Ripples to Waves progress 2026/27 – Key message no longer ripples, now ripple waves to tidal waves!

Progress updates provided by Cambridgeshire, Peterborough, Suffolk, Essex, Norfolk, Luton, Central Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire (8 LA's)

The ripple to wave video showing our commitments can be found here: *Over a Brew – Association of Directors of Adult Social Services Eastern Region*

Wave 1 – Championing coproduction: Understanding the value of coproduction, using the right language, and involving people with lived experience in identifying barriers and solutions.

Cambridgeshire

- The council has **funded a Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Coproduction Facilitator role** (started November 2025) to support the involvement of the survivor voice in improving services across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.
- The council has a **coproduction action plan and has refreshed the coproduction information on its internal and external webpages.**

Peterborough

- Is actively **embracing the principles of Gloriously Ordinary Lives Coproduction Programme**, recognising that people with lived experience are experts in their own lives and should be central to shaping services and information.
- Has worked alongside people with lived experience to **develop and embed the Gloriously Ordinary Language approach** across Adult Social Care
- People who use services, carers and staff have helped the council **to identify barriers caused by professional jargon and complex information.**
- Together, **documents have been redesigned and reviewed,** information sheets and web content to make them clearer, easier to understand and more accessible.
- **Strengthened the principle that people with lived experience are experts by experience** and should be involved in shaping how the council communicate and provide information.
- Supporting a wider **cultural shift towards more inclusive, person-centred communication** across Adult Social Care.

Suffolk

- Suffolk ASC has a **coproduced framework** in place. There is a general willingness and enthusiasm to coproduce more, better, and earlier.
- In recognition for this, the council has **agreement to recruit to two posts in ASC to support co-production.**
- **Identified ASC coproduction Champions** across service areas to support ongoing coproduction with the Care Market

- Continued to take opportunities to embed coproduction principles where possible, and there have been some early results in pockets across ASC but **recognition that more work is needed** to extend depth and breadth and bring into a consistent embedded offer across ASC where possible (recognising restrictions to not being able to coproduce everything)

Essex

- There is a designated team, **the Customer Experience Team, who are dedicated to embedding the persons' voice** into Adult Social Care assurance, improvement and transformation activity
- **Coproduction and lived experience are embedded across most major Adult Social Care Programmes**, including Meeting of Minds, Collaborate Essex, strategy development and service improvement initiatives
- **Partnerships** with CLEAR (formerly Healthwatch Essex) and SUMMIT enable Adult Social Care to deliver the quarterly Collaborate Essex forum and local boards. Collectively, **engaged with 500+ people** through wider lived experience engagement, alongside 100+ regular contributors and 30+ partner organisations.
- **Diverse participation is actively encouraged** through accessible and inclusive engagement methods, application of the Accessible Information Standard (AIS), and engagement with a wide range of communities including carers, autistic people, people with learning disabilities, sensory impairments, physical disabilities and mental health needs.
- The Adult Social Care practice model, Inclusive Essex, promotes the **use of inclusive language and strength-based approaches** across Adult Social Care.

Norfolk

- **Coproduction is a core** part of how the council designs, improves and evaluates services
- Through established mechanisms such as the Making It Real Board, Learning Disability Partnership Board and Autism Partnership Board, **people with lived experience, carers and community representatives are involved in shaping priorities,** identifying barriers and influencing solutions
- Developed a **coproduction toolkit and supporting framework** to help staff understand the principles of coproduction, use consistent language and involved people at the earliest stages of service development
- **Coproduction embedded within the wider transformation programme**, adult social care strategy and the Real Care Deal, ensuring lived experience directly informs decision-making

Luton

- **Established and embedded the Our Say Forum**, providing a regular mechanism for people who draw on care and support to influence Adult Social Care priorities and developments.
- **People who draw on care and support now co-chair forums and play a more active** role in setting agendas and facilitating discussions.
- **Co-production has become a recognised approach** across strategy development, recruitment, commissioning and service improvement activity.
- **Coproduction embedded within the strengthening adult social care improvement programme examples of end-to-end co-production include** review of the Direct Payments policy and training and commissioning of a new carers service.
- **People who draw on care and support** have also been trained in recruitment practice and now actively recruit staff alongside us.

Central Bedfordshire

- **Developed, launched and embedded a Co-Production Framework** to strengthen workforce understanding and implementation of co-production.
- Development of **'Co-Production Champions'** ensuring all services across Adult Social Care have a staff campion, who can help their colleagues to utilise co-production within their own service areas with those with lived experience, to create positive and meaningful change, or implement a new process, or idea
- **Supported participation in the regional 'Over a Brew' programme**, bringing together people with lived experience, carers and professionals to explore Care Equity and improve access to support.
- **Expanded the Talk to Adult Social Care (TASC) Forum**, enabling people with lived experience, carers and professionals to influence service development and strategic priorities.
- **Established a co-produced Direct Payments Working Group** to identify barriers, improve understanding and shape future policy and practice.

Hertfordshire

Hertfordshire has **embedded co-production** across Adult Care Services through **commissioned User Voice arrangements** for Learning Disability, Mental Health, Autism, Older People, Physical Disability and Carers. **People with lived experience are involved** in identifying priorities, shaping service specifications, contributing to strategy development, and influencing commissioning decisions.

Examples include:

- The **co-production of the Hertfordshire Carers Strategy, Learning Disability and Mental Health** engagement programs, and **regular User Voice forums** that gather feedback directly from residents.

- **Easy Read documents are routinely produced** to support accessibility and inclusive participation, ensuring people can understand proposals and contribute meaningfully.

Wave 2 – Reward and recognition: Developing policies and procedures, supporting people to engage and build skills and knowledge, and recognising people with lived experience and carers as experts.

Cambridgeshire

- The council has an **active coproduced Recognition Policy** which has been used throughout the year.
- Council staff continue to be **undertaking coproduction training** with local coproduction experts, SUN Network Cambridgeshire and Peterborough CIC
- **Appreciative Enquiry training has been offered** to council staff and Cambridgeshire system partners (in November 2025, February 2026, and April 2026) with over 100 people undertaking the training.
- **Ripple Effect Mapping training has been offered** to council staff and Cambridgeshire system partners through the Appreciative Enquiry Larning Network (March 2026)
- The council has contributed to the **co-development of Principles for Reward, Recognition and Support for Involving People and Communities in the East of England guidance**. The guidance was supported by funding from the regional NHSE team and the Patients Association.

Peterborough

- **Recognise that people with lived experience, carers and community members bring valuable expertise, insight, and challenge to the council work.** Contributions from people help the council to improve services and ensure that decisions are informed by real experiences and outcomes.
- Over the past year, the council has **continued to promote the importance of recognising and valuing people's time, knowledge, and involvement in coproduction activities.** The council is reviewing and updating the recognition guidance to ensure it remains fair, inclusive, and accessible, and that it reflects best practice in recognising the contribution of people who participate in shaping services.
- The review has helped strength the approach to reward and recognition, provide greater clarity for staff and participations, and ensure that people feel welcomed, respected, and valued when working alongside the council to improve Adult Social Care

Suffolk

- Not progressed as yet but the two new posts will be challenged with progressing this.

Essex

- **People with lived experience are recognised as experts** and at times, **contribute to strategic decision-making**. Recent examples include the coproduced Carers and Autism strategies. Review of Dementia Strategy is underway with people living with dementia as well as carers.
- **People with lived experience representation is embedded within some governance structures**, including current participation in Adult Social Care "Practice Governance Board" structured meetings and discussions
- Participation of those with lived experience is valued and supported by a **Rewards and Recognition Policy**
- **Opportunities exist for people with lived experience to influence** strategic decisions, service reviews and improvement priorities
- The people's voices and lived **experiences are captured and discussed through quality assurance and performance meetings, enabling a triangulated understanding** of feedback from lived experience surveys, compliments and complaints data

Norfolk

- Norfolk recognises that people with lived experience and unpaid carers bring **expertise that is as valuable as professional experience**
- Reviewing wider coproduction arrangements, and are **considering how to further support participation, remove barriers and strength recognition** of lived experience contributions
- Coproduction toolkit and engagement approaches **promote working as equal partners**, valuing people's knowledge, experience and insights in shaping services
- Committed to developing approaches that support people to **build skills, confidence and influence within co-production activity**

Luton

- **Developing a suite of co-produced learning modules to support people who draw on care and support** and carers to build knowledge and confidence for involvement opportunities.
- **People who draw on care and support receive the same recruitment training as council colleagues** before participating in interview panels.
- **Carers involved in procurement activity** received the same training and information as council officers, helping them participate confidently as equal partners in decision-making.
- **A Reward and Recognition policy has been in place for adult social care since 2024,** and the council continues to explore how best to formally recognise contributions whilst ensuring opportunities remain accessible and inclusive.

Central Bedfordshire

- Adult Social Care has worked in partnership with people with lived experience and carers to co-produce a **Remuneration (Reward and Recognition) Policy.** The policy recognises the value, expertise and contribution that people bring to co-production activities, helping to reduce barriers to participation and ensuring opportunities are accessible, fair, consistent and inclusive.
- A **co-produced induction programme has been developed within Older People's Day Services**, with people who draw on support playing a key role in the design and delivery of training for new colleagues. This helps embed lived experience, person-centred practice and authentic insight from the start of employment.
- People with lived experience have been central to the co-production of the **new Connect to Work offer**. This has included the creation of training videos that translate mandatory training content into more accessible language, supported by practical visual demonstrations to improve understanding and engagement.

Hertfordshire

- The Council **recognises people with lived experience as experts by experience.**
- Through **co-production support budgets**, expenses policies and commissioned User Voice contracts, **residents are supported** to attend meetings, engagement events and consultation activities.
- **Reasonable adjustments, transport** support, **Easy Read** materials and **advocacy** support are provided where required.
- **Participants are acknowledged for their expertise and are increasingly involved** in presentations, recruitment activity, strategy development and service reviews.

Wave 3 – Coproducing with communities: Working with lead members and councillors to strengthen coproduction within local communities and supporting communities to become more involved.

Cambridgeshire

- **A coproduction development session was held with elected members** of the councils' Adults and Health Committee (December 2025)
- The council has undertaken coproduction on a wide range of projects including:
  - **Co-designing a future day opportunities model** for people with learning disabilities and autistic people in Cambridgeshire
  - **Coproducing changes to transitions from Children's Services to Adult Social Care Services** in Cambridgeshire to inform the - work of the council's Transformation Improvement Board
  - **Coproducing a prevention seed-funding approach** with local communities.

Peterborough

- **Work in partnership with local communities through the Partnership Boards**, ensuring that people with lived experience, carers, community groups, and professionals work together to influence the design and improvements of adult social care services.
- **Strengthened the links with the voluntary and community sector** through organisations such as Peterborough Council for Voluntary Services (PCVS) and local charities, including COMPAS, helping the council to reach communities that may not normally engage with statutory services.
- Through participation in the Armed Forces Covenant, the council has **developed relationships with welfare personnel at RAF Wittering through the Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Coordinator and Armed Forces Covenant Champion, Councillor Jason McNally,** to explore how the council can improve access to information, advice, support, and community connections for serving personnel, veterans, and their families.
- The work has demonstrated the council's commitment to **taking services and conversations into communities, building trusted relationships, and co-producing solutions** with people based on their lived experience and local knowledge.

Suffolk

- **Examples of coproduction within ASC are shared with the Cabinet member** via regular Director briefings and good new stories.
- Less confidence in how this is taken forward into communities supporting people to be more involved, however, looking at identifying opportunities to join this up e.g. exploring the use of MP Senior Fairs to promote face to face dementia support.

Essex

- Adult social care has **strong partnerships** with CLEAR, SUMMIT, VoiceAbility and a range of community organisations, enabling **diverse communities** to **influence adult social care priorities.**
- **Collaborate Essex brings together** residents, carers, providers, voluntary sector organisations, commissioners and adult social care colleagues to shape improvements collectively
- **Lived experience surveys and engagement activity have broadened participation** from a wide range of cohorts and communities
- **Community insight gathered through engagement activity has informed** strategies, commissioning discussions, service reviews and improvement priorities, including work relating to carers, autism and service design
- **People with lived experience from a range of communities**, including carers, people with disabilities, autistic people with long-term health conditions, have helped shape adult social care priorities through engagement and co-production activity. This is thanks to working together with partners in the system.

Norfolk

- **Community involvement is a key** feature of Norfolk's approach
- Through the **Making It Real Board,** community engagement activity, partnership boards, Healthwatch and wider voluntary and community sector relationships, work with residents and communities to influence priorities and service development
- Adult social care strategy places a **strong emphasis on prevention, neighbourhood working, community capacity and strengthening local relationships**
- Increasingly seeking to **move from consultation with communities to coproducing solutions** with communities, recognising that local knowledge, assets and networks are essential to improving outcomes and promoting independence.

Luton

- **Co-designed the I Care Campaign with unpaid carers**, using real stories, images and experiences to help carers identify themselves and access support.
- Worked with community groups, carers forums, VCSE organisations and partner networks to **shape and distribute campaign materials.**
- **Established a co-production steering group for the new Adult Social Care Strategy,** bringing together residents, community organisations and professionals.
- **The lead member for adult social care** worked alongside officers and residents to shape the new Carer's Service, through extensive community engagement, with carers influencing service design, specification development and procurement decisions.
- **Maintained and strengthened the Carers Forum and Carers Partnership Board** to ensure there was appropriate representation of carers, providing ongoing opportunities for carers to influence strategic priorities, and monitor outcome delivery.

Central Bedfordshire

- **Co-produced Direct Payments project** has actively engaged people who use Direct Payments, carers and family members in discussions about how services and processes can better promote choice, control, independence and flexible support arrangements.
- **Feedback from Talk Adult Social Care forum members and community participants** continues to shape Adult Social Care priorities, with a particular focus on improving access, reducing complexity and ensuring services reflect the realities of people's lives.
- **The lead member for adult social care is actively engaged in both the older people's network and TASC** and also receives a monthly update on co-production activity across services.

Hertfordshire

- **Co-production is delivered through partnerships with community organisations** including Healthwatch Hertfordshire, advocacy providers and User Voice networks. Community-led engagement **enables seldom-heard groups and people living in rural communities to influence** service development.
- **Insights** from local forums, networking events, outreach activity and community conversations are **shared with commissioners, operational teams, senior leaders, and elected members.**
- This approach helps **ensure service improvements are informed by local experiences and community priorities.**

Wave 4: Encouraging self-reflection: Using the I/We Statements, being curious, gathering stories of change, and seeking support where challenges arise.

Cambridgeshire

- The council is a **member of a number of local coproduction peer networks** including the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Involvement and Participation Network and the Appreciative Enquiry Learning Network
- As part of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Involvement and Participation Network, **the council has been involved in working groups covering cultural system change; impact frameworks; and involvement, training, and support.**
- The council has **encouraged staff to take part in regional and national peer learning activities such as "Over a Brew."**

Peterborough

- As part of our Gloriously Ordinary Co-production Programme, **developed an approach to gathering and sharing stories of change.** This will help the council to understand the real impact of co-production on people's lives, services, and communities.
- **Working with people with lived experience, carers, and partners to identify meaningful ways of capturing outcomes and experiences.** These stories will support reflection, learning, and continuous improvement across Adult Social Care.

Suffolk

- **Hold regular practice sessions/workshops giving opportunities for self-reflection** within ASC including monthly "People at the heart of care" drop-in sessions.
- **Also worked with the wider care market to put in place a coproduction charter** to underpin the way the council works with the care market.

Essex

- **Lived experience feedback is routinely discussed** across Essex adult social care localities, creating opportunities for discussion and reflection in order to improve practice and adult social care delivery
- **All lived experience feedback is recorded and analysed to support the sharing of lessons learned**, best practice and continuous improvement across adult social care services
- **Feedback gathered through Collaborate Essex has influenced at least 19 projects and system changes,** helping to ensure lived experience informs actions and improvement
- **Adult social care is participating in a Making It Real pilot using the boardgame and** associated I and We Statements to support meaningful conversations and reflection with colleagues, people who draw on care and support, and carers
- **Coproduction initiatives actively create opportunities for residents to reflect** on what is working well, what needs to change, and whether improvements are making a difference

Norfolk

- Norfolk encourages a **culture of learning, reflection and continuous improvement**
- Transformation programme, Human Learning Systems approach, **coproduction framework and Real Care Deal all emphasise curiosity, listening, learning and adapting.**
- **Encourage teams to reflect** on how effectively lived experience has insights to improve future practice
- **Reviewing co-production arrangements to understand what is working,** where barriers remain and how to create simpler, more influential and inclusive coproduction for the future

Luton

- **Greater use of feedback loops and "You Said, We Did" approaches** across engagement and commissioning activity.
- **Development of the Our Say Charter and Terms of Reference** helped create ongoing opportunities to reflect on how power is shared and how decisions are made.
- **Adult Social Care Strategy development includes facilitated conversations** focused on understanding what is working well, what could be improved and what matters most to people who draw on care and support.
- **Increasing use of participant feedback, reflections and stories of change to inform future co-production activity.**
- **Continuing to discuss the importance of co-production and the Our Say Forum have become key mechanisms for encouraging reflection and continuous improvement**. People who draw on care and support are actively encouraged to challenge, advise and identify future priorities, with their experiences and recommendations treated as equal contributions alongside professional perspectives when shaping future work.

Central Bedfordshire

- **Feedback from Co-Production Week has helped Adult Social Care reflect** on involvement in decision-making, identify barriers to participation and shape future co-production activity.
- **Monthly people's stories are collated across services and shared** with Lead Members and senior leaders, helping to inform learning and workforce development.
- **The council's Quality Improvement Framework and audit programme are aligned to I Statements**, with audits incorporating the voice of the person and independent feedback to support learning and service improvement.

Hertfordshire

- Hertfordshire routinely **gathers** qualitative **feedback through monthly "Over a Brew"** sessions **and wider outreach activities**. These provide valuable opportunities to hear directly from people with lived experience, capture case studies and personal stories, and evidence the impact of co-production on individuals, services, and communities.
- **User Voice providers submit performance reports** containing themes, recommendations, and evidence of influence.
- **Services are encouraged to reflect on the I/We Statements** by considering how people were involved, what changed as a result, and where improvements are required.
- **Learning from engagement** activity, annual reviews, contract monitoring and co-production events is used to strengthen future practice and address barriers to participation.