

If not now, when?

When we are asked why we have chosen now as the moment to expand, why now the moment to invest in new office space, grow our team by 25%, and deepen the connections we have with our senior advisor team; we say: "If not now, when?"

What point can any of us remember that there has been more need for thoughtful, purpose-led innovation? At what point has partnership been more necessary? At what point has the world been more complex? When have powerful conversations been less needed?

We believe that we have a valuable role to play in shaping what comes next into something that is better than where we are, and we're ready to take the next step as a team towards achieving that.



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02 Our clients and partners in change

We would like to thank all of those that we have worked with in the last 12 months on delivering impact, including:

- Baxendale
- Bloom
- Bristol City Council
- Bristol Water
- Buckinghamshire Council
- Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust
- Care Quality Commission
- Central London Community Healthcare
- COBIC
- Collaborate C.I.C.
- Cordis Bright
- Cornwall Council
- Curshaw
- Edge Health
- Epsom & St Helier University Hospitals
- Gemserv
- Greater London Authority
- Hammersmith and Fulham Place Based Partnership
- Harrow Borough Based Partnership
- Health Education England
- Healthcare Central London
- Healthier Greenwich Partnership
- Healthworks Associates
- Helpforce
- Imperial College Health Partners
- Into Film
- Kings College London NHS
- Health Centre
- LaingBuisson
- Lewisham Health and Care Partnership
- London Ambulance Service
- London Borough of Barnet
- London Borough of Bexley
- London Borough of Brent
- London Borough of Enfield
- London Borough of Hackney
- London Borough of Harrow
- London Borough of Islington
- London Borough of Lewisham
- London Borough of Southwark
- London Council
- London Estates Board
- London ICS Network
- Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust
- Mutual Ventures
- National Voices
- New Local
- NHS Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire ICB
- NHS Confederation
- NHS England
- NHS North West London ICB
- NHS South East London ICB
- NHS Surrey Heartlands ICB
- NHS Sussex ICB
- Norfolk & Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust
- North East London NHS Foundation Trust
- Oxford Academic Health Science Network
- Researching People (ResPeo)
- Queen Victoria Hospital NHS Trust
- Royal Borough of Greenwich
- Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust
- Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust
- Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE)
- Social Finance
- Surrey County Council
- Surrey Heartlands ICB
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- The Innovation Unit
- The Nuffield Trust
- United St. Saviour's
- University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust
- West Northamptonshire Council
- Woking Borough Council

128 projects delivered
across the UK

Over **68,928** hours
of client advice and support

568 hours of
volunteering and pro-bono
time

£72,000
of impact funding distributed
in-year

£152,000
of new funding generated to
support social impact in 2024

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03 Our values

Everything we do is driven by our values

Click on each value or read on to see an examples of how we put it into practice in our work last year

Creative

Ethical

Competitive

Balanced

Structured

Flexible

Sustainable

“PPL’s breadth and depth of experience across health and local government is unrivalled but it is their ability to work in genuine partnership that has made the real difference to our integrated work this year.”

Laura Churchill, Director of the London ICS Network



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Strategy & impact

What a year, what a journey

We understand that delivering impact involves bringing together compelling vision and strategy development with outstanding project and programme management.

Our work builds on industry leading approaches to strategy development, project and programme management, process and pathway mapping and supporting analysis - but recognises that real impact happens through people, and through their actions and beliefs, rather than simply through products and documents.

The following case studies highlight just a few ways in which we have applied this thinking with clients and partners in 2022/23.



Helping the NHS tackle health inequalities cost effectively and sustainably

The challenge

NHS England have identified Virtual Wards as a means of improving patient and carer experience, patient outcomes, and deploying resources, particularly staff time, in the most efficient way possible.

National policy has moved from piloting Virtual Wards to targeting a full roll out of 40-50 beds per 100,000 people across England. We are working with our partners to implement Virtual Wards, whilst ensuring a rigorous approach to measuring benefits, learning from experience, and evaluating efficacy.

Our approach

We have been managing the implementation of Virtual Wards with ICBs since September 2021. In parallel, we have also supported the implementation of new technologies and the capture of benefits as part of the strategic planning process.

In other ICBs we have been modelling a suite of interventions to assess their potential to create financial sustainability and reduce population health inequalities for the urgent and emergency care (UEC) pathway. This includes the cost of one additional hospital avoidance for five types of Virtual Ward, and differences in impact associated with ethnicity or deprivation.

We subsequently worked to build on this analysis with a new, linked, patient-level dataset that provided averages for avoided bed days per Virtual Ward admission for individual pathways and cohorts based on real data, representing a significant improvement on evaluation approaches in other areas to-date.

Our impact

In just one of the ICBs we've been working with, the live capacity has grown to almost six hundred virtual beds already, a significant increase in twelve months and a major support to their local hospital sector and to patients and carers themselves as we head into another difficult winter.

We are now working with NHS England to deliver a comprehensive evaluation of Virtual Wards across the South East Region, quantifying and articulating the outcomes associated with a diverse array of approaches will allow us to draw even more robust conclusions on what works. Our recommendations are already helping systems and individual decision-makers to focus resources on the most cost-effective interventions, and those which deliver the biggest benefits to patients and those who care for them.

Empowering improvement through “Well Led”

The challenge

Recent legislative changes have reintroduced Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspections of Councils in England. This came into effect in April 2023 and means that Adult Social Care (ASC) services’ capacity to dispense their statutory responsibilities to residents will be closely assessed. At the same time, the CQC has re-designed its assessment criteria into a new Single Assessment Framework (SAF) and developed a range of guidance for local authorities.

PPL has been working with Brent Council to undertake a rapid stocktake of performance against the CQC’s new assessment criteria, identify priority areas for improvement, and start to action these. This is not just about achieving a good rating – it is part of the council’s commitment to continuous improvement for all of those it serves.

Our approach

The project started with a supported self-assessment bringing together a full spectrum of national guidance, evidence, performance metrics, feedback from

residents, input from staff at all levels, policies and procedures, case audits, and all other relevant evidence. This allowed us and Brent to understand the strengths, weaknesses, and ongoing improvement work for each of the nine CQC ‘Quality Statements’ against which the Adult Social Care team will be inspected.

We worked with the Council’s Performance & Insight team to deliver a ‘CQC datapack’ summarising performance against quality statements and identifying gaps in data collection, to support the CQC’s electronic Information Return – a set of required documentation. Finally, we designed a comprehensive CQC communications and engagement strategy with tailored approaches for five key groups; residents, service users, frontline staff, leaders and members, and partners. We engaged staff through a range of channels to ensure they were aware of changes, to demystify the inspection process, to answer any questions, and to give them an opportunity to feed into the self-assessment.

Our impact

We designed a fully-fledged permanent CQC Assurance Programme for Brent, and we’re working with them to ensure a smooth handover. A rigorous approach helped the Adult Social Care Department prioritise transformation and improvement work, and concurrently to develop a permanent programme based on lessons learnt in the self-assessment. Ultimately, this is not about a single inspection but a strategy and plan for ensuring that improvement work continues to be a core part of the delivery of Adult Social Care in Brent, in line with chief officer and elected member ambitions for local communities.



Ensuring the autism pathway provides children and young people the support they need

The challenge

South East London (SEL) had identified large variation in the children and young people (CYP) autism assessment pathway across their six boroughs, resulting in differing access to care and outcomes.

Without a standardised pathway there was little clarity for children, young people and their families around the expected process and timelines for receiving an autism assessment, or the support on offer both pre- and post-assessment.

Our approach

Our approach involved an initial desktop review collating data and innovative ideas, before setting up a Task and Finish Group to progress the work at pace.

We worked with a reference group to engage with clinicians, the voluntary and community sector, education colleagues, CYP and their families and carers to co-develop a needs-led and flexible pathway, that put CYP at their centre.

To engage effectively with such a wide range of stakeholders, we needed to be creative. This included an online interactive whiteboard for clinical professionals to update weekly and an easy-read survey targeting service users and parents that was distributed online and in-person and adapted appropriately for CYP and their families. We also held semi-structured interviews with trusted VCSE leads.

We took a holistic approach, challenging the Task and Finish Group to draw on the evidence-base and develop an end-to-end pathway encompassing not just the assessment but the support CYP receive both pre- and post-assessment.

Our impact

With our support, SEL has been able to move towards a more integrated care approach, sharing best practice and building relationships across the system.

Our work has also enabled SEL to produce a standardised needs-led pathway that can be implemented to support equitable care outcomes.

And CYP and their families now have clarity across SEL around age thresholds and what support is available in each borough both for pre- and post-assessment.

“We really appreciated your structured approach, attention to detail and professionalism whilst addressing challenges and ensuring we adhered to the tight timelines.”

Clinical lead



Place and partnership development

We have been working for over two decades on the development of better co-ordinated person and community centred services.

Despite this, and the many efforts of frontline staff and organisations, we recognise that for too many people, their experience is of services that are not co-ordinated or designed around them.

We help co-design approaches to delivering services and outcomes that work with and for the people who rely on them.

We support this not simply because we think it is the morally right thing to do, but because it is one of the few ways in which we can help make limited resources go further – by reducing delays and duplication, intervening earlier, and working collectively to keep people living independently and well.



Creating a 'sense of place' in Hammersmith & Fulham

"Everything starts with a conversation – it's as simple as that."

Workshop participant

The challenge

Hammersmith and Fulham Health and Care Partnership (HFHCP) wanted to establish solid partnerships after the implementation of the Health and Care Act 2022. Leaders of HFHCP saw that developing a 'sense of place' would be key to the development of place-based working.

Over the last year, our focus was to develop a clear vision and shared culture for HFHCP. We wanted to honour each person's unique contribution, while uniting everyone under a common identity built on the principle that partners are 'Better Together'. Our work was guided by three core aims:

1 Make the Health and Care Partnership 'real' for people by defining a clear 'sense of place' for people to rally around.

2 Give people spaces to think innovatively about the Partnership's development and build positive momentum.

3 Build an environment where people felt safe to voice challenges, allowing us to find creative solutions together.

Our approach

Designing a place identity: we worked with staff and local people to develop a recognisable visual identity for HFHCP that communicated the Partnership's values and provided something tangible for people to rally around.

Building momentum: we ran a system-wide event to launch the new HFHCP identity, with a wide range of partners in attendance. This event helped connect people as an 'in-group', encouraged people to drive change forward themselves, and asked them to think

innovatively about the next stages of partnership development.

Finding creative solutions: throughout the process, we made time to reflect on progress with system leaders. We identified areas for targeted organisational development interventions and focused on enabling change on the ground. We co-designed new ways of working and formalised these in Team Charters which fostered greater ownership and accountability amongst staff, helped people at all levels build high-trust relationships and made meetings effective spaces for healthy debate.

Our impact

This work helped align HFHCP's leaders around a shared vision and fostered stronger working relationships. It created more permissive spaces for innovative thinking around partnership working, not just for leaders, but also for staff, VCS representatives and local people.

Combatting obesity in North Central London

The challenge

We worked with several London boroughs and the Royal Free London Healthy Living Hub to host workshops and focus groups in North Central London (NCL) communities.

These sessions helped gather crucial information used to create a detailed map of local systems and insights from key community members in the area.

The mapping exercise helped create draft action plans for the NHS, NCL and each of its five boroughs. These plans aimed to support local action to bring about sustainable, equitable, and long-term system change to reduce obesity rates.

Lasting change to reduce rates of obesity requires a whole systems approach, this includes:

- Understanding the complexity of obesity
- Recognising the multiple factors that drive obesity

- Implementing unified solutions that involve collaboration across system partners, and co-ordinate action across a range of disciplines and functional areas
- Ensuring communities are equal partners in shaping the changes we want to see

Our approach

Our approach included three key phases: mapping the local environment, engagement with professionals and communities and the generation of NCL-wide and borough specific action plans.

We worked with the boroughs and NHS partners to deliver a range of engagement sessions for professionals and diverse communities in NCL. These engagements included:

- Podcasting sessions with teenagers at a youth hub.
- A workshop for parents of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.
- Engagements with public health teams and other local authority teams.
- A focus groups with older residents.

Our impact

We engaged with over 100 people to create obesity action plans for all 5 boroughs of NCL, NHS Trusts and a shared plan for NCL as a whole.

These action plans were prioritised according to the urgency of the step, and whether the step was a long- or short-term change. And we agreed an owner for each step in the plan to ensure accountability.

We grouped the plan steps under five key themes that emerged across all engagements and mapping across NCL. These themes are illustrated in the accompanying diagram.



The role of local partnerships in supporting complex mental health needs

The challenge

Individuals with complex mental health care needs often live with severe mental illness, experience a range of other health conditions, and have varied and complicated social care requirements. In Greenwich, the local health and care partnership had identified several challenges to the effective provision of services for these individuals, with a need to improve shared understanding, relationships and arrangements.

Our support focused on evaluating the proposal to delegate the health component of placements jointly funded by the NHS and Greenwich Council to a Mental Health Trust. This included supporting the co-development of an options appraisal with all key stakeholders.

Our approach

We provided advice and support to members of staff to critically appraise

the paper structure, highlighting risks and benefits of different options and incorporating a set of evaluation criteria:

- 1** Is the proposal sufficiently clear and is there consensus amongst colleagues from partner organisations on what the option will entail?
- 2** What impact is it expected this option will have on key patient outcomes identified in the case for change, and how quickly will this impact be realised?
- 3** To what extent do the expected outcomes of this option align with the strategic objectives of the HGP?
- 4** What are the expected implications on the partner organisations' financial positions in the short and long term, and to what extent will this option mean improved value for money on an individual service user level?
- 5** Does the proposal address the lack of clarity on roles, responsibilities, and delegated authority? Does it explicitly address the limited communication

and weak relationships that underpin these issues?

- 6** Does this option explicitly address the need for improved engagement with service users and residents, including coproduction of priorities and solutions? Does the option jeopardise any existing work in this area?

We convened a Task and Finish Group to evaluate the options, and through a series of 1:1s effectively pressure-tested evaluation outcomes and co-developed a recommended option.



Our impact

The final options appraisal paper effectively evaluated and presented the benefits and risks of pre-agreed options for the optimal management of complex mental health cases in Greenwich.

Colleagues from partner organisations strongly endorsed an option as the best way forward for Greenwich and this was unanimously agreed by the Healthier Greenwich Partnership in September 2023.

The process of creating the options appraisal effectively surfaced the need for a focus on improved relationships and communication amongst partners in addition to key underlying processes and principles, and improved partner organisation's collective understanding of the challenges they share in improving resident outcomes.



Helping Harrow Adult Social Care improve services in a challenging environment

The challenge

Amid an increasingly challenging care environment, Harrow Adult Social Care (ASC) sought to identify opportunities to integrate and improve in order to continue delivering high quality, holistic services to local residents, and move towards a preventative and integrated approach to care.

This service development work was not about creating new services but rather identifying opportunities for how Harrow ASC could develop their existing services, aligning them to the wider transformation programme and new operational models being developed.

Our approach

A transformation and improvement plan was co-designed through extensive engagement with a wide range of stakeholders. Three focus groups were held, with 218 participants. This included representatives from within ASC teams and wider teams, like Public Health,

Commissioning, Business Intelligence, Mosaic, Access Harrow and Education.

We spoke directly with residents via the Local Account Group and incorporated this feedback, alongside previous engagement outputs from residents and ASC staff, into the transformation and improvement plan.

The subsequent system-wide workshop involved representatives from across ASC teams, voluntary sector, public health, commissioning and mental health.

Our impact

A key part of this work was to understand how the new service models and team structure should operate to deliver on the integrated and preventative approach.

We engaged with and built relationships across teams enabling them to have honest and open conversations about how staff and residents want existing ASC services to develop. And we developed a detailed and clear roadmap with

activities, owners and timelines to turn the identified development opportunities into reality.

We also implemented the transformation and improvement plan aims to help ASC services achieve a more integrated way of working and more needs-led care.



Building a fairer society and tackling inequalities

The growth in inequalities affects everybody, but disproportionately impacts the lives of those who are already vulnerable or in greatest need.

Whilst there is no singular answer to this challenge, we are working with partners to understand and address these challenges, and improve outcomes wherever we can.

Over two decades our work across both health and local government has highlighted the importance of not only recognising the wider determinants of health, wellbeing and economic success, but taking practical action to address these.

In addition to our project work in this area, we provide direct support to communities through both our volunteering and direct investment via our social impact fund.



A population health approach to tackling inequalities

The challenge

Core20PLUS5 is a national NHS framework taking a population health approach to tackling inequalities and a priority for all Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) across the country.

ICSs hold responsibility for delivering this agenda and improving equality of outcomes across their populations, but we know the solutions to tackle inequalities often involve hyper-local working with communities, where a one-size-fits-all model would not be effective.

North West London ICS recognised this challenge, and wanted to understand the local foundations it could build on and the lessons that could be learnt and tailored to other local areas. With extensive experience with partners across North West London, we were appointed to support this project to help improve outcomes for local communities and citizens.

Our approach

We reviewed existing documents and communications, and held interviews and small group discussions with staff and community representatives. By building up a detailed picture of all the work that was taking place across North West London, we were able to identify the key areas that were delivering the biggest impact on people's health outcomes.

Our impact

Our work not only built on the strengths of evaluative models but also focused on shared learning and practical changes that could help enhance ways of working. Our report has been an invaluable tool in helping ICSs nationwide improve services for communities, including:

- Delivering new services more efficiently.
- Sharing learnings between ICSs to help avoid and mitigate known issues when implementing changes.

- Creating connections to support local areas to develop and learn together, creating a broader and deeper intelligence and improvement resource.



Tackling health inequalities faced by people experiencing homelessness

The challenge

People experiencing homelessness often face multiple overlapping factors for poor health. West Northamptonshire Health & Wellbeing Board recognised the significance that settled, good quality housing with tailored support can have on reducing health inequalities. This made reducing homelessness a high priority for the local system.

The Council also wanted to review the existing support available to those experiencing homelessness, explore how effective it was, and develop an evidence-based case for change.

Our approach

First, we established a steering group with representatives from the local voluntary sector service providers, housing providers, and public sector to oversee the work. We collated and analysed data sets from organisations within the local system, completed extensive engagement with professionals,

engaged people with lived experience of rough sleeping, and completed a desktop review of best practice and the evidence base.

We reviewed the current service provision within West Northants against published standards, and the health, social care and accommodation needs identified in the assessment.

We also looked at the cost effectiveness of existing accommodation-based provisions and modelled the economic case of transitioning to different models over the next decade.

This enabled us to develop a set of recommendations to inform future commissioning and service delivery.

Our impact

Our findings corroborated the evidence base, highlighting the huge health inequalities faced by those experiencing homelessness and the support they need – as well as demonstrating a robust case for change to reshape the local

pathway, including the components of a new pathway and roadmap to get there.

A number of our recommendations have already been implemented, including the appointment of a new joint commissioning manager across Adult Social Care and Housing and a new dedicated homelessness social worker role.

Our report has been instrumental in kickstarting a council-wide transformation programme for reshaping services for people experiencing homelessness.



Transforming the Housing Options service in Cornwall

The challenge

Cornwall Council receives over 3,000 statutory homelessness applications every year. In October 2022, Cornwall Council insourced a number of housing and homelessness functions. This change represented an opportunity to understand fully where the service was currently, and signal the start of an improvement journey towards “best in class”. A journey that maximises the potential of the recent changes and provides the service with a clear direction and the roadmap to get there.

The Council wanted to appoint an independent, external organisation to complete a holistic service review of the current quality, value for money and effectiveness of the housing options service. The review needed to identify opportunities to improve and help facilitate the co-design of a new structure to move the service forward in the short, medium and long-term.

Our approach

We completed a holistic review of the current quality, value for money and effectiveness of the service. The review needed to identify opportunities to improve, and help facilitate the co-design of a new structure to move the service forward in the short, medium and long-term.

Our approach took both an “outside in” (customer’s perspective) and “inside out” (service/ organisational perspective) view through a range of activities; including practice/ ethnographic observations, mystery shopping, case file audit, partner and staff engagement, best practice review; and customer journey mapping. We also completed extensive data and benchmarking analysis around performance and value for money.

Our impact

This resulted in a service redesign and transformation plan. We then owned the delivery of key actions in the plan which included supporting the restructure of the service, developing the Private Rented Sector prevention offer, developing the case and specification for an external mediation service, developing a private rented sector offer (PRSO) policy; and a performance framework for all levels and teams within the service.



Organisational development

Collaborative working is critical to improving outcomes and can be immensely rewarding, but it also presents challenges and needs space, trust and support to develop successfully.

The experience and insights we've gained have led us to develop PPL Catalyst: an approach to delivering sustainable organisational and system change, building on what people do and how they do it in order to get the best possible results for themselves, their organisations and communities.

We are committed to making change feel 'real' for everyone involved, to helping people find their place in the new world, and to putting in place the mindsets and culture to continue the process of development and growth long after our teams have left.



Empowering excellence through team training for hospital discharge

The challenge

Hospital discharge is a complex process that involves multiple stakeholders and requires careful planning and coordination. Improving discharge has been identified by NHS England as a key priority in recovering productivity and improving whole system flow.

London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust has been working to improve patient experience, and reduce the number of days waiting for discharge, by creating greater consistency and improved understanding of discharge across health and social care.

They reviewed and updated the discharge processes for Northwick Park and Ealing Hospitals. But while the refreshed discharge process was successfully adopted by discharge teams, the Trust found the wider staff involved were not following the process, leading to challenges for patients, families and discharge teams.

Our approach

We supported the Trust to develop interactive hospital discharge training across its two hospitals. The goal was to reach as many Multidisciplinary team (MDT) members as possible, giving them the right tools and understanding to improve how they plan, coordinate, and safely discharge their patients. We delivered 16 training sessions across the two hospital sites to around 200 MDT members.

We collaborated with members of the Integrated Discharge Team to develop a comprehensive reference pack to be provided to each ward in paper copy. And we worked with the Trust to re-develop the existing training materials. The aim was to maintain the operationally focused detail needed for front-line staff, whilst maximising engagement. We made sure the information was grounded in personal experience and as interactive and collaborative as possible.

This approach provided opportunities for staff from different wards and disciplines to complete tasks as one team, just as they do when discharging patients.



Our impact

As well as being largest training the Trust had ever undertaken, it brought together a range of roles, disciplines, and sectors for the first time to learn about how ward staff could support safe and effective discharge. It also provided a catalyst for the launch of D2A onto their referrals system, which is already having a positive impact on discharge.

“A huge thanks for all your support and efforts to deliver this training and complete the resource pack. Super pleased with the outcome, it was a pleasure to work with PPL.”

Natasha Harmsworth-Blyth, Head of Discharge Operations, London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust.



Introducing matrix working to support greater collaboration, flexibility and agility

The challenge

Into Film is a charity putting film at the heart of children and young people's education, helping to support their academic, cultural, and social development.

Following changes to their programmes and funding, they identified a need to introduce new ways of working to support greater collaboration, flexibility and agility.

They identified matrix working as a way to achieve these aims, and wanted support to build an understanding of the practical changes they needed to implement a matrix structure, and the culture needed to make this a long-term success.

Our approach

We wanted to ensure staff felt well supported and included in the change process, and that they were getting clear and consistent direction from senior leaders.

To achieve this, we began our engagement work with leaders, starting with one-to-one interviews to understand individual priorities and concerns, and then we held two leadership workshops. These workshops focused on the vision for matrix working, the cultural building blocks to support this, and some of the practicalities involved in implementing the approach.

Alongside this, we provided coaching for the Joint Heads of Programmes who were designing the detailed matrix structure. We then ran workshops for managers, to support them in understanding their roles in the new structure, and in supporting the change process.

Finally, we delivered an all-staff workshop where we helped staff consider how their roles might change in the new structure (and what would stay the same), how the organisational culture might evolve, and the implications for ways of working.

We developed a pack outlining relevant tools, models, and approaches in

response to the challenges identified in the workshops, with advice about how to apply these in Into Film.

Our impact

Into Film now has clarity on the key steps needed to implement matrix working, specifically in making sure they are developing the right approach for Into Film and the team, rather than a generic plan on paper.

They have the skills, tools and confidence to continue their change journey and make matrix working a success in the long term.

“This will be a very positive change for the organisation – not just us but also for our beneficiaries.”

Workshop participant

Enabling integration in London: training the trainers

The challenge

inPLACE is a tool co-developed by the London Health and Care Partnership and PPL to help with the integration of care in partnerships across London. inPLACE supports partnerships to move from “Why can’t we?” to “How will we?”.

To help ensure that London’s Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) and places within them were self-sufficient in using inPLACE, the London Health and Care Partnership appointed us to design a ‘Train the Trainer’ course to enable inPLACE to be implemented as efficiently as possible.

Our approach

We developed the structure and contents for the inPLACE Train the Trainer course and a full suite of training materials, using learning from earlier pilots, and testing for online as well as in person delivery.

We enabled participants to become confident in using inPLACE, including evaluation and refinement of training design based on participant feedback.

Finally, we provided support to the initial cohort working with nominated place-based partnerships and wider stakeholders, handing over a comprehensive training pack including suggested communications and guides for facilitators and trainees.

Our impact

With the introduction of our Train the Trainer course, we’ve enabled partnerships across London to be self-sufficient in using inPLACE.

This will support accelerated integration across London, providing systems and places with tools to enable them to have open and honest conversations about where they are now, where they want to be and most importantly, how they are going to get there.

“I am grateful to the PPL team for their work on the InPlace Train the Trainer programme. I was able to completely rely on the team’s expertise to develop, design and deliver the work, whilst feeling that I had meaningful input at key points in the process.”

Anisa Goodwin, Director of London’s Health and Care Partnership



Digital, data & evidence-based change

Digital and data is at the core of everything we do. However, we know even the best technologies and analytics cannot produce meaningful change in isolation.

Our work is about bringing together the latest capabilities with proven approaches to co-design and organisational development to ensure that investments deliver better outcomes for individuals, communities, and the staff that support them.

For us, this is about empowering people at all levels to make the best possible decisions, and ensuring that everyone who needs it has access to the quality of support and care they need.



Developing world-class digital systems with University Hospitals Sussex

The challenge

University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust (UHSussex) is one of the largest hospital trusts in the south of England, running seven hospitals with almost 22,000 staff, a patient population of 1.8 million and an annual operating budget of over £1.3 billion.

We have supported the Trust to undertake a comprehensive review of all digital options to deliver on the Trust's strategic priorities.

Although this process has been driven by local priorities, it is taking place against the background of a national commitment (shared by all main UK political parties) to accelerate the roll-out of digital health and care services, and put the needs of patients, carers and families first.

Our approach

Our support has involved working with the Trust Board, senior managers, clinicians and corporate teams to develop and deliver an options appraisal process, a strategic outline case for an EPR investment and now the full business case covering capital and revenue costs and benefits over the next ten years. This has included:

- Governance and project management – support to provide continuous assurance and to meet the requirements of the Trust, the local Integrated Care System, and NHS England nationally.
- Business case development – developing and drafting the Strategic and Outline Business Case and, following approval of these, preparing the Full Business Case.

- Finance – working alongside the UHSussex finance team to ensure the solution is deliverable and affordable.



Developing world-class digital systems with University Hospitals Sussex

- Technical requirements – ensuring UHSussex has a clear, shared and evidence-led view of the key requirements for any technological solution, and that these needs can be communicated effectively to the market.
- Benefits & change – identifying and quantifying the patient, staff, financial and wider benefits of the programme.
- Procurement – working alongside the UHSussex procurement team and external specialists to ensure an effective and compliant process and a fit-for-purpose, value-for-money outcome.
- Engagement and comms – hosting online and in-person engagement sessions to gather user requirements and socialise progress and objectives with the wider organisation.
- UHSussex deployment readiness – ensuring UHSussex can fully utilise available national funding to support preparedness for this digital transformation.

Our impact

- The agreement of a Strategic Outline Case and Outline Business Case by the UHSussex Trust Board and all relevant groups that report to the Trust Board.
- A programme structure that can assure and deliver this important investment.
- Delivery of an engagement package which has engaged over 300 individual stakeholders to-date through in-person and online channels.
- A set of detailed design requirements informed by this engagement that reflect the needs of the Trust, its patients, staff and partners. A clear understanding of the benefits aligned to the Trust's overall "True North" strategic priorities.
- A roadmap and plan to deliver the required capabilities in line with local, system and national requirements.



Creating a digital data strategy to improve lives across South East London

The challenge

There are unprecedented challenges facing health, care, and communities, and a need to change the way we work in response to this. There is a national drive towards data-driven decision support, building analytical capability and business intelligence functions across England's Integrated Care Systems (ICSs).

However, there is also huge potential in the data and capabilities already available, including within acute, community and mental health, primary care, social services and public health teams.

Alongside our partners at Edge Health, we were asked by South East London ICS to co-design a System Intelligence Strategy to move forward the use of analytics and data to improve the lives of their residents.

Our approach

We engaged with a wide group of key individuals across South East London, through a combination of 1:1 interviews, workshops, focus groups and surveys to understand what they needed from system intelligence.

We also reviewed key national, regional and local strategies to identify what good could look like, and where there were gaps with what currently exists. We created a System Intelligence Specification which set out:

- A vision for analytics in South East London.
- Example use cases that demonstrated what practically could be done that could not be done now, if the vision was achieved.
- A series of recommendations, including an indicative timeline of how to get to the vision.

Our impact

The specification is currently being reviewed before implementation, however, the expected impact will be a series of additional capabilities around analytics in South East London, and a series of improved outcomes for residents and staff.

Through our work, a range of stakeholders in South East London, including analytics teams and hospital providers, have greater clarity around a shared vision, and what needs to be done to get there.



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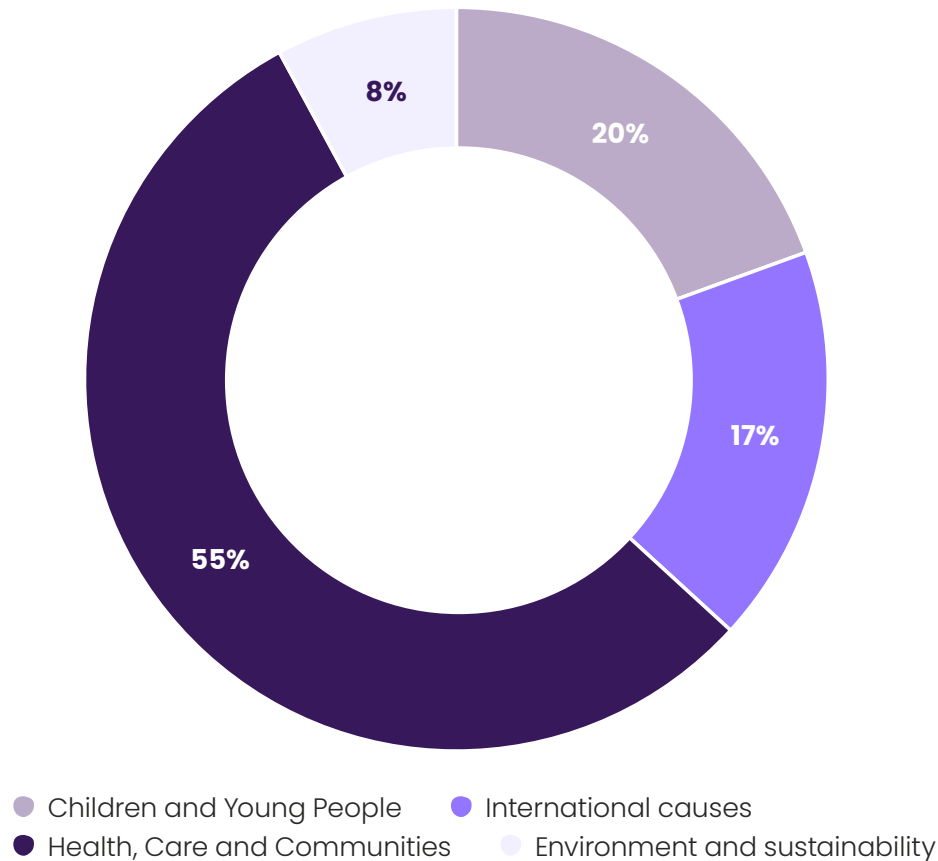
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Our volunteering

Every member of our permanent team has an allowance of up to 10 days of paid volunteering leave which they can put towards a cause of their choice. This is a core part of our social impact offer – with benefits for the communities supported, the organisations working with them, and for the individual volunteer.

We are proud to have volunteered with 17 different organisations in the last year.



Over the last year team members have volunteered 519 hours at the following organisations:

- Brazelton Centre UK
- British Red Cross
- Campus Children's Holidays
- Community Southwark
- Community Voices
- Housing First
- Looe Marine Conservation
- Metropolitan Police
- NaariSamata
- Oakleaf Enterprise
- Sickle Cell Society
- St John Ambulance
- St Vincent De Paul Society
- Stop Killer Robots
- Team Upside
- The Mill
- Wokingham Arts Trail

Our volunteering



Joe Kane-Smith
Manager

Housing First is a specific model evidenced to be highly effective at ending homelessness for people experiencing multiple disadvantages. It adheres to a set of internationally recognised principles, and provides unconditional access to permanent housing with open-ended support. Following our work, West Northamptonshire have committed to developing a local Housing First service. I used my volunteering days to develop and deliver introductory training on Housing First to over 40 individuals from 15 organisations within the local health, care and housing system. The model represents a fundamentally different approach and philosophy, and these sessions are the first step in West Northants' journey to making Housing First a success.



Pippa Quincey
Consultant

Since 2019 I've been volunteering with Action for Children as part of their 'Independent Visitor' (IV) scheme. Similar to the role of a "befriender", an IV is matched long-term with a looked-after younger person; building a trusting, positive relationship and providing additional support, as well as developing their interests and hobbies. Seeing her grow over the years and become more confident trying new activities has been great. I do feel very lucky to be involved in my young person's life and am grateful that I can use my PPL volunteering days towards it!



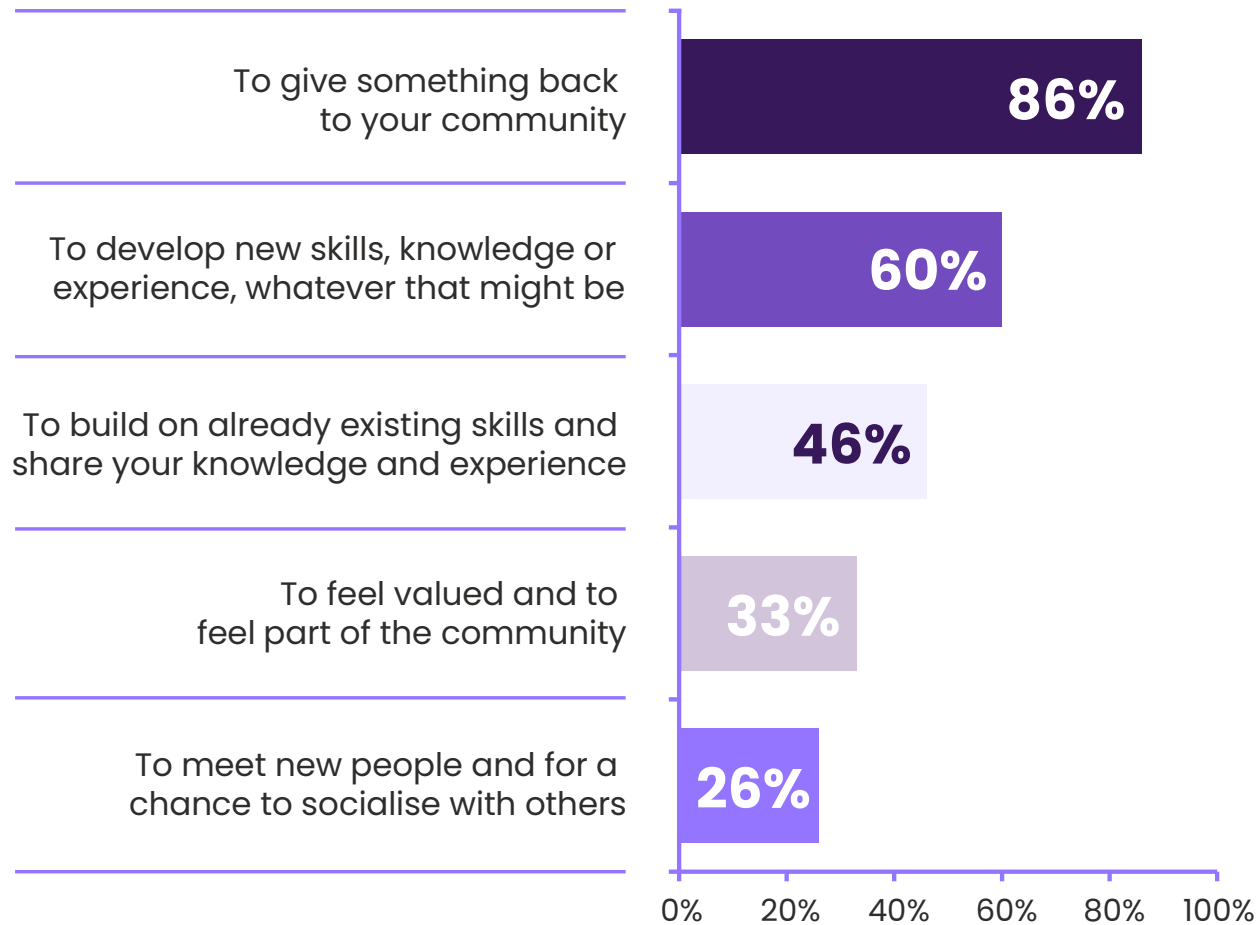
Eliza Griffiths
Consultant

I have been volunteering with Stop Killer Robots since I was a university student, supporting on the campaign with investigative work and report writing. Stop Killer Robots campaigns for an international ban on lethal autonomous weapons, and this year, I supported with coverage of the House of Lords Artificial Intelligence in Weapons Systems Committee – a big step forward for raising the profile of the issue in the UK.



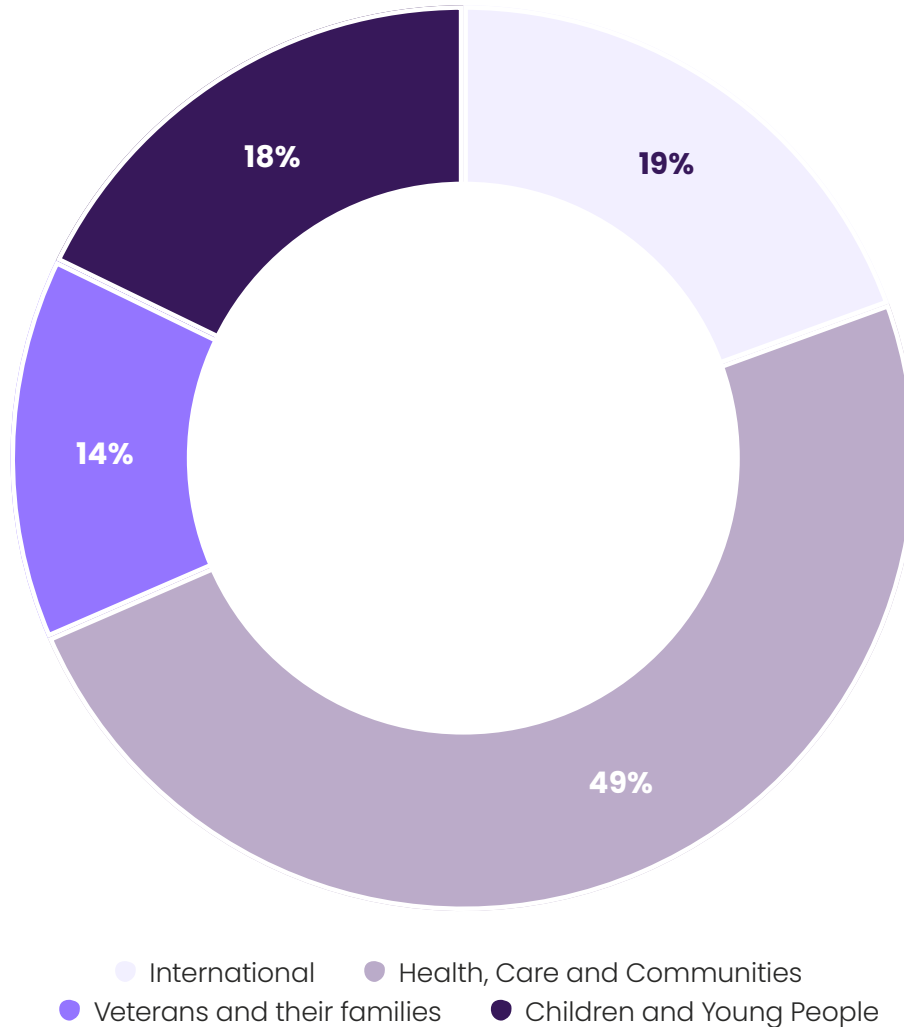
Our volunteering

We asked our team why they volunteer. The following chart summarises the main reasons why.



Donations

Please see below for a breakdown of our donations in the last year.



“I would like to thank PPL very much indeed for your continued support.... Your ongoing generosity really is appreciated greatly and will make a significant contribution to our work.”

Major General Tim Hyams CB OBE,
Army Benevolent Fund



PPL Dragons' Den

At PPL, the Dragons' are our team as a whole, to whom individuals can pitch for a share of funding each year to support causes close to their hearts. In 2022, £10,000 of our social impact funding went to three successful pitches; in 2023, that was doubled to £20,000 which was split across six bidders.



2022 results

Organisation	Impact
NaariSamata	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported the redevelopment of the local primary school in Chinnabettiganapalli, a village in the state of Tamil Nadu, India. Funding was used to build a second floor to the primary school's main building. New classrooms have been built and are in use!
Looe Marine Conservation Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helped to fund a project to understand and improve the seagrass beds in the Looe and Whitsand Bay Voluntary Marine Conservation Zone. Seagrass beds play a vital role in mitigating carbon outputs!
Sickle Cell Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helped to cover important overheads for projects, meaning that projects such as Peer Mentoring, currently being rolled out across London, could run without restrictions. Funding was also able to support an important project called Sickle Cell Family Retreat which happens every August.

2023 results

- £1600** **London Air Ambulance**
 Providing faster and specialised medical attention for individuals in desperate need.
- £4000** **Team Upside**
 Helping young people (aged 14-18) from underserved backgrounds achieve their full potential in education.
- £4600** **NaariSamata**
 Working to ensure the safety and wellbeing of women and children, particularly within underprivileged communities. Encompassing different aspects of wellbeing including physical safety, education, and access to proper hygiene.
- £2000** **Meningitis Research Foundation**
 Sharing life-saving information and funding vital medical research into meningitis and septicaemia.
- £4400** **Love North Southwark Food and Baby Bank**
 A community initiative that provides food support and access to baby products to those in need.
- £3400** **Wonder Foundation Empowering women and girls**
 Empowering women and girls from over 20 countries to get the education they need to exit poverty for good

The PPL Winter Fund

The PPL Winter Fund is an annual initiative where PPL donates money from our Social Impact Fund to local organisations working to support people through the winter period.

At the start of 2023, we split the fund between our existing partners at South London Cares, and Community Southwark and United St Saviours, who were funding 'Warm Hubs' across Southwark. This allowed us to channel funding directly to practical activities within communities addressing both the physical and mental wellbeing of local people.

Community Southwark and United St Saviours had in place the relationships and infrastructure to maximise the impact of our resources, as well as the local networks to ensure it reached Southwark residents as quickly as possible.

“With your contribution we will be able to reach out and support more small BAME groups – particularly serving the Afro-Caribbean and Latin American community.”

Sarah Thurman, Head of Community Investments, United St Saviours Charity



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PPL Senior Advisors

In 2023, PPL was delighted to welcome several new senior advisors to our team – all individuals with exceptional backgrounds and careers, committed to continuing to deliver social impact.

Dr Charlotte Augst former CEO of National Voices and now Executive Director of Policy, Campaigns and Improvement at Diabetes UK, is a highly respected leader with expertise in putting the patient voice at the heart of policy making, with a robust focus on addressing inequalities in health and care.

Edel Harris OBE former CEO of Mencap and Cornerstone, has pioneered new ways of providing care, based on Frederick Laloux's Reinventing Organisations, tackling the challenges faced by the social care sector whilst ensuring that people in receipt of care and support are empowered to live the life they choose.

Halima Khan has held leadership positions at the Greater London Authority, Nesta and the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit and is passionate about people powered approaches to public services.

Nigel Edwards is a former CEO of the Nuffield Trust and has also worked for the King's Fund, KPMG's global practice and the NHS Confederation where he was Director of Policy and later Chief Executive. His work and interests are wide ranging, from the development and implementation of new models of service delivery at the front line to wider health care policy in the UK and internationally.

Ren Kapur MBE is CEO of Enterprise for Life which has supported thousands of startups and provides entrepreneurship learning to members of the uniformed services, and their families. In 2013, Ren founded X-Forces Enterprise (XFE), the UK's premier organisation for enterprise and start-up skills in the wider military community.

Sean Harriss is a former local authority CEO with extensive experience joining services, systems and politics at local authority, place and system level.



“I chose to become a Senior Advisor to PPL because their values and goals so closely reflect my own.



PPL’s commitment to improving health, wellbeing, and economic outcomes for individuals and communities across the country, thus levelling the playing field for all UK citizens, is mirrored in my own professional and personal life.

Social enterprises, working in tandem with local authorities and government, as well as the voluntary and private sectors, can truly effect change that will empower and improve people’s lives.”

Ren Kapur MBE

“I am delighted to be joining the team and I have had the good fortune to work with colleagues from PPL in the past and they delivered everything they said they would do and more.



Our values are aligned and I love the social enterprise ethos.

I look forward to working with charities, other organisations and people who want to bring about positive change, and in using my experience to benefit others.”

Edel Harris OBE



Paul Corrigan on... Integrated Neighbourhood Teams



A decade ago, I remember starting work with the NHSE Better Care Fund to help create neighbourhood teams.

The initial motivation that argued for working together between frontline local authority and NHS staff was the money from the joint Better Care Fund: “work together and you will get this working together resource”.

When I was trying to make this happen, most people in the room were immediate managers of frontline staff. You heard about the life of an 85-year-old woman with multiple long term conditions and the chaos of her experience of the many different people whose task it was to help her, including different nurses coming at the same time, different hospitals demanding the same tests, and a complete lack of co-ordination between professionals.. We agreed in the end that each older person would need an Excel spreadsheet to keep in touch with their care. Each member of staff in the room knew their bit of this, but very

few appreciated how collectively they were imposing chaos on an already frail human being.

Getting the patient ‘in the room’ became a vital part of motivating professionals to work differently. When National Voices developed with patients their “I” statements, it was possible to ensure that those statements were in the room all the time. And what was (and has been since) powerful about those statements was the fact that they were so moderate and reasonable. Why shouldn’t we be able to ‘only tell your story once’ and why not insist that ‘I am given information that is relevant to me and which I understand’? When you put these wishes before health and care staff, they feel reasonable; and then, after a few minutes, they feel impossible actually to achieve.

This is what integrated neighbourhood team (INT) care is all about. It is people asking for entirely reasonable joined-up care where they are respected as the key to that care.

Yes, creating INTs is difficult, but it’s clearly something that the public want and need; and it’s something that the primary care service of the NHS will not survive without.

So let’s get on with doing it.

“As the senior advisory team at PPL expands, I am looking forward to working with colleagues old and new to support the fundamental change we all want to see.”

Halima Khan on...

Relationships matter

Mentioning relationships in the context of public services can feel almost awkward. Especially when there are such significant and sustained pressures on public service budgets and workforces. The response can be a sense that there's no time or that the focus needs to be on the 'real' issues at hand. But people are the lifeblood of public services – the people working in them and the people they serve. And relationships are vital drivers of productivity and wellbeing.

The challenge, then, is to bridge from the theory to the realities of public services in the UK. At the centre of that is the issue of funding, investment and resourcing. For example, the NHS in England is experiencing vacancy rates at a 5-year high. Relational practice is far more difficult in these circumstances. But, it could be argued, all the more important.

What is sometimes missing are frameworks that can help translate

to concrete actions. A helpful example is the Senses Framework, which was developed in the context of working with older people with dementia, but can be adapted elsewhere. It is based on the idea of six senses which are essential for good relationships in the context of care and service delivery:

- A Sense of Security
- A Sense of Continuity
- A Sense of Belonging
- A Sense of Purpose
- A Sense of Fulfilment
- A Sense of Significance

Not all of these senses will be possible at the frontline given the acute pressures on public services. But leaders, managers and staff can use them to inform how they go about their daily interactions with one another and with members of the public.

As we know from the #MyNames campaign, something as apparently small as introducing oneself can make a big difference. Good relationships help

people feel valued. And, in turn, this can boost the productivity of public services. Even – indeed, especially – in challenging times.

“One of the things I love about PPL is its learning culture. Plenty of organisations say they have a learning culture, but PPL really puts it into practice! As well as a fantastic year-round learning series, there are informal ‘lunch and learn’ sessions monthly. I really enjoyed giving one recently on public service reform, which enabled the team to hear some emerging thinking, relate it to their work and give helpful feedback and questions.”





Dr Charlotte Augst on...

Proportionate universalism unleashed – Embracing community support for a brighter future

Commentators from all sides of the political spectrum agree that health services are facing the toughest challenges yet. In the absence of any long term plans, including for social care, workforce, health inequalities, or estates, it is hard to see how things can improve before the next election.

So the motto for the next period will continue to be working smarter, more efficiently, and cutting ‘waste’. One of the biggest challenges for public services is then how to stratify, assess, police access and ration support.

I do believe we need to step out of this paradigm and rediscover an older idea: proportionate universalism, embedded in community activity.

I was reminded of this important idea, to provide universal services, but at a scale and intensity proportionate to the degree of need, when I read the recent health impact evaluation of the

Sure Start programme. Sure Start was a one stop shop, based in a community setting, that offered health education, parenting support, information and employment advice all under one roof. In the first wave, they were focused on areas with high levels of deprivation, but they were then rolled out across the whole of the UK. They were open to everyone who walked through the door.

Crucially, the proportionalism was not based on assessments and the constant enforcement of access criteria. The offer was open ended, and exuded generosity and mutuality: come here and hang out, meet others, make friends.

And the best thing of all: Despite most of the centres being forced to close in 2010, Sure Start continues to have massive and positive impacts on the children who attended, and those benefits are most pronounced for those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

What I am taking from all this, is that we need to stop thinking our biggest challenge is how to ‘target’ and start thinking about how to hold, support, strengthen, inspire and enjoy each other.

The future is bright, the future is community hosting services.

“With the breadth and depth of challenges facing public services over the next few years, we will need both pragmatism and creativity in spades. PPL combine immensely practical work with some deep thinking about the big issues that affect health and care. At Mill Street Nights both come together in really fruitful and engaging ways.”



Sean Harriss on...

Improving population health through partnership and integration

My thoughts are always drawn to Winter because, as sure as Santa is coming, there will be a crisis in the NHS (or more specifically hospitals) which will raise the spectre of bed blocking by Councils, and a lack of social care! This is an annual, unenlightened event that for a brief period puts the co-dependence of the two systems into the public eye in the most unhelpful way.

Why? Because it frames the relationship in a negative light, casts the purpose of social care as primarily a hospital discharge system and, reduces the NHS to only being about hospitals and A&E.

So, taking a step back from the blame game, why, and how, should we lead a debate and movement to focus on something very different?

The best local authorities, NHS trusts, and systems, know resident and population interest's are best served by creating strategic partnerships and integration. But too few organisations

and systems are sufficiently focussed on this as a key priority.

The reasons why are complex. They range from the top down target based systems of both the NHS and Local Government which reinforce silos; a lack of understanding; mistrust at political, board and professional level; and reinforcing organisational objectives rather than community and system objectives.

Moving an organisation, and particularly a system, towards joint working and integration is neither quick nor straightforward but, there are practical steps that can be taken.

I would encourage all councils, NHS organisations, and systems to consider to what extent they are prioritising integration and just as importantly assessing the internal capacity and external support that they may need both to improve relationships, understanding and joint working to make the change happen.

"I joined PPL as a Senior Advisor as everyone is focused on helping organisations across the public sector deliver improvements that will help real people in communities. When I spent a morning with the Team recently I was so impressed with everyone's passion, commitment and desire to make positive change happen"



Nigel Edwards on...

Fads and fashions in healthcare policy

“There are costs to not being part of the group who are adopting and using the current ideas, but some fads and fashions prove to be both short lived and of limited positive impact.”

Healthcare policy and management is somewhat prone to [fads and fashions](#) in how ideas develop and are adopted. There also tends to be a cycle in some of them, for example, in a number of countries reforms decentralising control of the health system.

There are costs to not being part of the group who are adopting and using the current ideas, but some fads and fashions prove to be both short lived and of limited positive impact. Just because an idea has a high level of currency doesn't mean it's a bad one or that attention should always be directed elsewhere. However, too much focus on the idea of the moment can have some less desirable effects:

- First, is that insufficient attention is given to less glamorous areas that may be as important and so opportunities are missed.
- A second consequence is that we miss weak signals from issues that are emerging and may prove to be highly significant. That means that when they do become serious issues we are poorly prepared even though often we are not surprised.

Being ready with methods for thinking about these types of problems and having done some of the basic work to understand what is happening and the solutions that might be available would be advantageous. This requires some change in what we do and focus on.

It also needs to be combined with some flexibility and a willingness to believe that you might have missed something or be wrong. This seems to be the most difficult thing of all.

“I have worked with PPL over the last 5 years and have been consistently impressed by their rigour and professionalism. The values of the organisation are very different from other consulting firms I have worked with and permeate their work. I bring deep knowledge of NHS management and policy issues, experience of other health systems and can bring a keen eye to ensure we are looking at the right questions, using appropriate methods and that our conclusions are incisive and evidence-based.”

Five years of How We Learn

This year marks the fifth anniversary since we launched our first How We Learn (HWL) training session at PPL. Inspired by Carol Dweck and the Growth Mindset concept, the programme evolved from our earlier Consultant Development Programmes. We believe in learning from both our successes and our mistakes, and we wanted to create an environment where people could bring their personal learning experiences into their professional identities.

The foundations of the 'growth mindset' within our organisation include:

- 1** Prioritising consistent development opportunities across all levels.
- 2** Cultivating a culture of psychological safety, encouraging learning from mistakes.
- 3** Ensuring our management culture supports and enhances that psychological safety.

To make the 'growth mindset' a part of our daily work, we implemented the following:

- Whole team training days held ten months of the year, with an emphasis on experiential learning and real-world application.
- Recognising that learning is a personal responsibility that happens continually, not just during formal training.
- Creating an environment where discomfort is embraced, and psychological safety is upheld.
- Restructuring our management culture to support learning and development.

While we continue to offer specialised training programmes, such as Management Development and Coaching, the philosophy of HWL remains at the core. We're proud of our CMI-certified training and are keen to share this model with a broader audience.

Our goal for the future is to build a community centred around this approach to talent development. We believe that a community of skilled and thoughtful consultants is essential for addressing complex challenges in public sector transformation.

"I'm really proud of all that we've achieved over the past five years through How We Learn. It is so much more than a training programme; it guides everything we do from our work with clients through to our daily interactions with each other"

Natasha Larkin, Head of Organisational Development at PPL

PPL Out and About

A focus for our team this year has been to proactively engage with the people and world around us – connecting and building relationships, old and new, with our clients and partners, and the wider community, in the sector we work in and people we work for. Our team has been intentional in welcoming colleagues and fellow travellers into our space at Mill Street, but also working hard to connect more widely with those organisations and people we work hard to positively impact through our work, at a local and national level.

A key arena for this has been in conferences and events our team has either attended or been directly involved in – listening to expert voices from different areas and sectors, keeping our ear close to the ground on key local and national policy issues, and representing ourselves in forums important to our work.

Stronger Things

This started with [New Local's Stronger Things 2023 – Community Power: Making it Happen](#), an event that brought together the boldest and brightest thinkers at the forefront of the community power moment, with an agenda centred on taking action towards a community-led vision for public services. Our Joint Chief Executive, and Vice Chair of New Local, Claire Kennedy helped to open the event, in conversation with Professor Bola Owolabi, Director of the National Healthcare Inequalities Improvement Programme for NHS England. Dr. Owolabi's poignant reflection during this conversation that "people's stories are data with soul" echoed the approach we take in our work – understanding the real, lived stories and experiences at the heart of the issues we work to solve, while working with data and evidence from every source to make change happen.

'Making it happen', a focus of the event overall, has also mirrored our own approach to our work this year – focusing, with urgency, on action and what we can do in the now, to make change and moves things forward on an everyday basis. Of course, there will be mistakes to learn from in such an approach and we were proud to recognise these in Victoria Stanway's, a Manager at PPL, online session around power, personalisation, and learning in health and care partnerships working more closely with communities – providing an open and real exploration of what it means to learn, focusing on what didn't work at first and what we did about it.



NHS Confed Expo

Our team was also excited to attend the [NHS ConfedExpo](#) again this year, listening to leaders and experts from across the NHS and across key areas of our work from leadership, health inequalities, digital, data, and AI, and integration. This two-day event allowed us to reflect, align, and think beyond the best practice of today to push forward, do more, and do better in those projects and programmes of change that make up our everyday lives – supporting our clients and partners, and shaping the work we deliver, with leading-edge approaches. Here, in her keynote address, Amanda Pritchard, CEO of NHS England, pushed us to take the longer view, helping us to recognise the small, hard won, steps we make everyday, as clear progress when looking back and a pathway ahead when looking forward.

Roffey Park

To finish off the year, we had the pleasure of attending the [Roffey Park Organisational Development Conference 2023](#). This focused on 'Creating Workplaces Where Organisations and People Thrive' and had some incredible keynote speakers, including Shelly Hossain, Gervase Bushe, Chris Mowles, Neil Mullarkey, Graham Curtis and Linda Holbeche. The speakers encouraged us to embrace ambiguity, urging us to find comfort in the unknown, be positively disruptive, and tap into the 'power of self' for authentic leadership. We left feeling very inspired and with a renewed sense of purpose!



Awards

We are not an organisation driven by awards. What really motivates us is the prospect of making an impact and delivering real, sustainable improvement in the public services people rely upon every day. The reward lies in the sense of satisfaction that comes with achieving meaningful change; and the thought-provoking discussions we have, the challenges we overcome, and the relationships we build along the way.

It is nonetheless always a bonus to be acknowledged for delivering impact through the work we do, especially when that acknowledgement comes from clients and industry peers.

We are very proud to have again been recognised by the **Financial Times' Leading Management Consultancies** in the UK, for the sixth year running. This year, we have received a Gold Award for our work in **Healthcare and Life Sciences**, ranking in the top five organisations in this sector across the whole of the UK.

In addition we received two Silver Awards for our wider work in the **Public & Social Sector**, and for our expertise in **Organisations & Change**.

These awards show that our peers and clients understand – just as we do – that, you don't have to be the largest organisation to consistently leave a positive mark.

And this gets to the heart of our ethos. We believe that anyone can help to make the world better with the right commitment, support, and drive behind them:

This is embodied in our informal motto: "Do what you can, where you are, with what you have."

Gold	healthcare and life sciences
Silver	public and social sector
Silver	organisations & change



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Launching Mill Street

Last year, we shared that we had bought our first home. This year, we spent time as a team to design our new space to give us spaces to work together, to relax together, to think together, to grow, learn and develop together.

In May 2023, it was an absolute privilege to have Baroness Armstrong of Hilltop open our new offices at St Saviour's Wharf in Mill Street.

Baroness Armstrong of Hilltop welcomed so many fellow travellers into what is both a new and historic space, and to hear her speak so warmly about the work we and other social enterprises are doing in seeking to create positive change. We were also delighted to welcome clients and partners from across the public and VCSE sector, and we were touched by the messages we received following the event including from people who had made a new connection or reconnected with an old friend.

Our vision for Mill Street has always been

that, in addition to being a fantastic space for our team, it will be open to everyone from our community of social enterprises, clients and partners from across the public and VCSE sector.

Mill Street is all about those sparks of connection: the moments that open up new ways of thinking about old problems, and create new opportunities to co-produce meaningful change.



Launch of Mill Street Nights

On Wednesday 18th October 2023, we held our inaugural “Mill Street Nights” event. This event served as the catalyst for a new era of discussions, bringing together influential figures to discuss key topics of the day.

The focal point of the inaugural discussion revolved around the theme, ‘Why Integrated Neighbourhood Teams will fail and what we can do to prevent that’.

Guided by the Chair and PPL Senior Advisor Nigel Edwards, the participants engaged in a thought-provoking conversation, navigating through challenges and potential solutions. Departing from the traditional round-table format, the focus was on actions rather than simply minutes.

What was most striking about the evening was the ‘different kind of conversation’ – the freedom to debate and discuss in an informal space, and to make new connections.

Plans are already underway for subsequent nights in 2024, as we eagerly anticipate continuing these enriching conversations.

Some actions for ensuring Integrated Neighbourhood Teams do not fail:

1. Looking at interfaces, building trust and bringing cultures together.
2. Being patient, not expecting neighbourhood teams in themselves to be a ‘quick fix’ for problems, but instead to create a different culture and set of relationships than then allows people to work in a logical way at a local level (where ‘local’ may look different in each area).
3. Learning from existing examples, including approaches to managing demand around Musculoskeletal health services in Brighton;
4. And Camden’s social services “managed autonomy” – empowering frontline staff to use their professional discretion and insight.
5. Applying the principle of ‘keeping a community safe / healthy’ as a guiding principle that cuts across professional boundaries.
6. Reflecting opportunities around the “inversion of power” – what would it mean if INTs focussed attention towards patients / people, rather than the healthcare system?

“No minutes, only actions.”



PPL Hub @ Mill Street

Following rapidly on from the opening of our new offices, in October 2023 we were pleased to announce completion of the Hub @ Mill Street – an additional 1500 sq ft of community space, developed and hosted by PPL and available for public, voluntary and community sector groups to use, free of charge.

The Hub is space to meet, to work and to come together. We took over the empty space in September 2023 and immediately started refurbishing it to create a flexible and modern environment.

We decided to create the Hub in response to Community Southwark's State of the Sector report, which highlighted how availability of premises were a significant challenge for the local voluntary sectors. Our ambition was to find new ways to create social value, supporting work with local communities

By removing the need for local charities to invest in, pay for or manage spaces, we enable them to focus on delivering maximum value with the funding they receive for the people that they support.

Our ambition is that the investment benefits society twice – first through the cash saving it delivers for the organisations using the space, and then through the additional impact those organisations are able to generate as a result.

The Hub hosted its first event at the start of November 2023 – Homestart Southwark's Annual General Meeting. We are already delighted with the positive feedback the Hub has received, and we are looking forward to an exciting year ahead with our partners and communities!

“We were delighted to be able to use PPL's Hub to host Home-Start Southwark's AGM 2023! The lovely venue was an essential element of the event's success! All attendees were impressed with how lovely the venue was! And we truly appreciated how the venue was equipped with everything we needed!”

Home-Start Southwark

PPL
hub
@ Mill Street



One year of South West

Our ambition has always been to promote better health, wellbeing and economic outcomes across the UK. Last year we launched our South West office based out of Redcliffe, Bristol; looking to deepen our relationships in the region and drive our impact wider.

Our South West office is not just another office - it brings everything that we can do in terms of skills, capacity, and capabilities; as well as adding local knowledge and insight.

In the last 12 months, our South West team have worked with BNSSG (Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire) Integrated Care Board on their strategic partnership, completed two phases of work with Cornwall Council on their Housing Options Transformation Programme, and are currently working with Bristol City Council and Social Finance to review the use of 'top-up' funding as part of Delivering Best Value for those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) programme.

In this year we have been excited to welcome two new joiners to the office, Emily Spottiswoode as a Senior Consultant and Matt Price-Drewett as a Consultant.

As with PPL as a whole, we don't just deliver impact through our client work, but also through our social impact fund and volunteering time. That's why we have also identified areas to distribute our social impact fund and volunteering opportunities in and around Bristol. We are also looking to take inspiration from our sister office in Mill Street, hosting events in the South West, getting out and about at local events and exhibitions; and spreading awareness of our work and the insights to share from it. Please watch this space, and do reach out if you're in Bristol anytime soon.



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