

Stoke-on-Trent City Council

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2023-24

Our approach to improving mental health
outcomes for the people of Stoke-on-Trent



PURPOSE

Mental health affects everyone and is integral to our overall health and wellbeing. Our vision is for everyone in Stoke-on-Trent to experience the best possible mental health and wellbeing throughout their life.

This framework takes a life course approach and sets out how the Council, with partners, will support, improve and maintain the mental health and wellbeing of all our residents. This document is not in itself a strategy or plan but describes the approach we will adopt to ensure Stoke-on-Trent is a mentally healthy city. The development of further strategies and plans will be undertaken in collaboration with partners, providers, people with lived experience and stakeholders across the health care system and beyond, with great work already underway.

This framework is informed by national and local strategy, best practice and consultation and is supported by local evidence which will inform the way services are commissioned and shape how the City Council works to prevent and reduce the impact of poor mental health. It sets out our strategic priorities to adopt a preventative approach and recognise the importance of wider determinants of health, many of which the City Council is well placed to support as an anchor institution¹. It explains our local context in terms of the needs of local residents, outlines priorities for action, describes in broad terms how they can be met and sets out how we intend to measure progress.

¹Anchor institutions are large organisations that have a significant stake in their local area. They have sizeable assets that can be used to support their local community's health and wellbeing and are referred to as "anchors" because they are unlikely to move.



The strategic framework should be regarded as a live document that will evolve over time as our local integrated care system (ICS) matures and we work collectively to improve outcomes. Effectively supporting people experiencing poor mental health or low wellbeing will be a challenge as growing numbers of both adults and children

are experiencing difficulties, however by setting out our aspiration and strategic priorities we intend to meet this challenge head on to support our residents to live longer, happier and more fulfilling lives. This framework sets out our vision to prevent mental ill health, promote activity which improves mental wellbeing, support recovery and reduce health inequalities.



STRATEGY AND POLICY

This framework has been informed by a range of different sources with local priorities and strategies carefully considered. Stakeholders and the wider public have been consulted, with focus groups held to gain an understanding of what matters to people in the city. To ensure recommendations are in line with national ambitions, relevant policy has been considered, as well as mental health and wellbeing data for Stoke-on-Trent.

Local strategies which support the ambitions within this mental health and wellbeing framework include;

- Stoke-on-Trent Green Space Strategy (2018)
- Community Safety Strategy 2020-2023 (2020)
- Stoke-on-Trent City Council Strategic Plan 2020-24: Stronger Together (2020)
- Room to Grow Children and Young People's Strategy (2020)
- Early Help and Prevention Strategy for children, young people and families (2020)
- Stoke-on-Trent Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2020)
- Powering up Stoke-on-Trent (2021)
- Stoke-on-Trent Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2021)
- Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-2024 'Breaking the Cycle' (2021)
- Reach report: supporting adults with learning difficulties in Stoke-on-Trent (2022)
- Stoke-on-Trent Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2022)
- Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Partnership Strategy (in development)





Consideration has also been given to a range of national and international strategy and policy including;

- **World Health Organisation Mental Health Action Plan (2013)**: Recognises the essential role mental health plays in overall wellbeing and calls for integration of mental health issues into multisectoral policies, stressing the importance of a preventative approach across the lifecycle
- **Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health (2017)**: Aims to facilitate local and national action around primary prevention of mental health problems and the promotion of good mental health
- **NHS Long Term Plan (2019)**: Sets out a 10-year strategy for improving and reforming the NHS in England, including further commitment to improve mental health services including the expansion of support for perinatal mental health, increasing mental health spending, supporting people to age well and suicide prevention
- **Suicide Prevention Workplan (2019)**: Cross-government plan outlining how the government will work with stakeholders within the NHS, local government and voluntary sector to reduce suicide
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing Plan**: government discussion paper (2022): A cross-government, 10-year plan for mental health and wellbeing for England to improve mental health and wellbeing outcomes, particularly for high-risk groups
- **Mental Health Policy in England: research briefing (2022)**: Provides information and analysis on recent legislation in mental health
- **Levelling Up the United Kingdom (2022)**: Commitment to give everyone the opportunity across the country to live longer more fulfilling lives benefitting from sustained rises in living standards and well-being.

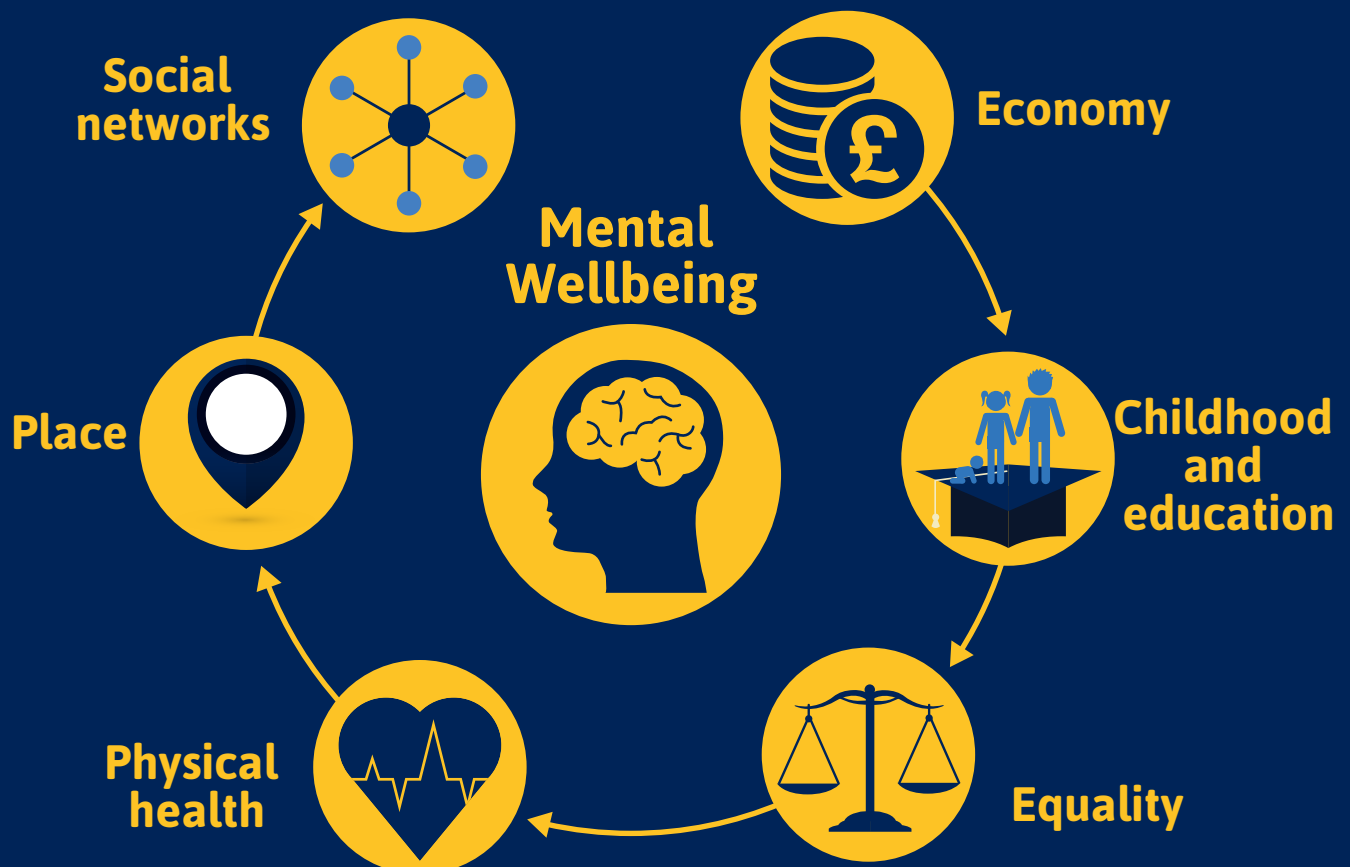
OUR APPROACH

A person's physical and mental health and wellbeing are influenced throughout their life by a range of external factors referred to as the wider determinants of health. These encompass a wide range of social, economic and environmental factors which can also occur alongside behavioural risk factors. Some of these factors are protective to our health, such as personal relationships, being physically active and stable employment, however some can be detrimental including smoking, substance misuse or living in poor housing.

A framework developed to support local authorities to appropriately consider personal wellbeing in their local population has been adopted to support this work. The recommendations are based around six core domains as shown in figure 1 which are; economy, childhood and education, equality, physical health, place and social networks and are based on the belief that improving people's wellbeing is the ultimate goal of effective policy and community action. Improving outcomes across many of these domains sits within the local authority's area of responsibility as an anchor institution, local organisations well placed to deliver improvements to mental health and wellbeing.

This framework will take a lifecourse approach, working in collaboration with partners, to work towards a common goal of improving mental health and wellbeing at a population level in Stoke-on-Trent.

Figure 1. Domains contributing to mental wellbeing





Economy

Having limited income or experiencing economic deprivation is associated with low mental wellbeing with strengthening the local economy having a multitude of benefits for our population. Stoke-on-Trent is the 13th most deprived local authority in England with concerns having been exacerbated by the cost of living crisis.



Areas of focus:

- Embed a mental wellbeing approach into efforts to improve the local economy
- Enable those in public-facing roles to make the most of everyday interactions and conversations by 'making every contact count'
- Maximise our current resources to grow a mentally healthy and vibrant city
- Promote opportunities to maximise income and improve personal financial management



Childhood and education

Experiencing poor mental health and adverse childhood experiences (ACE) significantly impacts development, preventing children from reaching their full potential and increasing the risk of ongoing mental ill health in adulthood. There is also a strong association between poverty and frequency of adverse experiences in childhood with the 2020 ACE index study summarising the frequency at local authority level placing Stoke-on-Trent as experiencing one of the highest rates in England. Actions are needed across the entire life course however intervening earliest in life is associated with the greatest potential to benefit to mental wellbeing.



Areas of focus:

- Support good parental health by encouraging smoking cessation, physical activity, increasing breastfeeding and promoting mental wellbeing
- Maximise opportunities for lifelong learning, including apprenticeships
- Deliver integrated services which support positive mental health and wellbeing



Equality

Inequalities in health are influenced by inequalities in society associated with the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age with socio-economic inequality underpinning many risk factors for mental ill health. Sadly, the city's population have lower life expectancy and healthy life expectancy than many other areas and experiences one of the highest suicide rates in the country.



Areas of focus:

- Ensure services are tailored to need and co-produced to ensure that under-represented and disproportionately impacted groups can access (including those identifying as LGBTQI)
- Undertake a suicide audit
- Ensure that the evolving demographics of the city are reflected in mental health provision
- Continue to promote campaigns for positive mental health and wellbeing



Physical health

Inequalities in health are influenced by inequalities in society associated with the conditions in which Physical health and mental wellbeing are intricately connected and should be viewed as equally important. Engaging in certain behaviours such as having a poor diet, substance misuse, gambling, physical inactivity or smoking can negatively impact mental and physical wellbeing.



Areas of focus:

- Recognise the cause and effect impacts of long-term health conditions on mental health
- Empower individuals and communities to engage in behaviours which enhance their wellbeing and improve mental health
- Be active advocates and local leaders in wellbeing promotion using evidence based mental health interventions such as the 'NHS Five ways to wellbeing'
- Support behaviour change through active health promotion, campaigns and wider transformation work



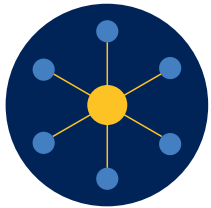
Place

Stoke-on-Trent has a proud cultural heritage, vibrant communities and a strong local identity. Embedding activity which promotes good mental health in planned programmes of regeneration will impact positively on population wellbeing.



Areas of focus:

- Ensure our green spaces, housing and the built environment contribute to population wellbeing
- Continue to work with community safety partners to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour
- Promote local democracy to support connected communities and a strong sense of belonging



Social networks

People with strong social capital who are well connected to their community and have positive social relationships experience better mental wellbeing. As an anchor institution, the City Council is well placed to promote community cohesion, build trust in services and strengthen local networks.



Areas of focus:

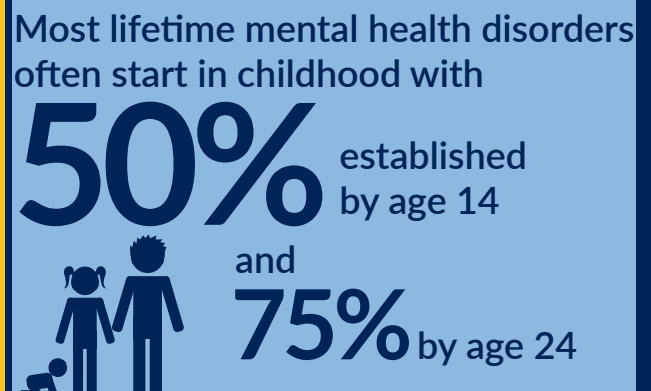
- Work to reduce social isolation and build strong community engagement, including for those with learning disabilities, adult social care users and carers
- Promote collaboration between health partners, social prescribing, individuals and community groups
- Build on existing community assets such as community lounges to promote social cohesion and increase social capital.

THE LOCAL CONTEXT

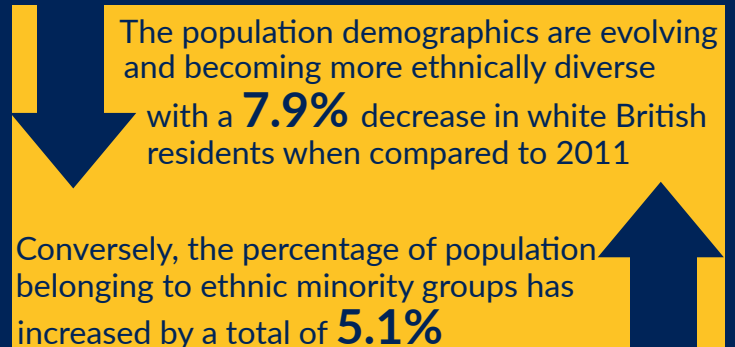
Understanding need

Mental health issues affect a significant proportion of the population nationally with just under a quarter of UK disease burden attributable to mental health disorders and self-harm.

Nationally



Locally



Mental health illness can affect everyone in Stoke-on-Trent across the lifecourse, however the city experiences higher prevalence of common mental illnesses with data suggesting that;



20.1% are estimated to experience common mental health disorders in Stoke-on-Trent significantly higher than the England average of **16.9%**

Between **77-100** women per year struggle with severe depression in the perinatal period

and an estimated **384** local women struggled with mild-moderate depression or anxiety around the same period

Estimated prevalence of depression in Stoke-on-Trent was

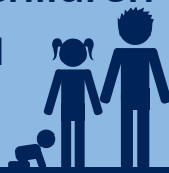
17.4%

significantly higher than the England average of **12.3%**

In children, mental health illness continues to be of concern with an estimated

4,778 local children

were estimated to have a mental health condition



There were **925** emergency hospital admissions



for intentional self-harm in 2019/2020, a rate significantly higher than the England average

Around

1/3 of looked after children

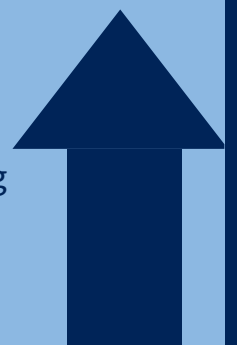
in Stoke-on-Trent are reported as having an emotional wellbeing concern

(currently there are just over 1,000 looked after children in the city)

The suicide rate in Stoke-on-Trent is trending upwards and is currently the highest in the West Midlands and the 10th highest in England with

94 people

committing suicide from 2018-2020 and males having a significantly higher rate



SUPPORT AVAILABLE

Across Stoke-on-Trent, there are a number of statutory, non-statutory, voluntary and community services and groups that work to provide mental health and wellbeing support to residents of the city. National and local organisations support individuals at risk of experiencing poor mental wellbeing with universal and targeted provision for groups including new mothers, men, veterans and the elderly.

Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board has overall responsibility for allocation of the NHS budget and commissioning of services, including mental health and wellbeing services which includes most hospital and community NHS funded services. Health partners provide a range of services across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent for those experiencing mental health difficulties.

In support of this framework, there are broader projects and initiatives which contribute to improving positive mental health. These include establishment of family hubs, Changing Futures (a service for people who face a combination of issues and need additional help), new investment in support of the national drug strategy to improve treatment and prevent rough sleeping, a refreshed approach to 'making every contact count' and development of community lounges.





OUR PRIORITIES

Following a review of policy and strategy, ahead of consultation and engagement with our stakeholders, three key areas were identified as priorities:

- **Promote** positive personal actions, healthy lifestyles and good mental and physical health
- **Prevent** mental ill health whenever possible, ensuring information, resources and services are easy to access at the earliest stage
- **Support** recovery to help people reach and maintain their optimum level of personal wellbeing

These priorities reflect the key principles of public mental health and wellbeing; encouraging promotion of mental wellbeing, prevention of future mental health issues and low wellbeing and supporting good recovery. It is increasingly accepted that actions and interventions to promote positive mental health and wellbeing must address factors pertaining to individuals, communities and structures to have the greatest impact.

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR PRIORITIES?

To achieve the ambition for each person in Stoke-on-Trent to experience the best possible mental health and wellbeing throughout their life we will undertake action to maximise our influence as an anchor institution. By strategically managing operations and resources, these institutions can address social, economic and environmental priorities and affect change in order to reduce health inequalities.

Local government plays a vital role supporting good mental health and wellbeing in the local population and plays a pivotal role in providing system-wide leadership through health and wellbeing boards, commissioning of voluntary and community services, working with stakeholders to reduce inequalities, the provision of statutory services, as well as wider services which are important supporters of population wellbeing, such as green spaces and leisure services.

Key activity in 2023/24:

- Ongoing consultation, co-production, engagement with partners and stakeholders including with Stoke-on-Trent's Health and Wellbeing Board, relevant ICS forums and the quarterly Mental Health Forum
- Sign up to the 'Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health' as a delivery mechanism for this framework
- Development of an online Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and ongoing provision mapping to ensure the needs of the city's population are understood and appropriate support is available
- Refresh commitment to 'making every contact count' and roll out training for Council staff (to include 'mental health first aid')
- Complete deep dive into suicide, explore commissioning a dedicated database and start a suicide audit
- Ensure health promotion activity and commissioned services routinely consider mental wellbeing.

MEASURING PROGRESS (to be further developed)

We will commit to developing a suite of key performance indicators to support our framework. This will include consideration of the following measures;

- Number of Council staff trained in 'making every contact count' and 'mental health first aid'
- Assessment of barriers to accessing mental health support
- Admissions to hospital for self-harm
- Suicide rate
- Number of health promotion campaigns
- Number of apprenticeships within Stoke-on-Trent City Council
- Number of people accessing community drug and alcohol services with an identified mental health need
- Availability of perinatal support for new parents
- Number of adults and children referred for mental health support





City of
Stoke-on-Trent