



Community Health Champions Champions Project

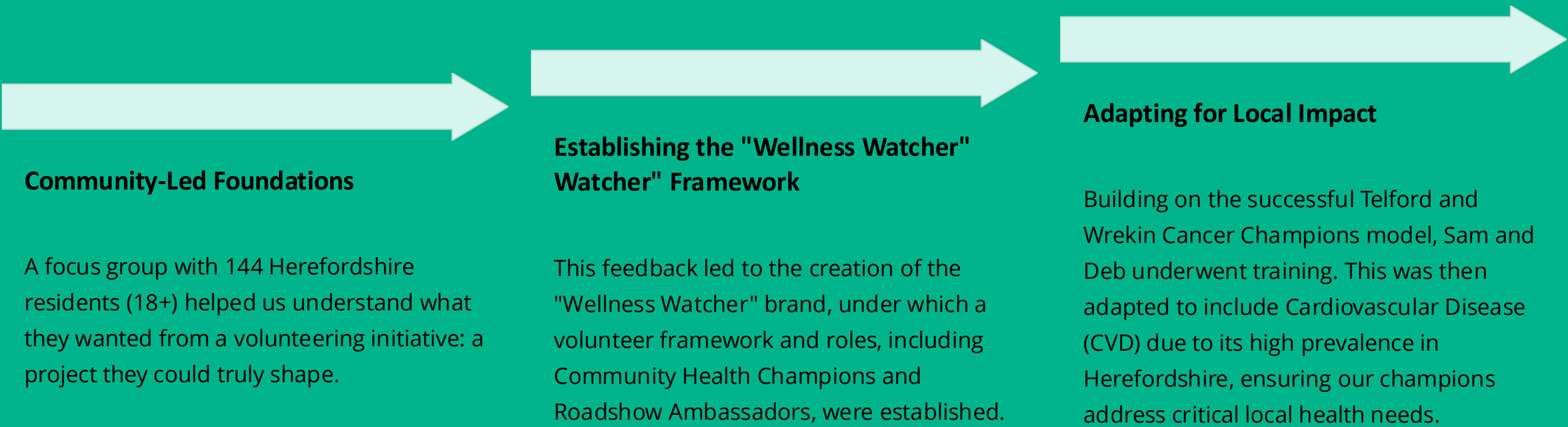
A pilot initiative funded through the Research Engagement Network via NHSE that ran until April 2025

Focusing on prevention and early diagnosis of cancer and cardiovascular disease through volunteer-led community engagement and roadshow events across Herefordshire



Development of Community Health Champions

Our Community Health Champions programme was carefully developed through a phased approach, ensuring it was rooted in community needs and adapted to local priorities.



This development process ensured the programme is responsive, relevant, and effective for the Herefordshire community.

What is a Community Health Champion?

Low Commitment

Volunteer role requiring minimal time investment

Non-Clinical

Sharing information with friends, family and community members

Community Reach

One champion trains, speaks to two people, who each speak to two more - creating exponential impact

What Have We Done So So Far?

Training Content:

- The role of a good community health champion
- History of cancer/CVD
- Signs and symptoms
- Risk factors
- Screening and local health checks
- Resources and helplines

26

People Trained

23 women (88%) and 3 men (12%)

5

Roadshows

With internal and external CHCs

5

Training Sessions



Roadshow Aims



Early Diagnosis

Contribute to diagnosing cancer in stages 1 & 2 and early detection of CVD



Understand Barriers

Identify why some individuals don't access universally available services



Increase Screening

Raise awareness in communities with low uptake



Share Feedback

Inform stakeholders to improve service provision



Roadshow Activities



Awareness Raising

Champions engaged communities across the county about early cancer screening and health checks

Interactive Approach

Used leaflets and props to engage people, listen to their stories, and discuss barriers

Personalised Support

Provided relevant signposting and additional support as needed

Collaborative Effort

Partnered with various agencies to maximize impact at each event

Roadshow #1: Old Market Hereford

All 9 people were given early cancer screening advice and some received leaflets. One person remembered their forgotten bowel screening test at home and committed to completing it.

22

January
2025

9

People
Engaged

9

Health Checks
Completed

Champions:

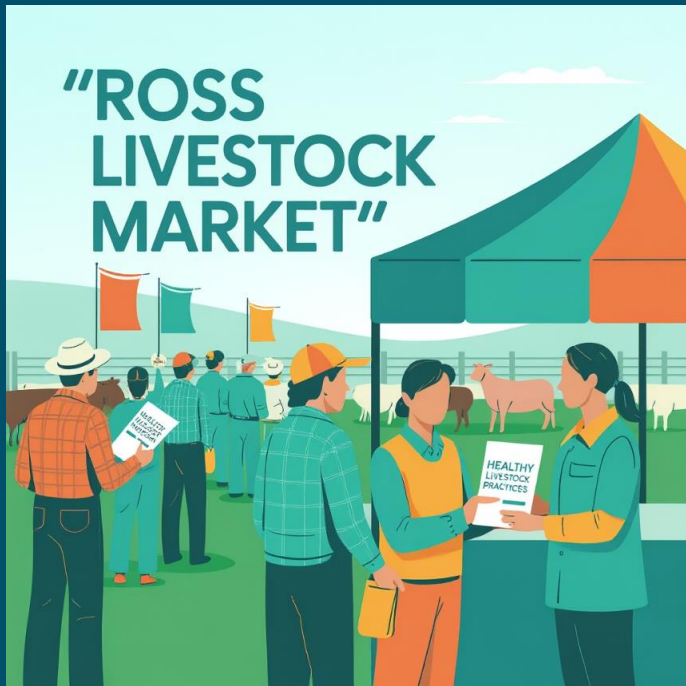
Sam, Deb with a pop up stand

Collaboration:

Taurus Health Checks, Talk Community



Roadshow #2: Ross Livestock Market



27

February

2025

10+

People

Engaged

"What I don't know won't hurt me"

Direct quote from one farmer at the event.

Champions: Sam, Toni, Deb

Collaboration: Lucy (Macmillan)

Most farmers reported good GP relationships and regular health checks. Some were already receiving cancer treatment.

One lady shared her story of late diagnosis due to a bad experience with her GP surgery.

Note: With over 100 farmers present but only a few engaged, this is not representative of the wider community.

" I haven't got time to do that"

The most popular response.

Roadshow #3: Much Birch Community Cafe

8

March
2024

Champions:

Sam, Amy with Chatty Van

Collaboration:

Taurus Healthcare

Engaging with the local farming community, we provided valuable insights on skin checks.

50+

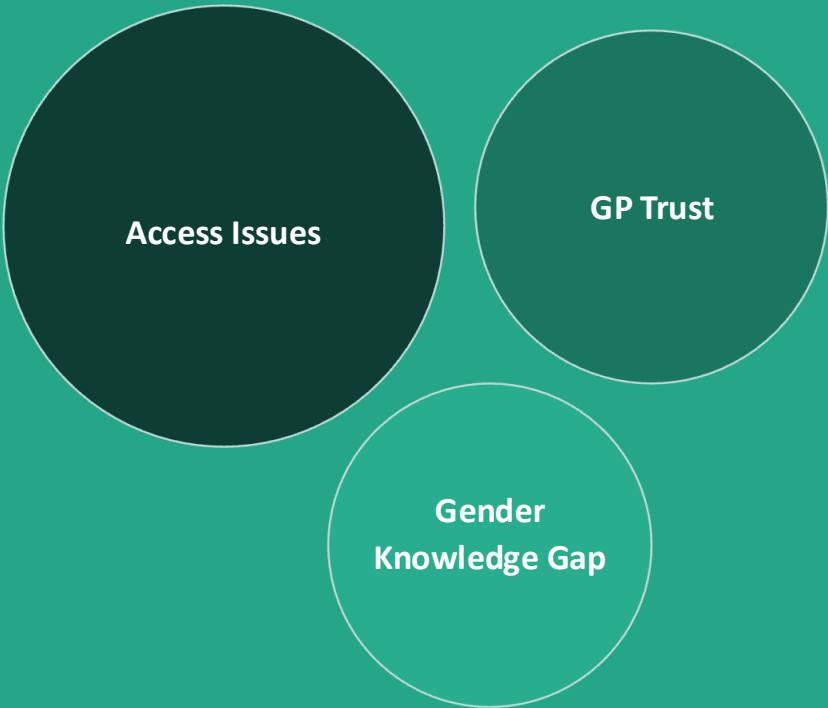
People engaged
with



15+

Health checks
completed

Barriers



Roadshow #4: Maylord's Wellbeing Event

22nd March

2025

30+ People

Engaged

Health Checks

Completed



Champions:

Deb,
Kim,
Toni,
Natalia

Collaborations:

- Talk Community – Healthy Lifestyles
- Taurus Health Checks
- Hereford Yoga
- Zumba
- Wellbeing stalls

Natalia was our first external CHC to participate in a roadshow, adding valuable new perspective to the team.

Roadshow #5: Kington Oak Wellbeing Events

2

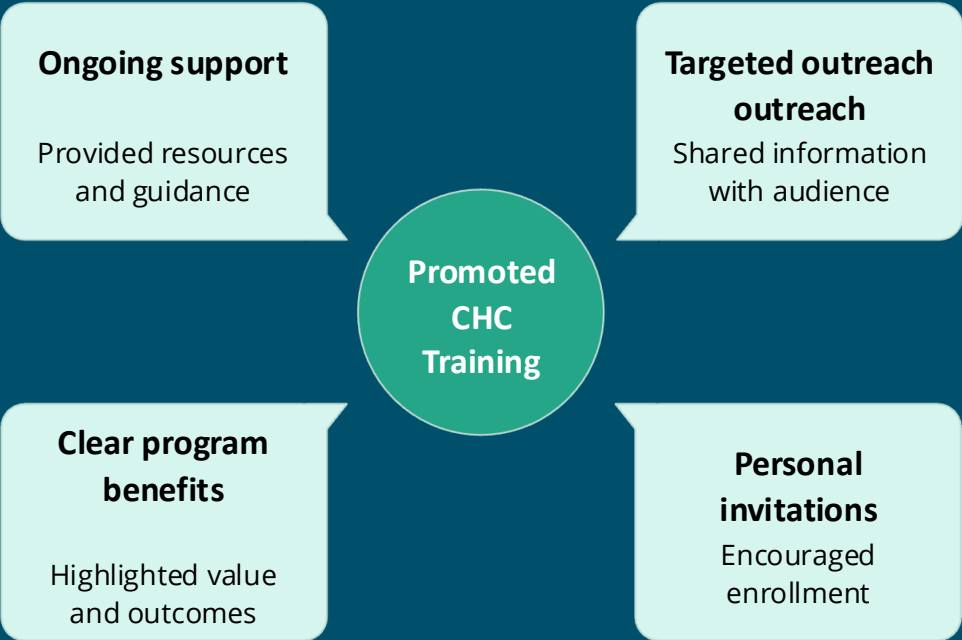
Events

January & April 2025

20+

People

Engaged



Champions:

Deb, Sam, Simone, Toni with Chatty Van

Collaborations:

- Talk Community – Healthy Lifestyles
- Dementia Matters
- Social Prescribers
- Chair Yoga
- Taurus Health Check



What Have We Learned? Barriers

Loss of trust

Negative experiences informing future choice

Positive interactions

Reports of early diagnosis and quick action

Health Literacy

Challenges understanding health information

Accessibility Issues

Digitization causing issues for some

Early themes emerging from the project

Keeping in Touch

Monthly Newsletters

- Upcoming training sessions
- Roadshow announcements
- Cancer and CVD awareness
- Local organisation highlights

Social Media

Regular Facebook posts and email updates

Collaboration post with partners

Online Support

Catch-up sessions for those who need support

1-1 sessions with CHC's to gather feedback and give support

Feedback Collection

Gathering CHC experiences

General engagement with our Chatty Van at various events

NEWSLETTER

CHAMPIONING HEALTHIER FUTURES IN OUR COMMUNITY

April 2025



WHAT IT MEANS TO LEAD WITH LOVE



What is #LeadWithLove?

Stress is everywhere—but what if the antidote was love? #LeadWithLove is a movement that promotes kindness, compassion, and Unconditional Positive Regard (UPR) in workplaces and daily life. By leading with love, we create environments where people feel valued, supported, and empowered to thrive.

Why It Matters

Stress affects mental health, productivity, and relationships. A culture of love and compassion can reduce stress, improve well-being, and create stronger, more connected communities.

How to Get Involved

- Practice Acts of Love: Small gestures, like active listening or offering support, can make a big impact.
- Support Self-Love: Prioritizing self-care helps us show up better for others.
- Share Your Journey: Use #LeadWithLove to inspire others with your acts of kindness.
- Access Free Resources: Explore stress management tools and guidance on fostering a culture of love.

The Power of Unconditional Positive Regard (UPR)

- Creates Psychological Safety: Employees feel safe to share ideas and collaborate.
- Enhances Communication: Encourages open, respectful conversations.
- Boosts Engagement: A positive culture leads to happier, more motivated teams.

Join the Movement

Commit to leading with love in your workplace and beyond. Share your story, support others, and be part of the change!

- Tag us @TheStressManagementSociety on LinkedIn & Instagram using #LeadWithLove
- Email us at info@stress.org.uk to share your story
- Access our free resources and stay updated by visiting our website www.stress.org.uk



OUR NEXT TRAINING SESSION

We are running more of our Community Health Champion training sessions and we would be grateful if you can spread the word so we can get as many people in Herefordshire trained. Our next session is:

Date: 20th May
Time: 11am – 2pm
Location: Halo
Bridge street Leominster

APRIL IS NATIONAL STRESS AWARENESS MONTH –

As we talked about in our training stress can be a risk factor to CVD and other health issues so, it is important to manage our stress levels.

Stress Awareness Month is an annual event observed every April run by The Stress Management Society, dedicated to increasing public awareness about the causes and cures of stress. This years theme is **#LeadWithLove**

WHAT'S IN THE NEWS

Ending Cervical Cancer by 2040: NHS England's Plan

NHS England has launched an ambitious plan to eliminate cervical cancer by 2040. The strategy focuses on three main actions: boosting HPV vaccinations for young people, increasing uptake of cervical screening (smear tests), and ensuring faster diagnosis and treatment when cancer is found.

While cervical cancer is highly preventable, around 2,800 people in England are still diagnosed each year. The NHS is working to make services more accessible—including self-sampling kits for home screening—and to reach underserved communities with targeted awareness and support.

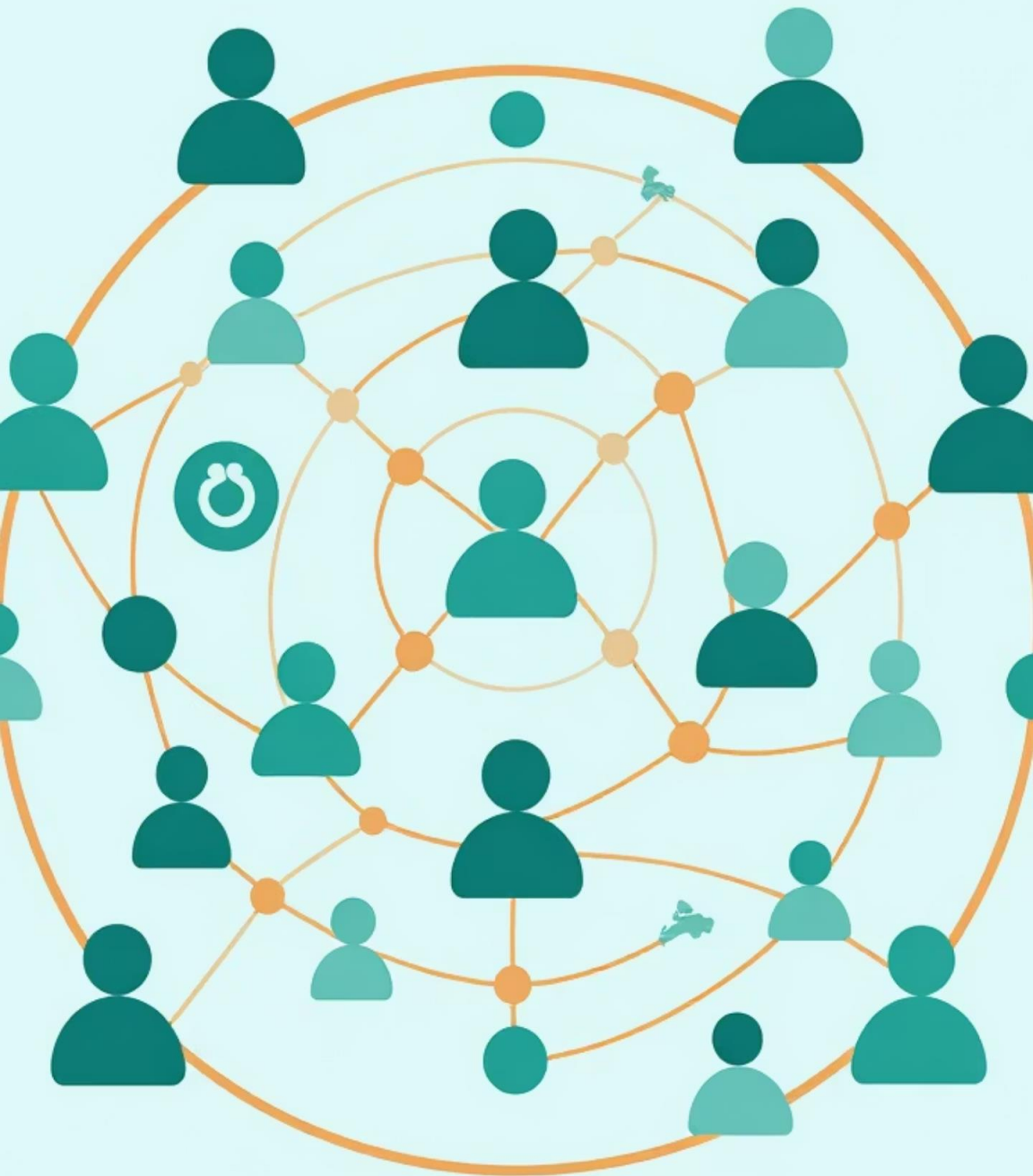
With the right action now, cervical cancer could become a disease of the past within our generation!

For a more detailed view access the plan here -> <https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/cervical-cancer-elimination-by-2040-plan-for-england/>

If you would like any additional information or support please get in touch. We are here to help as you talk to your community

 www.healthwatchherefordshire.co.uk

 info@healthwatchherefordshire.co.uk



What Have We Learned So Far...



Active Engagement

Percentage of CHCs actively participating



Unique Contacts

People reached who wouldn't have been otherwise

- One CHC has 10 feedback points, 4 of which are unique contacts
- Natalia has engaged in a roadshow (external CHC)
- 7 CHCs not feeding back or engaging in roadshows
- Some CHCs have not engaged at all since training

To improve engagement: Using Mailchimp to track email opens and creating a WhatsApp group for more direct communication

Addressing Challenges: Lessons and Solutions

While our previous findings highlighted areas for improvement in champion engagement and reach, we're actively implementing strategies to enhance our impact.

Previous Learning: Key Challenges

- **8% Active Engagement:** A small proportion of CHCs were actively participating in feedback.
- **Limited Unique Contacts:** Only 4 unique contacts were identified through CHC feedback, indicating potential for broader reach.
- **Non-Engagement:** Several CHCs did not engage after initial training, leading to missed opportunities.

Moving Forward: Targeted Solutions

- **Improved Communication:** Utilising Mailchimp to track email opens and engagement, ensuring messages are read.
- **Direct Support Channels:** Creating a dedicated WhatsApp group for CHCs to foster real-time communication and support.
- **Tailored Outreach:** Developing more personalised follow-up strategies for CHCs to address individual needs and encourage participation.

These actionable steps aim to build on successes and overcome identified limitations, ensuring a more robust and effective Community Health Champions programme.

Benchmarking: Shropshire, Telford , Wrekin and Powys Cancer Champions Champions

Our Progress So Far (Herefordshire)

Our Community Health Champions project is still in its early stages, building momentum and gathering valuable insights from our roadshow activities.

CHC's Trained

26

Number of people trained to date (Jan 25 - July 25)

Active Engagement



8%

Percentage of CHC's actively participating

We are focused on improving engagement and expanding our reach within the community.

Learning from an Established Model

The Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin Cancer Champions provide a valuable benchmark, demonstrating the potential for growth and sustained impact over time.

2

Years Running

Project Duration

300

Total Volunteers

Across the area

30

Active Volunteers

Regularly Engaged

This comparison helps us understand the typical lifecycle of such initiatives and sets realistic goals for the future expansion of our own champion network.

Limitations

Volunteer Engagement

Challenges in working with and maintaining volunteer participation

Varied Motivations

Different reasons for undertaking training affecting long-term commitment

Rural Challenges

Geographic isolation and wider determinants of health

Project Infancy

Early stage with limited measurable outcomes as shown previously it takes time to grow a sustainable model



Positives



Successful Training

Training sessions in Hereford city and surrounding villages well-received

Effective Roadshows

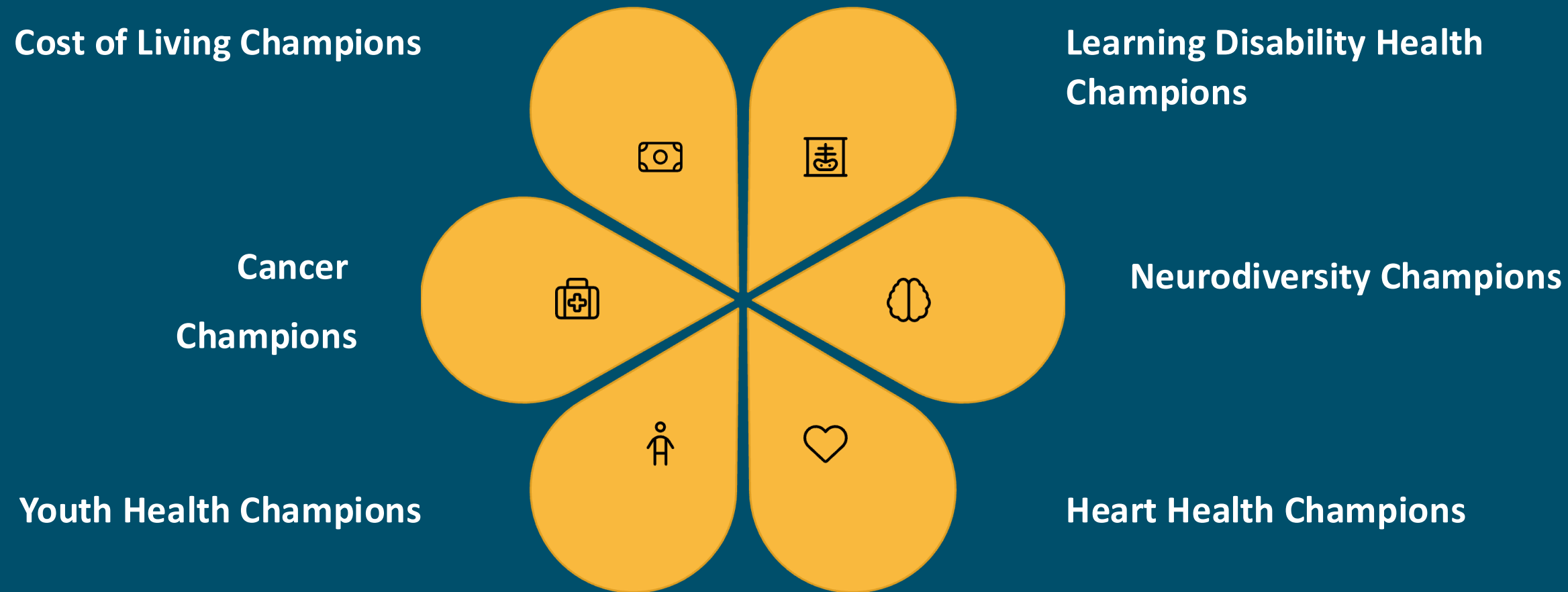
Numerous meaningful interactions across diverse communities

Community Diversity

Reached agricultural, city, and rural populations

The project has successfully established a foundation for community-led health promotion across Herefordshire's diverse communities.

Future Versions of the Model



Potential for paid roles as part of community power charity

Learning Disability Community Champions



We had the opportunity to engage with "Hear Our Voices" and speak to a wide range of people in the LD community

Individuals in this community are interested in health and helping to encourage others to think about their health

Top 3 Health Concerns in the LD Community:



Health Checks

Chosen as first priority



Healthy Weight

In top 3 priorities



Epilepsy

In top 3 priorities

Cancer Champions



Focused Approach

An adaptation of the CHC cancer/CVD model with specific focus on cancer awareness and prevention

Specialised Training

Deeper knowledge of cancer signs, symptoms, and screening programmes

Targeted Outreach

Engaging communities with low cancer screening uptake

Building on the success of the CHC model to create more specialised community champions focused on cancer awareness.

Enabling a research ready community

Part of this work has also incorporated spreading the awareness of what health & care research is and the importance of getting involved.

Why public understanding & involvement in health & care research matters:

- Makes research relevant to real lives and priorities.
- Improves quality & safety through lived-experience insights.
- Builds trust and counters misinformation via transparency.
- Boosts participation and diversity, reducing health inequalities.
- Speeds uptake into practice—co-designed findings are more acceptable.
- Delivers better value for public money by reducing waste.
- Strengthens ethics and accountability in decision-making.

These conversations were based on the partner project REACH framework for this funding, developed in Worcestershire.



Building Healthier Communities, Together

Our journey to empower communities through health champions is just beginning. We extend our sincere gratitude to all our champions, partners, and participants who have contributed to this vital work.

Together, we can continue to break down barriers and foster a more connected, healthier Herefordshire.

For further information or to get involved, please contact us.

info@communitypower.org.uk