

# South East Community Participatory Action Research Programme



**Cohort 2: 2023-24**



# Introduction

**Community Participatory Action Research (CPAR) is an approach in which community members take part in all parts of the research related to their communities as equal partners with system stakeholders, with the aim to put their research outcomes into action. This CPAR programme trained and mentored 30 Community Researchers from voluntary sector organisations across the South East.**

This programme is led by the South East School of Public Health in collaboration with the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities South East (OHID SE). The South East School of Public Health is part of the Workforce Training and Education Directorate (WT&E) of NHS England South East.

The Health Foundation reported that *'the UK is in the midst of an economic and health crisis. The rising cost of living risks many being unable to afford essentials to maintain their health and bringing increased stress and anxiety as families try to make ends meet'*. The Health Foundation identifies that lower income households are more at risk of poor health where nearly half of the poorest of households will have at least one person with poor health.

The CPAR Cohort 2 programme builds on the learning from Cohort 1 by enabling people and communities to have an equal voice in how health and care priorities and services are informed.

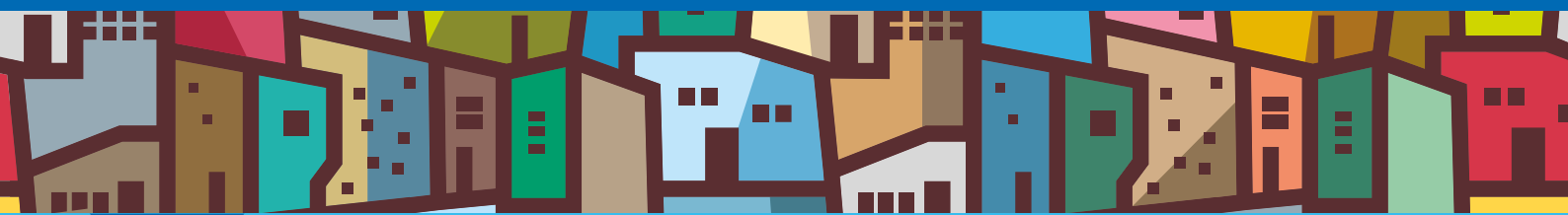
The focus of CPAR Cohort 2 is the Cost-of-Living Crisis and exploring the inequalities faced by marginalised communities as a result.

The programme supports and collaborates with organisations working with communities to recruit, train and mentor Community Researchers to undertake participatory action research. The findings of their research will be used to support key decision makers and commissioners at local and system levels in informing priorities and service development for marginalised communities in the South East.

**NHS England South East would like to thank our partners who have provided guidance in developing this innovative programme.**

Our training partners: The Scottish Community Development Centre, the University of Reading, and the Institute for Voluntary Action Research.

Our Oversight and Steering Group members: from Kent County Council, BOB ICB, Frimley ICB, Surrey Heartlands ICB, Kent & Medway ICB, HIOW ICB, the Health Foundation, Community Researchers Cohort 1, Brighton School of Medical Science and OHID SE.



# Training Providers

The CPAR training and mentoring programme is delivered by a collaboration of experts who have extensive experience in community development, participatory action research and community connections. On completion of the programme Community Researchers will have learned how to identify their communities' health priorities, collect and analyse data, present their findings and recommendations, and finally learn how to advocate for their research actions to system leaders.

Further information about the training providers is outlined below.

## **Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC)**

SCDC is the lead body for community development in Scotland, and works directly with community groups, practitioners, policy makers and wider partners to promote and support strong, equitable and sustainable communities. SCDC's work covers a diverse range of areas, including inequality, community empowerment, community engagement, co-production of services, health, sustainability, participatory democracy, policy and research. Although their office is in Glasgow, SCDC has a team of 15 staff based around Scotland.

## **University of Reading**

The University of Reading has an excellent track record in using community-led and participatory action research (PAR) to tackle problems and evidence needs through inclusive, innovative and co-created methods. The University empowers local communities to lead research that inform changes in thinking, policy and practice across

Reading and beyond. As an engaged University, Reading works with diverse partners to play a positive role in the social, cultural, environmental and economic life of communities, locally, nationally and internationally.

## **Institute for Voluntary Action Research (IVAR)**

We are an independent charity that works closely with people and organisations striving for positive social change. We work with charities, foundations and public agencies to strengthen communities across the UK through action research. Our mission is to strengthen communities through action research – so we use research to develop practical responses to the challenges and opportunities being faced across the sector, and we create spaces for people to come together and learn from and use our findings.



# Host Organisations of Community Researchers

The following host organisations have led in recruiting and supporting the Community Researchers to undertake their role and research projects.

## Hampshire

### Home-Start Portsmouth

Home-Start Portsmouth is a voluntary organisation committed to supporting families with children under the age of 5. We enable local parents to be the best they can be by offering emotional and practical help through our staff team and our trained volunteers; both in family homes and out in the community. We believe the earliest years make a big difference and we help to make those years count.

### Hope Portsmouth

Hope Portsmouth is a faith based community outreach organisation. We seek to support those who experience hardship and adversity, offering compassion, knowledge and dignity to those that we encounter. We participate in city-wide community action, and represent the Kingdom of God in the mission to tackle social inequality and poverty. We do this because we believe in the transformative power of relationship with our creator God. We also recognize that trauma, adversity and hardship impact people's lives, and often create barriers of low self worth, low self esteem, and lack of belief that life can be better,

living without hope. As a church, it is therefore our responsibility, and in fact our commission, to support and engage with those living without hope, to build relationships with those people through meeting needs during a crisis (physical, emotional, spiritual, through Foodbank, Community Mentoring etc), empowering opportunities for sustainable, positive change.

### Portsmouth City Council

Portsmouth city council has hosted Hope Portsmouth and Home-Start Portsmouth for the duration of this work. The Strategic Intelligence and Research Team aim to promote research and evidence-informed activity in Public Health, the wider council and alongside partners. Our work increasingly includes research that is important to and led by people within our local communities.

### Recapture Life CIC

Recapture Life CIC provides support for people living with dementia and their families. We provide Cognitive Stimulation Therapy for people living with dementia which also offers respite to their unpaid carers. We also provide carer support and strive to improve the situation of those living with dementia including involvement in research and raising awareness of dementia.



## Sussex

### Bognor Regis Foodbank

The Bognor Regis Foodbank is part of the Trussell Trust Foodbank Network. We provide emergency food parcels to people in crisis in the town and surrounding area as well as offering signposting to other sources of help and inhouse support with finances and help with housing issues through our financial inclusion workers. We would love to see the day when we no longer need to exist.

### Wellsbourne CIC

Wellsbourne CIC is a GP surgery in East Brighton, set up in 2018 by doctors and nurses working in the area, to provide a better service for local people. We are a GP surgery with a difference. Alongside the clinical services you would expect, we are working with our community to make sure everyone can live, work, learn and play happily and healthily in East Brighton. Find out more about our community gardening, walking and art projects. [wellsbournehealthcare.org.uk/community-projects](https://wellsbournehealthcare.org.uk/community-projects)



### Independent Lives

Independent Lives is a user-led charity working to change the lives of disabled people, people with support needs and carers. Our vision is for a fair society where everyone can participate and has the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

### Diversity Resource International

Diversity Resource International (DRI) is an ethnic-led nonprofit organisation that empowers ethnically diverse and migrant communities in Sussex. Our mission is to help people use their passions, talents, skills and experience to achieve

sustainable and positive social impact. DRI listens to our communities' changing needs and works with other actors to respond by redesigning processes, structures, and circumstances to remove the barriers to societal cohesion.

## Kent

### Fourth Wall Folkestone CIC

Fourth Wall Folkestone CIC is a not-for-profit creative space focused on all things art and mental health. Open to all as a non-traditional gallery, open studio, and research space, we invite the local community to reimagine the role of art in society as a tool to affect change by holding accessible creative events.

### Folkestone Nepalese Community UK

The Folkestone Nepalese Community (FNC) is a charitable organization that was founded in 2005 to help the Nepalese and Gurkha veterans and their families in Folkestone and the surrounding areas. The FNC runs the Folkestone Nepalese Community Centre, which was inaugurated on 7 October 2021. The centre offers various activities and services to enhance the well-being and integration of the community members. The FNC strives to improve education and training, reduce poverty, foster good health, and provide recreational facilities to the Nepalese community. The centre also participates in projects such as education programs, support groups, and cultural festivals. The FNC works with other community groups and organizations to achieve its goals. The community centre also rents out facilities to sustain its activities and raise funds. Visit our website at [www.fncuk.org](http://www.fncuk.org) to learn more.





## Buckinghamshire

### SV2G – St. Vincent & the Grenadines 2nd Generation

Through creative cultural connections, SV2G is a dynamic organisation that has created new forms of learning through arts and heritage projects with inter-generational audiences addressing inequalities faced by African and Caribbean communities. The organisation nurtures talent and raises aspirations of the next generation to encourage innovation that extends the creative skills of young people to provide a pathway to employment. SV2G delivers creative wellbeing programmes that inspire, empower and develop young people, families and communities for a positive social and economic impact.

### Caribbean Community Lunch Club

The Caribbean Community Lunch Club (CCLC) in Aylesbury is a key group that helps address issues in the African and Caribbean communities. It focuses on unity, healthy living, and community engagement. The CCLC aims to tackle loneliness, mental health, unemployment, and poverty by providing a weekly nutritious meal, space for discussions, and activities. The club plays a vital role in building community bonds, welcoming people from all backgrounds, and promoting racial harmony. It encourages healthy lifestyle choices and empowers members to improve well-being for themselves and the community.

## Oxfordshire

### Oxford Community Action

Oxford Community Action aims to support new and emerging Black, and racially Minoritised Communities alongside more established Multi-ethnic communities to tackle and overcome barriers created by structural inequalities that prevent Black and Minoritised individuals and communities from reaching their full potential and enjoying equal representation and participation as active citizens within UK institutions and wider civil society.

The purposes of Oxford Community Action is to promote community development, social inclusion and social justice for diverse, multi-ethnic communities aligned to the key community [development principles.oxfordcommunityaction.org/who-we-are](https://developmentprinciples.oxfordcommunityaction.org/who-we-are)



### Healthwatch Oxfordshire

Healthwatch Oxfordshire is hosting Oxford Community Action. It is the county's independent health and social care watchdog. We listen to the opinions and experiences of Oxfordshire residents about the health and social care services they use, to inform and influence commissioners and decision makers and highlight areas for improvement or change.



# Summaries of CPAR Research Projects

**Bognor Regis Foodbank**

**Caribbean Community Lunch Club**

**Diversity Resource International CIC**

**Folkestone Nepalese Community (FNC)**

**Forth Wall Folkestone CIC and the University of Kent**

**Home-Start Portsmouth**

**Hope Portsmouth**

**Independent Lives**

**Oxford Community Action and Healthwatch Oxfordshire**

**Recapture Life CIC**

**St. Vincent & the Grenadines 2nd Generation (SV2G)**

**Wellsbourne Healthcare CIC**



**Organisation:** Bognor Regis Foodbank

**Community Researchers:** Aida Kaman, Clare Ockwell

**Contact:** [clientsupport@bognorregis.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:clientsupport@bognorregis.foodbank.org.uk)

**Research Project Title:** Mind the Gap

### Research Project Summary

The cost of living crisis has caused a significant rise in the use of Foodbanks nationwide. Our Mind the Gap project has sought to dig beneath the surface to establish how the people coming through our doors can best be supported beyond the provision of a crisis food parcel. We aim to enable our customers to find the support they need to enable and empower them to improve their lives, and to rekindle some of the hope that too often has been lost within their situation

Our work was in itself threatened when a risk arose that the Foodbank would close and the energy of the team had to be redirected into doing what we could to ensure its long term survival. Our survival has necessitated a complete change of board and ongoing changes to our governance structure, meaning the workplace is still in a substantial state of flux.

Nonetheless we have persisted in circulating a questionnaire amongst our customers. Unsurprisingly a huge majority cited the rising costs of essentials as the main reason for their need for emergency food. However a

significant number also highlighted issues such as homelessness or insecure housing, loneliness, mental health and debt. Qualitative interviews are starting to highlight the many different services people are trying to navigate their way through a plethora of services.

We are currently seeking guidance from our customers as to what will be the most helpful actions to take to enable people to access the support they most need to enable them to reclaim their dignity and autonomy.





**Organisation:** Caribbean Community Lunch Club

**Community Researchers:** Roneish Myers (Lead), Patriece McKinley

**Contact:** [contact@caribbeancommunitylunchclub.com](mailto:contact@caribbeancommunitylunchclub.com)

**Research Project Title:** Exploring the impact of the Cost Of Living Crisis on the Black Community's Wellbeing in Buckinghamshire

### Research Project Summary

Our study delves into the impact of the Cost Of Living Crisis (COLC) on the wellbeing of the black community in Buckinghamshire. We held three 90-minute focus group sessions involving 30 respondents to collect qualitative data.

The aim was for the community to share personal experiences, discussing how the COLC has affected their financial and mental health. The outcomes revealed several key themes on the causes and effect of the COLC on the black community.

Key themes include:

- Historical and contextual factors that significantly contribute to the deprivation of the black community, placing them at a disadvantageous position compared to their white counterparts, leading to greater hardships during the COCL, highlighting the lack of a level playing field "Black Tax".
- Experiences with existing services, including racial discrimination, stigma, and cultural attitudes towards sharing burdens with professionals "not everybody you can trust".

- The direct impact of the COCL on the black community and its effects on individual lifestyle, such as less time with family and friends, financially supporting family, reduced self-care, and heightened utility costs. These factors collectively contribute to burden and stress.
- Solutions to improve wellbeing in the black community include taking action to address barriers in personal finance, business, career, and life skills. Representation matters, so partnering with service providers from the black community will play a crucial role.

*"They're starting to look at the causes, but whether they act upon them is another story"*

Our study aims to inspire changes among policy and decision makers, paving the way for tangible improvements within our community.



**Organisation:** Diversity Resource International CIC

**Community Researchers:** Aabha Gupta, Maria Tayao, Tayce Turner (Lead)

**Contact:** [Community@driorg.com](mailto:Community@driorg.com)

**Research Project Title:** Cost-of-Living Impacts on the Quality-of-Life for Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants

### Research Project Summary

DRI researched the impact of the Cost-of-Living on ethnically diverse populations primarily within Sussex. Through the lens of the cost-of-living crisis, our team of researchers looked at three topics chosen by the priorities of local community members.

- 1) The quality of life for Refugees, Asylum Seekers, and Migrants**
- 2) The mental health of ethnically diverse men**
- 3) The impact of medical costs for ethnically diverse individuals, family, and staff**

This research used a mixed method approach, questionnaires distributed to the wider community and participants invited to be interviewed if they would like to expand on their lived experience. Translated questionnaires were provided as well as interpreters at interviews.



**Organisation: Folkestone Nepalese Community (FNC)**

**Community Researchers: Kanchan Roka, Bijendra Singh, Norbu Lama**

**Research Lead: Maha Rai**

**Contact: [maha.rai@fncuk.org](mailto:maha.rai@fncuk.org)**

**Research Project Title: The impact of the cost-of-living crisis on the Nepalese community in Folkestone**

### **Research Project Summary**

Our CPAR 2 question is “What was the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on the Nepalese community in Folkestone?”

It was conducted on the basis of determining the cost-of-living crisis and its effects on the beneficiaries of the Folkestone Nepalese Community Centre (FNC Centre). The main method of collecting the data was survey as a team we thought it would be the most efficient way into gaining insights of the beneficiaries. The beneficiaries often discussed their issues with the NHS and their dependants back home, so we tailored the survey to this and the relation of the cost-of-living crisis to this. There was a total of 103 participants in the survey.

The survey established that more than 60% of beneficiaries thought their spending habits of changed with a lot of the responses relating to how everything has become more expensive.

On the next stage we conducted face-to-face interviews. We interviewed 7 of the participants, focusing on 3 main themes. These were namely how the cost-of-living crisis affected them personally, how their access to the health services has been and their suggestions on how to improve

this and why some of the beneficiaries of the FNC Centre chose to support their dependants back home in Nepal.

The main conclusion drawn from the research was that the crisis has had a sizeable effect on the beneficiaries, both in regard to their finances and their mental health. This is despite the fact that many did not realise this until we defined cost-of-living to them.



**Organisation:** Forth Wall Folkestone CIC and the University of Kent

**Community Researchers:** Sarah Lloyd, Karen Pamplin Browne, Katie Lambert

**Contact:** [info@fourthwallfolkestone.co.uk](mailto:info@fourthwallfolkestone.co.uk) [www.FourthWallFolkestone.co.uk](http://www.FourthWallFolkestone.co.uk)

**Research Project Title:** What Cost Folks?

### Research Project Summary

What Cost Folks? looked at the impact of the cost of living crisis on the wellbeing and mental health of the Folkestone Community. The project aimed to open up dialogue and bridge the gap between the community and stakeholders, using creative research methods as a tool to create questions and understand issues that the community would like to address.

We facilitated art drop-ins, workshops and exhibitions at Fourth Wall Folkestone and in community cafes and the library over the last year. We've explored creative research methods, made artworks, collages, badges, written prescriptions for Folkestone, had creative discussions, made spreadsheets on walls, used Lego as a research tool, enjoyed chats over a cuppa and shared the research process on social media and in exhibitions at Fourth Wall Folkestone.

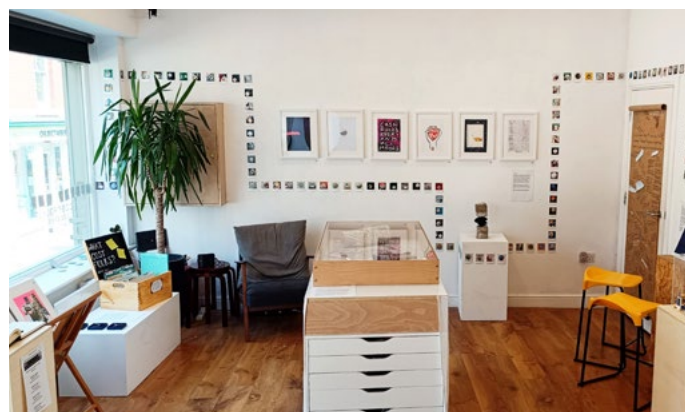
Our findings indicated a lack of access to and knowledge about mental health and wellbeing services and gaps between severe mental illness and secondary care.

We found that local council decisions directly impacted the local community with national politics directly influencing local issues. Housing, health and the environment were key issues raised by our community.

There is strong evidence that the arts support wellbeing, and Arts and culture are a core part of Folkestone's identity. The community highlighted the need for creative opportunities and more arts activity focussed on wellbeing.

Fourth Wall Folkestone requires further funding to enable us to carry on exploring creative action research methods in order to influence positive systemic change in arts and mental health.

<https://fourthwallfolkestone.co.uk/community-participatory-action-research-project/>





**Organisation: Home-Start Portsmouth**

**Community Researcher: Alison Bond**

**Research Lead: Gail Mann**

**Contact: [alisonb@hsportsmouth.org.uk](mailto:alisonb@hsportsmouth.org.uk)**

**Research Project Title: Is the current cost of living making a difference to the health and happiness of Portsmouth families?**

### Research Project Summary

I am researching the question 'Is the current cost of living making a difference to the health and happiness of Portsmouth families'. For the purposes of this project 'family' is being defined by one or more parents/carers with one or more children 18 or younger living with them. Health has 3 categories, physical, emotional and mental.

This CPAR project focuses on the voices of the community being heard and findings from the research resulting in action. It aims to bridge any gaps between those using services and those providing them and have lived experiences included when making policy and developing services. I designed a survey, posing both closed and open questions, which I shared in person with parents. I also carried out a 'walk and talk' interview to be transcribed as a case study and have participants for a focus group (tba).

This project is still in progress and my findings so far show:

- The majority of participants replied that both their health and happiness has been negatively affected.
- The categories of health can impact each other.
- Happiness should be considered when talking about health and well being.
- Parents are trying to protect their children and citing that as an additional stress.

*"worried if I have enough money to feed and keep the house warm"*

*"my children are not directly affected, but they know Mum is trying her best and they seem to know when I worry"*

*"seeing the prices go up again is soul destroying"*



**Organisation:** Hope Portsmouth

**Community Researcher:** Juliet Gillespie

**Research Lead:** Gail Mann

**Contact:** [juliet@thekings.church](mailto:juliet@thekings.church)

**Research Project Title:** The effect of the Cost of Living Crisis on the over 60's

### Research Project Summary

I chose this topic because while volunteering at the Foodbank, I noticed that there were not only young families coming in, but also older people, which led me to the question how the older generation is coping in this financial climate. Some clients may have lost their husbands, wives or partners, which may have added to the financial burden, loneliness and lack of support.

The method of research I used was conducted through interviews and some of the interviewees were Food bank clients as well as volunteers.

The reason I chose this method of research is because people over 60 may not be natural digital citizens and I also realised that engaging online could create a barrier and it may not be comfortable to engage in that way. I wanted people to feel empowered to tell their stories, to give them a voice, to let them know that they are heard and not forgotten.

While conducting the interviews, I noticed some common themes emerging.

Things like financial struggles, mental and physical health, loneliness and even concerns about their grown up families. Some people were even unaware of the help or assistance that was available to them because they have never faced the struggles they are facing now.

It would be good to connect the different agencies with the people that need the help and also to raise an awareness about the different struggles people are facing.



**Organisation:** Hope Portsmouth

**Community Researcher:** Mazikeen Smith

**Research Lead:** Gail Mann

**Contact:** [Maze@thekings.church](mailto:Maze@thekings.church)

**Research Project Title:** How is the cost of living affecting education and social development in children aged 5 to 12 years old

### Research Project Summary

The primary objective of this research was to identify how the cost of living is affecting our communities and identifying solutions going forward to improve our local and national communities.

What I discovered during my research over the last 12 months are as followed:

- How the cost of living affects educational needs such as travel, expenditure, community engagement and focusing within school.
- How the cost of living affects social development such as communicating effectively, psychoeducation, third party workshops, achievement goals, friendships and relationships.
- How the cost of living affects physical health such as healthy eating, better nutrition and overall well being.

I gathered my information through face to face interviews, community groups, research hub's, tackling poverty meetings, foodbank session's, online survey forms and phone calls. I made sure the community was at the heart of my research. Their voices echo through every word I have written from their perspectives and what they are going through.

This research is so vastly important as this generation sets us up for many generations to come. They currently are fighting for survival instead of being able to thrive as a community, city and country. Listening to the voices of the people and providing solutions will promote economic growth. We can transform society together and build a better world for children to thrive.



**Organisation:** Independent Lives

**Community Researchers:** Polly Bishop, Gareth Shepherd, Cara Redlich

**Research Lead:** Dom Goodeve

**Contact:** [info@independentlives.org](mailto:info@independentlives.org)

**Research Project Title:** Pressure Points: Experiences of Cost-of-Living on Disabled People and Carers in Sussex

### Research Project Summary

Our research is focussed on disabled people and carers in Sussex. The project has been developed by Independent Lives, a user-led disability charity.

The research focus not only encompasses participants themselves, but the processes and structures on which the research is based. As such, the research team felt that it was important to include the voices and input of disabled people and carers. From the outset, members of the disability community were invited by the research team to form a steering group. We have all since met at regular intervals to discuss ways in which the research could best be developed.

We launched a survey to collect experiences of the cost-of-living amongst disabled people and carers in Sussex. These were followed up with filmed interviews resulting in the creation of a short film.

As a result of our research, we have found that:

- disabled people and carers have been forced into making dire decisions: Heating, eating or care.
- how there were few options available to participants, often contributing to them feeling trapped.
- participants often highlighted how they were 'surviving, not thriving'.
- participants were suffering the consequences of the cost-of-living crisis, with devastating impact on their mental health.

We also asked research participants for their views on what changes could or should be made to enable disabled people and carers to better navigate the cost-of-living crisis. This resulted in a wide range of suggestions and recommendations which have been included in our final report.





**Organisation:** Oxford Community Action and Healthwatch Oxfordshire

**Community Researchers:** Mujahid Hamidi, Hassan Sabrie

**Contact:** [veronica.barry@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk](mailto:veronica.barry@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk) [info@oxfordcommunityaction.org](mailto:info@oxfordcommunityaction.org)

**Research Project Title:** “I really feel the kindness of strangers” community views on food and the cost of living

## Research Project Summary

Community researchers from Oxford Community Action chose to explore community voices around cost of living and food provision – building on the experiences of their food delivery service in East Oxford serving 350 people a week. Working with Healthwatch Oxfordshire, community members and two other local food distribution services, Oxford Mutual Aid and Waste2Taste, they explored impact of cost of living and what could better support community members.

With community members, we designed a survey, shared via WhatsApp. 170 people gave their views. We wrote a report and made a film to bring people’s voices to speak to decision makers in their own words.

## Research Findings

People said the cost of living meant increased bills, worry about money and making ends meet.

Getting food support helps with:

- **Cost of living** – help with saving money, feeding family
- **Community**- meeting people and ‘giving back’
- **Convenience** – food access, choice and cultural preference

- **Health and mental health** – reducing isolation, worry and support with health

*“makes me feel that I matter to other people in the community”*

*“It’s impacted my mental health as I’m struggling to afford things me and my family need”*

*“With my increased bills, I’d have to choose between feeding my family and heating our home”*

*“Basically it’s about money!”*

## Next steps:

- Access more support and advice about managing the cost of living.
- Set up a community food growing project – sharing support and skills
- Bring what we have heard to decision makers to identify and guide better support for our communities



**Organisation:** Recapture Life CIC

**Community Researchers:** Lesley Barton (Lead), Katie Dodds, Jane Ward

**Contact:** [lesley@recapturelife.co.uk](mailto:lesley@recapturelife.co.uk)

**Research Project Title:** The effect of the Cost of Living Crisis for people with Dementia

### Research Project Summary

Our research question is - How does the Cost of Living Crisis affect people with a dementia diagnosis and their carers and family.

To get a broad response to our research question we firstly carried out a focus group and then developed a survey and held individual interviews. The Team took the questionnaires to dementia groups and helped responders to complete the forms. We also shared the questionnaires with members of NHS teams and other organisations as well as posting the survey online and encouraged people to complete this through social media. Our survey questions included questions about the cost of care, shopping, transport, social life, heating, holidays and the cost of routine health checks. We also asked demographics, such as age, nationality, carer or person with a diagnosis and location.

We completed 6 interviews and the questions were based upon the financial concerns now and for the future, how this would influence their choices now and what they would like policy makers and stakeholders to know.

Our main findings from the research identified that not only were people cutting back with their spending in general terms and missing out on social interaction, but the main impact was on the emotional wellbeing of the carers and people with the diagnosis. This influenced their decisions about paying for support now and concerns about what the future would hold for them, emotionally and financially. We also found that there were other major impacts for those people with Young Onset Dementia, such as concerns about not being able to continue working, mortgages, their children and the emotional strain this puts on the whole family.



**Organisation:** St. Vincent & the Grenadines 2nd Generation (SV2G)

**Community Researchers:** Jacqueline Roberts (Lead), Jenni Phillips, Judy McDowall

**Contact:** [office@sv2g.org.uk](mailto:office@sv2g.org.uk)

**Research Project Title:** The Impact of the Cost of living Crises on the African and Caribbean Community in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire

## Research Project Summary

### Research Question

In what ways are the experiences of African and Caribbean residents in High Wycombe during the cost-of-living crisis interconnected with pre-existing health and wellbeing concerns, as well as obstacles to accessing support within the community?

### Research Summary

This research study, conducted between October and December 2023, aimed to investigate how the COL crisis has affected the African and Caribbean community in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire. Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies were utilised to collect data from our local African and Caribbean community residing in High Wycombe. An anonymous questionnaire was co-produced, featuring open-ended and non-leading questions. Quantitative data was complemented by focus groups and a one-to-one interview to identify common trends and provide a comprehensive understanding of the findings.

Through extensive data analysis, the study aimed to discern correlations between the rising cost of living and health indicators. Our inquiry delved into the underlying reasons for these health problems, exploring factors such as knowledge gaps regarding healthy habits, communication barriers with healthcare providers, and difficulties navigating the healthcare system. Financial constraints may have also led individuals to opt for cheaper, but often less nutritious, food options. Furthermore, we investigated whether the economic fallout from the pandemic, directly impacted people's health and overall quality of life. We identified barriers to seeking help and highlighted the importance of addressing these barriers to facilitate access to wider necessary resources. We recognised that health problems not only diminish well-being but also exacerbate other issues, potentially forming a vicious cycle of poor health outcomes.



**Organisation:** Wellsbourne Healthcare CIC

**Community Researchers:** Lucy Mitchell, Keith Turner

**Research Lead:** Liza Bowen

**Contact:** [lucy.mitchell30@nhs.net](mailto:lucy.mitchell30@nhs.net) [turner.keith@talktalk.net](mailto:turner.keith@talktalk.net) [lizabowen1@nhs.net](mailto:lizabowen1@nhs.net)

**Research Project Title:** Impact of the cost-of-living crisis on health and opportunity in the communities of Manor Farm, Bristol Estate and Whitehawk in East Brighton

## Research Project Summary

Equal access to good healthcare, housing and education and support which allows individuals to reach their full potential is the mark of a civilized society. This study aims to explore the effects of the cost of living crisis on people living in the Manor Farm, Bristol Estate and Whitehawk areas of East Brighton. These are areas of deprivation, already experiencing health inequalities. When basic needs are not being met, what are the implications for future opportunities in life?

Our research questions were:

- 1. What are the local experiences of the cost of living crisis?**
- 2. How has the cost of living crisis affected health in these communities?**
- 3. What are the concerns for the future in these communities?**
- 4. What support in the local community has helped?**

This research used both quantitative and qualitative methods. We circulated a survey in person to local community groups and via text message through Wellsbourne Healthcare CIC GP practice. The survey included free text responses, adding rich qualitative data. A focus group was conducted with four community members and thematic analysis used to identify patterns from the qualitative data.

## Research Findings

We received 211 completed surveys. Since the cost of living crisis 89% said they had been forced to change shopping and eating habits, 84% reported feeling more worried, and 76% said that it had affected their hopes for the future. Themes emerging from the qualitative work included deterioration of health and mental wellbeing, feelings of shame, and inability to realise short- and long-term aspirations.



# CPAR Partners





# Notes



We would like to express our thanks to everyone who has contributed to this event.



Contact: [england.publichealthschools.se@nhs.net](mailto:england.publichealthschools.se@nhs.net)