

# PEOPLE POWERED HEALTH

The rise of people powered approaches  
across Greater Manchester



A joint venture to support  
the local VCSE sector  
in the ten boroughs of  
Greater Manchester

Edited by Carey Bamber, Ben Gilchrist & Steve Goslyn

This brochure was developed to demonstrate the range and impact of people powered health projects across the whole of Greater Manchester. The stories illustrate a range of approaches that build on the tenets of people powered approaches, but have been developed independently across the 10 boroughs of GM over recent years. They show examples of how local people are addressing local challenges in positive and creative ways. The examples shared here were recommended to us by Healthwatch organisations and voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise organisations working at a local level as fantastic examples of people powered approaches. We hope you will agree, and we hope that they inspire local system leaders, community organisations and individuals to learn more about people powered health, and develop something locally themselves.

This Report was developed at the end of Stockport's People Powered Health journey with Nesta, to share learning from across Greater Manchester.

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## Thanks to

—  
**Healthwatch & VCSE  
organisations across  
Greater Manchester who  
suggested local projects  
and organisations, and  
most particularly to the  
projects themselves who  
shared their stories with  
us, in their own words.**

### **Find out more in your area:**

There are hundreds more voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise organisations taking diverse and creative approaches like those detailed in this booklet in each of the ten boroughs of Greater Manchester. If you would like to find out more about examples in your local area please get in touch with 10GM ([www.10GM.org.uk](http://www.10GM.org.uk)). 10GM is a joint venture to support the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector in the ten boroughs of Greater Manchester and supports groups and organisations like those that you have read about. 10GM provides not only a strong independent voice for the sector in Greater Manchester but an ideal platform to develop communication and collaboration.

# Foreword

This report shows the power of people coming together, across communities, to support one another, tackle disadvantage, solve problems, build friendships and have fun. It is about thousands of acts of kindness, compassion and connection that build into communities of people feeling healthier and happier.

The examples here fizz with creativity and ingenuity, combined with a determination to improve lives. Each of them builds on the best of what is already there: people's skills, talents and generosity alongside physical assets such as pieces of unused land or underused buildings. Many of the organisations and projects work with people who feel very isolated, distressed and unheard. They show that everyone is reachable and everyone can take steps forward with the right support. Sometimes this support comes best from people who understand because they have made the same journey themselves.

At Nesta Health Lab our vision is to see a people-powered and data-driven health system, with new sources of support like this which make it possible for people to be more involved in their health. We are pleased to have been able to play a part in the rise of people powered approaches across Greater Manchester since 2011. For example, we have supported Stockport Together, helping people with mental health conditions develop a local circle of support. And Dadly Does It, working with fathers in Salford to speak up about their problems and share solutions father to father, in ways that improve the wellbeing of them and their children.

Greater Manchester is packed full of vibrant and impactful community-based work. This locally-grown and community-driven change is essential to a healthy civic life and needs to be supported to flourish. I hope that by making them more visible, these projects and programmes will be able to secure the support they need to continue their valuable work. And we look forward to continuing to work with partners across Greater Manchester to help create a more people-powered future.

**Halima Khan**  
Executive Director, Health Lab, Nesta

# Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership

Greater Manchester challenged itself two years ago to make the greatest and fastest improvement possible in the health of our population. There are many contributions to that endeavour and it certainly includes the full range of health and care services and many other public services. Those contributions are ambitious and utterly necessary; however, they are not enough to make the level of improvement we require possible.

Throughout our journey to develop the plan, Taking Charge (1), engage the public and partners on its potential and start to implement some of the changes it describes, we have urged the need for true humility to recognise what is not possible from public services alone. We have consistently confirmed the need for us to think differently about the relationship between the public and their public services. We have recognised the limitations of building the plan around only what we can provide at the expense of what we could help unleash. We have held the aspiration that would not only be a plan to be implemented but a movement to be cultivated. The power of 2.8 million people to help maximise their health potential is the most significant resource we could bring to bear to make real gains in the health, life expectancy and life chances of Greater Manchester's population.

These case studies confirm that we are making real progress. The examples are rich, varied and inspiring. Many of the projects are simple in their approach, making use of peer mentoring for example, or simply valuing the expertise which comes with the lived experience of people who have overcome challenge and applied that knowledge to help others. Whilst the approaches are often simple they remain profound when we recognise the complexity of many of the issues they are helping to address whether that is supporting people living with cancer, or helping families overcome the effects of parental substance misuse. It is impossible not to be inspired by examples of survivors who then dedicate themselves to lifting the lives of those around them.

These case studies are a moment in time and we should expect to be able to collate many more examples over years to come as the movement spreads and we recognise the replicability of so many of these approaches. The report generates real insight into the way we estimate the value of interventions, projects and approaches beyond their cost - understanding social value and planning services accordingly.

Most importantly, on the part of public service leaders, we should recognise the extent to which this contributes to that shift in the way we ourselves think about the planning and delivery of services and the interactions we have hour by hour with residents. The mantra we can take into our working lives from now can be to seek what's strong, not focus solely on what's wrong.

**Warren Heppollette,**  
Executive Lead, Strategy and System Development

## Innovation through Conversation

### Project description

Heywood, Middleton & Rochdale Circle is a membership organisation for the over 50s and our primary aim is the reduction of social isolation amongst older people.

We have been hugely successful in getting older people out and about, meeting new people, making new friends and getting socially connected with their local community.

To achieve this, we do 2 main things, organise social events and deliver practical support.

Each month we organise between 35-40 different social events, ranging from meeting up for a coffee to going out for a meal, to going a show or exhibition, trips out, anything and everything our members ask to go on the social calendar.

In 2016 alone we took nearly 6000 social bookings and completed nearly 1000 practical jobs for our members.

Every year we work with an average of 575 older people across the borough.

Our practical service helps with the awkward job older people struggle to get done such as gardening, decorating, DIY, moving boxes, changing lightbulbs, so giving our members access to trusted and friendly trades people and removes the fear of 'rogue traders'.

### Key learning

Our success is down to the members having ownership of the activities and looking to continually improve what we do by having regular dialogue with our Members, we call this- Innovation through Conversation.

The three-key learnings from the activities we do are: -

1. Members decide the social activities they would like to see on the social calendar.
2. Activities must take place across a range of times, days and locations.
3. Each event must have a designated social host to make people welcome and for the event to run smoothly.

The key to getting older people to socialise and engage with their community is to facilitate the things they want to do, not what people think they may like or should do.

The members suggest the things that appear on the social calendar and when and where these activities take place, this ensures maximum engagement and uptake.

As well as putting on a diverse range of activities, it is equally important that the events take place when members want them to happen. Members have differing needs and situations. For example, some members tell us they aren't lonely during the day as they are busy doing their day to day activities such as shopping etc. It's when they 'close the curtains' at night that they are at their loneliest, so we ensure activities take place both during the day and at night-time as well.

The same applies to weekends, as events and activities must take place across the full week. Sunday is a good example as older people miss 'family time', with historically Sunday being the day people came together to eat as a group. With families increasingly living geographically apart, socially isolated older people even those with living adult children are an increasing issue.

The events we organise have to be spread around the borough so as to make them as accessible as possible and also give people the opportunity to visit venues or events they wouldn't have otherwise attended.

To ensure people are made to feel welcome and for the event to run smoothly, each activity has a social host. The host, who is usually a member volunteer collates the attendance list, makes new members welcome and introduces them to other members and helps things to go as smoothly as possible.

### More about us

Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale Circle (HMR) was originally set up thanks to a seed fund from the town's largest social housing provider, 7 Rochdale Boroughwide Housing (RBH).

HMR Circle was originally part of a larger organisation called Participle who devised the original 'Circle' idea, but unfortunately due to business pressure, Participle wasn't able to continue.

Here at Heywood, Middleton & Rochdale Circle though, we were able to continue as a stand-alone organisation developing the Circle model and have gone from strength to strength, receiving world-wide recognition for our work in the reduction of social isolation amongst older people, principally via the research group Studio-L based at the University of Osaka in Japan.

We have changed the business model to be a low-cost operation and have also adopted a culture of continuous improvement in what we deliver- Innovation through Conversation.

We have developed the Circle model and have launched a modified version based around Independent Living Schemes called Be-Social with Trafford Housing Trust.

We have also helping to deliver a project in the Rochdale Borough Called Silverlinks in conjunction with Care & Repair England. Silverlinks is based on providing information and advice around housing options as we get older. We have also developed Circle-Soft Landing, a programme based around reducing re-admissions into hospital which we hope to launch very soon.

With Circle-Soft Landing a Circle volunteer is partnered with a patient /older person whilst they are in hospital to act as an informal visitor. Once the patient/older person leaves hospital the Circle Volunteer continues to visit them whilst they are at home and supports them in getting back socially active.

The patient/older person is encouraged to get active within the Circle Social Calendar so when the support from the Circle Volunteer tapers off they have a ready-made 'social circle' to keep them engaged and active.

### **How and why our project is people powered**

Circle's entire ethos is based around co-design and co-production with our Members driving everything we do.

Members suggest the events and activities they want to do and when they want to do them.

Members suggest the range of tasks they want from our practical service.

The members host the majority of our social events, they actively volunteer on a weekly basis to help support the administration side of Circle as well as helping out with Practical Jobs for other members, befriending and giving lifts or sharing transport costs with each other.

The feedback/suggestions/questions are a daily occurrence and we encourage this, but we are conscious that 'one size' doesn't fit all when it comes to ensure people stay 'empowered'.

We also have more structured communication channels to ensure maximum ownership and that Circle is genuinely people powered.

Members are also involved and kept up to speed via a quarterly newsletter called Circuit which answers members questions and suggestions.

We also have a twice-yearly event called Suggestion Time devoted to giving members a more formal meeting style for a more structured discussion on how to improve the service we offer Members.

Circle operates with small board with a member with a permanent position and also we will be adding two more members who will attend board on an annual basis.

### **Evidence of impact**

At Circle, we are keen to demonstrate the benefits that we deliver and the positive changes we make to people's lives.

Using the HACT Social Value Calculator Circle delivers a fantastic ROI of £1 invested brings a social value return of £58.74p

We are proud of the findings and a full version is available from our website.

Circle Monitoring and Evaluation Statistics-Circle Follow Up Questionnaire (see website)

### **Links:-**

HMR Circle's website: [hmrcircle.org.uk/](http://hmrcircle.org.uk/)

Complete Member Surve:

[hmrcircle.org.uk/news/174/making-a-difference](http://hmrcircle.org.uk/news/174/making-a-difference)

When Studio L based at the University of Osaka in Japan visited HMR Circle [hmrcircle.org.uk/news/169/big-in-japan](http://hmrcircle.org.uk/news/169/big-in-japan)

Marty'n's story. One of our early success stories. Circle Member Marty'n pen his own experiences of what Circle did for him: [relationalwelfare.wordpress.com/2014/07/29/this-was-living-again-martyns-story-in-his-own-words/](http://relationalwelfare.wordpress.com/2014/07/29/this-was-living-again-martyns-story-in-his-own-words/)

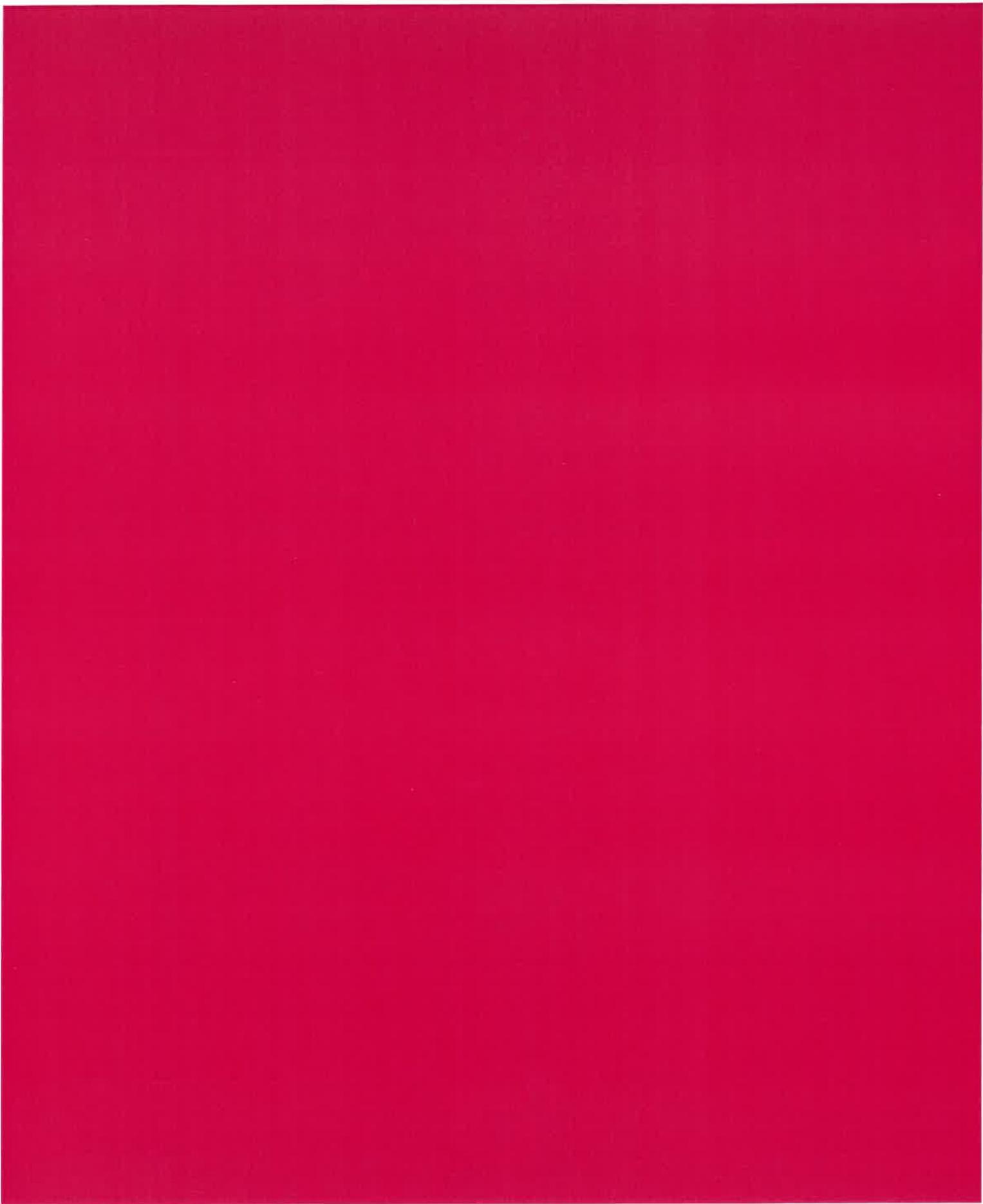
HMR Circle Launch a pilot programme: [rochdaleonline.co.uk/news-features/2/news-headlines/97429/rochdale-circle-norden-and-barnford-pilot-programme](http://rochdaleonline.co.uk/news-features/2/news-headlines/97429/rochdale-circle-norden-and-barnford-pilot-programme)

Circle-Thrill seekers in the Manchester Evening News: [manchesterrevenueingnews.co.uk/incoming/thrillseeking-circle-members-proving-still-9962902](http://manchesterrevenueingnews.co.uk/incoming/thrillseeking-circle-members-proving-still-9962902)

Joan's Story-A heart-warming story of the difference we make: [relationalwelfare.wordpress.com/2013/04/24/the-power-of-circle/](http://relationalwelfare.wordpress.com/2013/04/24/the-power-of-circle/)

Heywood, Middleton & Rochdale Circle Facebook page: [facebook.com/circlecic/](https://facebook.com/circlecic/)

Heywood, Middleton & Rochdale Circle [@HMRCircleCIC](mailto:HMRCircleCIC)



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