

'It's our future': Childcare in Glasgow East

The final report of the CHANGE: Childcare and Nurture
Glasgow East pathfinder project (2016-2020)



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“Childcare is good ‘cause it means I don’t get too stressed and the children get to do things I couldn’t do with them”

Grandparent

“The wee one gets to interact with other children, staff can’t do enough, they’re brilliant”

Local parent



The beginnings

Childcare in Scotland is complex and disjointed. Families report difficulty in knowing about and being able to access care that suits their needs throughout their children's childhood and that is affordable to most families' budget. Transition between different stages is not seamless and registered childcare often finishes abruptly at the end of primary school. Transformation in the extension of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) is underway but this only represents one part of a system in need of significant reform.

In early 2014, Children in Scotland, with the support of the Scottish Council for Development & Industry (SCDI) established the independent Commission for Childcare Reform. Consulting across Scotland, it looked at evidence from here and other countries to develop advice on the key features of an excellent system of childcare provision and offer proposals for how that system might be obtained. Reporting in 2015, the Commission outlined recommendations for meeting Scotland's childcare challenge. It made some key observations and recommendations about the scale of the change needed. As an organisation focused on challenging inequalities for children and their families, Children in Scotland wanted to test how to make these improvements in communities where there was a low number of registered childcare services, in what childcare researchers termed a 'childcare desert'

The Commission's report commented:

*"We believe that childcare can be a powerful means of advancing Scotland's equality and anti-poverty ambitions. When childcare is of high-quality and affordable for all, it enables female labour market participation and enables all parents to work or study if they wish. When high-quality childcare is only accessible to, and affordable by, relatively well-off families, it can exacerbate poverty and other inequalities. We understand too that high-quality childcare must be understood as part of a wider set of supports to families and communities and should not be seen in isolation."*¹

Children in Scotland set about establishing a project to test what was needed. The following recommendations from the Commission's report were at the heart of the project's origins:

- **RECOMMENDATION 5:** The state should take responsibility for working with parents, employers and providers to ensure the availability of a range of suitable childcare to meet the needs of children, families and business in Scotland. Decisions about local provision should be taken locally. Decisions about whether to use childcare, and which provider to use, should continue to be taken by parents.
- **RECOMMENDATION 5a:** The suite of high-quality services in a local area must be both sufficiently numerous to meet the needs of families, and sufficiently diverse to cater for the needs of all the children who wish to attend. This will include children with additional support needs; children from BME backgrounds; and children from low-income families or deprived communities.
- **RECOMMENDATION 5b:** Local authorities (and Community Planning Partnerships) need to actively plan with each other around proposed improvements and reforms of local childcare services.

¹ The Commission for Childcare Reform (2015). Available at: childreninscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/The-Report-of-the-Commission-for-Childcare-Reform-2015.pdf

Children in Scotland had worked with Glasgow City Council on previous projects and had witnessed the determination at multiple levels to improve outcomes for their children and families. Alongside the Glasgow Centre for Population Health (GCPH) a partnership application was submitted to the Big Lottery in 2016 for a childcare project to grow the number of local childcare places. A project area was selected by data zones to enable ease of data gathering; to ensure there was close alignment with Glasgow Community Planning Partnership's Thriving Places initiative in Parkhead, Dalmarnock and Camlachie; and because it was a part of the city with some of the lowest number of registered childcare places available.

The project's ambition was to create a sustainable childcare model, leading to additional registered childcare places and ensuring family and community involvement was at the core. CHANGE: Childcare and Nurture Glasgow East was born, originally a three-year project, and awarded an additional year of uplift funding to conclude in 2020.

Need for the project

Baseline data (collected in 2017) showed that approximately 45,000 people lived in the project area, which comprises Calton and Bridgeton, Parkhead and Dalmarnock and (the majority of) the Tollcross and West Shettleston neighbourhoods. Around 7,500 of the population are children (zero to 15 years of age) and of these, 3,000 were aged zero to four.

Nearly a quarter of the population of Parkhead and Dalmarnock (23%) at the time were children; children made up a fifth of the population of Tollcross and West Shettleston (20%). In contrast, only 14% of Calton and Bridgeton's population were children, considerably below the Glasgow average. There are eight primary schools, one Additional Support for Learning (ASL) secondary school and two secondary schools in the project area.

At the point of baseline data collection (the end of October 2017), there were:

- Six Glasgow City Council nurseries with 570 places
- Four private nurseries with 226 places
- Four voluntary sector nurseries with 184 places
- Three registered childminders
- Five Out of School Care (OSC) providers for children from the age of four to 16 (although the majority of users were primary school children) with 179 service users
- Seven 'youth, play and multipurpose services' providers catering for four to 25 year olds. Across six of the seven providers (not all services replied) there were approximately 993 weekly service users.



There were 840 children with places at nurseries and a further 456 children who were on a waiting list (35%). Of these registrations, 1,043 were for local children and a further 253 registrations (20%) were from children living outside the project area.

Less than 50% of four year olds from the overall project area had a place in a local nursery. The proportion of pre-school children registered with a nursery place in Calton and Bridgeton was very low, in contrast to the other neighbourhoods in the project area. The longest waiting lists were for local authority nurseries.²

In terms of OSC, in an area where 4,709 children were aged four to 14, this equated to one OSC place for every 29 children. The very significant numbers of children and young people attending play and youth services will be discussed throughout this report.

Local context

Extensive activity to shift outcomes for children and their families locally was evident from the outset. There were many projects operating in the area; in addition to childcare services and play and youth services there were many third sector family support services operating and offering critical interventions to local people. At the start-up point the project funders shared a spreadsheet of projects and services they had funded from 2013 which included the same area of the city which had 431 separate listings.

The Glasgow Children's Services Family Support Strategy was in draft in 2016 and during the CHANGE project's lifetime. **It remains in draft** but a tender process opened in November 2020 for services to meet the strategy's three-year aims.

Planning for the expansion of ELC from 600 hours per year for eligible children to 1,140 hours per year was well underway across the local authority in 2016 and a new 140-place ELC setting in the area was due to open in 2017.

Children in Scotland had worked locally with Dalmarnock Primary School, the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) Health Improvement Team, Thriving Places group and PEEK as part of the **Food, Families, Futures project**, just one of many local initiatives to support local families. The sense of community and drive to combat the very deep-rooted challenges for families was palpable in this experience.

The first **Children's Neighbourhood Scotland** project was also emerging at the time, taking a place-based approach to improving outcomes for children, young people and their communities. It launched in 2018 covering Bridgeton and Dalmarnock.

From the outset, the CHANGE team and partners were clear that the project must not duplicate efforts currently underway. They felt the CHANGE approach must understand the landscape and work alongside the community to seek change and drive all childcare into the Children's Services infrastructure.

² Baseline data from the GCPH year one evaluation. Available at: childreninscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Year_One_Evaluation_CHANGE.pdf

Project initiation

CHANGE: Childcare and Nurture Glasgow East officially began in October 2016. It included 'nurture' in the project descriptor to highlight the desire to consider how children and their parents and carers were supported and cared for in line with the point made by the Commission for Childcare Reform:

"We understand too that high-quality childcare must be understood as part of a wider set of supports to families and communities and should not be seen in isolation."³

A Project Board was established comprising the project team from Children in Scotland, the evaluation team from GCPH, members of the ELC team at Glasgow City Council and representation from the HSCP. It was later expanded to include the Scottish Out of School Care Network (SOSCN).

A pathfinder project like CHANGE can be a difficult concept to introduce. Establishing this piece of work posed a series of difficulties that were understandable and in part expected but nevertheless took several months to work through and either remedy, accept or to gain the trust needed to help shape change. These were:

- The frustration of local people about being the subjects of further research
- The fixed-term nature of the work which was also frustrating for local people who had seen many services and projects come and go
- A national children's organisation leading a piece of local work
- The expansion of ELC absorbing the time, attention, energy and resource of key people
- The term 'childcare' and its parameters including assumptions and facts about what it is and what services it includes
- The breadth of the work – a 'sustainable childcare model' involves change at every level. The approach and communication of the ambition for the project was challenging from the start.

To bring project partners together the International Futures Forum led a session using the **three horizons model of social change** to consider where all partners wanted to get to. This provided a platform and vision that was instrumental in influencing how the initial stages of the work were approached.

Current policy drivers

This work was and is aligned with the following current national drivers of policy and legislation:

- **Out of school care framework**

The framework identifies three key aims for focusing future policy development, one being: Out of school care is accessible and affordable and meets the needs of children and young people, parents and carers and communities.

- **Social justice**

One of the commitments of the current government is: We are tackling child poverty by addressing the underlying causes of deprivation and improving circumstances in which children grow up.

³ The Commission for Childcare Reform (2015). Available at: childreninscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/The-Report-of-the-Commission-for-Childcare-Reform-2015.pdf

- **The Promise Family Support Strand**

In relation to family, The Promise recommended: There must be significant upscale in universal family support services.

- **Challenging poverty. Every Child, Every Chance – The Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan**

One of the actions in the Delivery Plan is: New support for childcare after school and in the holidays.

Implications of Covid

Multiple references will be made in this report to the implications of the pandemic on the work of CHANGE. These are critical to the CHANGE story but will not reveal or represent the impact of the virus on children and families in the East of Glasgow. The pandemic was always likely to have a significant long-term toll on families already ill-served by decades of social policy failures.

Overall, the community in the East of Glasgow has demonstrated all the qualities project staff encountered in the first stages of this work: determination, fragility, humour, and vibrancy and supported by a workforce of passionate, resilient, skilled and exhausted individuals. Local recovery from Covid must focus on nurturing and nourishing this community as a whole.

Chapter 2 – The CHANGE approach

Introduction

This project sought to support and model sustainability for childcare in the area. In doing this it needed a new, locally-driven model. The CHANGE approach comprised the following key elements:

- Community engagement activity implemented throughout the project work
- Establishing an evaluation framework (driven by a Theory of Change, a specific type of methodology for planning, participation, and evaluation which when collated in this way provides evidence of impact) and carried out over the project's lifetime
- Developing an action plan based on the Theory of Change and community response
- Delivery of this action plan.

Part of the action plan included establishing a hub of services known as the CHANGE Hub, which developed and carried out tests of change.⁴ The Hub's remit was to explore the barriers to accessing childcare highlighted by families during engagement activity. It identified areas to work on allowing the project team and local partners to begin to move in the direction of creating improvement.

In addition to a programme of community engagement, the project recruited local parents as volunteers to support the way the project was developing. These individuals were known as 'family champions' and were key in ensuring parental experience was driving the project.

The project evaluation carried out by GCPH during years one to three included a process evaluation. This part of the overall evaluation was instrumental in supporting a shift in focus for the work.

Community engagement

The project team always strived to put local people and services first, using the Scottish Community Development Centre's National Standards for Community Engagement⁵ to design engagement activity. A programme of engagement with families (including children and young people directly) and services was rolled out during the first year, identifying specific issues for accessing and providing childcare locally. Many people in the area reported feeling over-consulted and it was therefore essential to speak to people where they felt most comfortable and to approach any engagement in a sensitive manner.

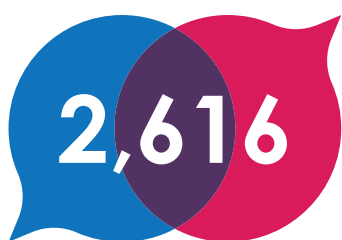
In the second year, the focus shifted slightly to groups or individuals who faced additional barriers to accessing childcare and who may not be engaging with services currently. A 'seldom-heard voices plan' identified local and national organisations working with parents and carers whose voices had not been heard directly by the team.

⁴ These tests are taken from the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles which test a change quickly on a small scale, see how it works, and refine the change as necessary before implementing it on a broader scale.

⁵ National Standards for Community Engagement. Available at: scdc.org.uk/what/national-standards

The project team established trusting relationships and gained an understanding of the everyday experiences for families and services which would prove crucial in shaping the direction of the project. The initial phase provided the team with a real sense of the community assets and what currently works well, alongside an understanding of the barriers faced by local families and what is needed to address issues highlighted. In many cases solutions were clear and in others they needed to be worked through with different stakeholders. The benefit of a third-party organisation without history locally leading this work and with time and capacity to facilitate improvement work started to become the guiding force for CHANGE.

Between 2016 and 2020, the CHANGE team engaged with more than 2,600 community members and local and national partners. Of these interactions, 1,135 involved different members of the local community. The CHANGE team engaged with 566 parents and carers and 207 local children and young people. Additionally, 362 local people in family groups attended events and sessions facilitated by the CHANGE team and partners.



2,616 community members and local and national partners engaged with between 2016-20.

The project team engaged with local people and partners in a number of different ways. As well as talking to community members in public places like shopping centres, the project team regularly attended services and activities in which local families participated. The CHANGE team also facilitated engagement sessions in schools, childcare and outdoor play settings.

It was notable that over the first year of the project and within the context of expansion of ELC there was a significant move towards the promotion of outdoor provision for services. However, parents or carers did not raise their desire for more outdoor childcare services in their area during engagement activity. The team ran two taster sessions in Tollcross Park to give families a flavour of how outdoor space is being used in the project area and what play sessions might feel like for their children. Thirty-eight parents, carers and children attended these sessions with all participants concluding that they were in favour of more opportunities for this locally. Families were especially positive about the opportunity to be outdoors together rather than doing more traditional indoor activities such as soft play. However, it was also highlighted that more needs to be done to ensure there are safe places to play outdoors in the local area and to ensure information about what is currently available is shared widely.

People in the project area have seen multiple services and initiatives established locally and have invested time telling their personal stories as part of their input to these projects. However, in many circumstances these services and initiatives have been temporary and local people reported not seeing the positive change coming from them that was needed.

The CHANGE team attended and contributed to local planning and information forums with local partners, ensuring the project was well informed about local developments and positioned to speak directly with multiple stakeholders.

Methodology

Conversations with local people and partners highlighted key themes that concentrated on the need to find out about childcare and how to use it, as well as concerns about the suitability of what was available. There was very clear satisfaction about local authority ELC provision (once families were able to access it) and the other childcare services available locally. Many parents and carers described the people working in nurseries and childcare and how warm and welcoming they were:

“They're fantastic in here. Whatever you need they'll step in and help you however they can.”⁶

Local parent

The response from families was more about what was already available and the changes that were needed rather than the need for more childcare. As highlighted, a range of very popular, free or low-cost play and youth services were operating in the area. These had evolved in response to need and their offer had to be considered alongside the registered childcare that was in place.

Families and the organisations representing them regularly raised and discussed affordability, availability, flexibility, accessibility, information and relationships and how these influenced the use of childcare services. However, two further key themes emerged from engagement activity - the isolation experienced when parents and carers were not engaged with community-based services including childcare and the benefits of early intervention and other support offered by childcare services to the whole family.

safe quality
support reliable happy
accessibility relationships
respect development learning family
nurture trust flexibility
values affordability
confidence

As a result of these findings, and informed by the process evaluation, the CHANGE team, with partners and funders, shifted the project aims and research questions to reflect the priorities expressed by the community. Workstreams were devised based on configuring existing provision, supporting the expansion of provision, and creating new connections and services. Although it was felt that in the longer term, more childcare was needed, the immediate, reported need was in preparing for and being able to use childcare for families and being able to work together and collaborate for services.

⁶ Family voices, Glasgow East: a series of short interviews with parents, carers and grandparents (2018)

To help address the barriers faced in accessing childcare and family support, a multi-agency hub was established. There was a keen appetite among partners to come together and work collaboratively. The CHANGE Hub developed and included a range of members whose purpose was to lead change at a local level. The Hub's initial focus included the prohibitive costs of childcare, lack of flexibility of hours, being unable to access to information easily locally and feelings of isolation expressed by families.



A Hub session

Relationships

The project team was able to develop open and trusting relationships with local people. These relationships have been cultivated by a team that knows the project area very well, with some staff having grown up, lived and worked in the community. An awareness of the historical context of improvement interventions locally and the importance of taking a sensitive but collaborative approach has been particularly advantageous. As commented earlier, the neutral position of the lead organisation was also key.

The team made every effort to show consideration and support to those who work in the area. It is apparent that many of those working directly with families in the community are exhausted, responding to increasingly urgent needs with stretched resources. Members of the project team were grateful for local partners' committed contributions to help improve the longer-term outcomes for local families, while they also responded to their own immediate and competing priorities.



An important factor in harnessing positive community relations was making the CHANGE team as accessible and visible as possible, so it was essential that project staff were based in the project area. Over the duration of the project staff members were based in the Olympia building in Bridgeton, the Barrowfield Community Centre (with the local Thriving Places team), and the newly refurbished Parkhead Housing Association Parkhead Schoolhouse alongside five local community organisations. Project team members were immersed in local activity and able to engage in the casual everyday conversations that often lead to innovative work. A project partner explained that:

“The team is known and embedded in the area which is crucial in terms of relationships building and managing to get to people...”⁷

Local stakeholder

The CHANGE project took regular opportunities to celebrate the area's assets. The East End of Glasgow is often associated with a negative image but there are many positive aspects to growing up, living and working in the area. People in the East End of Glasgow are caring and kind, and a strong community spirit is evident. There are also strong and vibrant community organisations, services and businesses. The area has a rich social history and a unique character that should be acknowledged and celebrated.

Listening and responding

The team produced summary information of what local children and families said, what had been done in response, and planned next steps. For each workstream an update on progress was provided. The activity identified by members of the CHANGE Hub was also communicated to local people and partners. An original CHANGE Hub member commented:

“The driver was because families said people weren't listening and they felt fed up. We had a collective responsibility and accountability to them and not being another group that lets them down.”⁸

CHANGE Hub member

Another Hub member highlighted how the person-centred nature of the project and “continuous feedback loop” helped them to stay engaged. Evaluators described the project as applying an ‘iterative networking approach’⁹ by taking what was heard and using it to continually inform project development. This reinforced positive relationships and helped foster further participation and innovation.

This approach led to the change in focus for the project, from increasing the number of childcare places in the area to better supporting what was already there. As one project partner put it:

“We don't want to create more childcare that people won't use. Some of what we captured was it is more about getting people ready for childcare; more about family support...”¹⁰

Local partner

⁷ Harkins Research & Consultancy Ltd., CHANGE Evaluation – Year Three. Available at: childreninscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CHANGE_Year_3_Evaluation.pdf

⁸ CHANGE Hub Evaluation Session, 16 November 2020.

⁹ Harkins Research & Consultancy Ltd., CHANGE Evaluation – Year Three. Available at: childreninscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CHANGE_Year_3_Evaluation.pdf

¹⁰ Ibid.

Impact of Covid

Like most services and organisations, the approach of the CHANGE team had to be adjusted in the final months of the project as a result of the pandemic.

The team gathered impact and response information from local partners and shared this, including through the Covid Scottish Government Children and Families Collective Leadership Group, highlighting the local response to emerging needs.

Towards the end of the project, physical distancing measures often made direct engagement with local people difficult. The project team was mainly working from home and missed being embedded in their community workplaces. A substantial level of digital exclusion in the area also meant that many local people had limited access to social media updates and online meetings. Among those with access to the internet, many local people, including partners, expressed a lack of confidence with IT. This meant that not everyone was able to access meetings on video conference platforms, and alternative methods of communication had to be adopted.

The CHANGE ingredients

The CHANGE project methodology was informed by the National Standards for Community Engagement.¹¹ Its goal was to embody the ambition of community empowerment to support communities to do things for themselves, and to make their voices heard in the planning and delivery of services.

The key CHANGE ingredients included:

Listening

Without local people and partners sharing their knowledge and experiences, the project would not have had any impact. Careful and active listening is key.

Responding

Many people contributed their time to the project. The team endeavoured to show respect and gratitude by making sure there was an open acknowledgement and response to what people shared.

Respect

Local people expressed fatigue about research and interventions that have not improved their lives. Similarly, the team was quickly aware of how exhausted local staff feel as they operate under stretched resources and especially trying circumstances. Being sensitive to this helped the project team to engage with local people and partners in a respectful and meaningful way.

Recognising the positives

The East End of Glasgow is consistently the subject of prejudice with regard to issues of class and poverty and framed in negative terms by the media. While recognising the challenges faced in the area, the many positive aspects of life in the East End of Glasgow need to be highlighted. The CHANGE team found the sense of community spirit, kindness and dedication of local people and services in the area to be unparalleled.

¹¹ National Standards for Community Engagement. Available at: scdc.org.uk/what/national-standards

What CHANGE heard

The CHANGE Hub was established in March 2018 as a mechanism for exploring and working through the barriers highlighted by families during the community engagement phase. It allowed the project team and local partners to begin to move in the direction of creating improvement by carrying out tests of change. Relationships developed quickly and effectively, with members keen to work collaboratively to create change for families locally. Some of the services had not previously worked together and many formed working partnerships outside of the Hub, as they became more aware of what each service could offer. For example, a local church was able to offer guitar lessons to children attending a play service.

“It’s about agencies coming together with similar outcomes but different ways of getting there; how do we overcome hurdles because we want to work together... as you build relationships and get to know organisations and their abilities to do things, you then build and reshape what you were going to do.”¹²

CHANGE Hub member

Hub members used the improvement tools from the **Children and Young People Improvement Collaborative** (CYPIC) to provide an analytical and practical focus, tracking ways to make improvements while continuing to take a person-centred approach. The aim of using the improvement tools was to make the Hub as effective and responsive as possible in tackling inequality and improving children’s outcomes using quality improvement tools that would measure and evidence impact and inform the direction of change required. The Hub was supported in using the methodology by a CYPIC Improvement Adviser.

“The approach used is a very robust model. There is a structure to help understand what is leading to impact – so for a scalable model, using that approach that will lend to high confidence of what will work...It’s one of the most innovative and exciting projects happening in Scotland at the moment.”¹³

CHANGE Hub member



¹² Harkins Research & Consultancy Ltd., CHANGE Evaluation – Year Three. Available at: childreninscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CHANGE_Year_3_Evaluation.pdf

¹³ Ibid.

How CHANGE responded

Following the Hub's inception, membership grew from eight to 37, representing a variety of organisations (26 in total), engaging people with different perspectives to create a multi-agency group. Twenty members attended consistently.



Hub membership

Type of organisation represented

National children's organisations operating locally

Out of School Care & play services

Nurseries & schools

Family Champions

Information & support organisations

Nutrition and community growing project

Glasgow Life

Thriving Places team

Health Improvement team

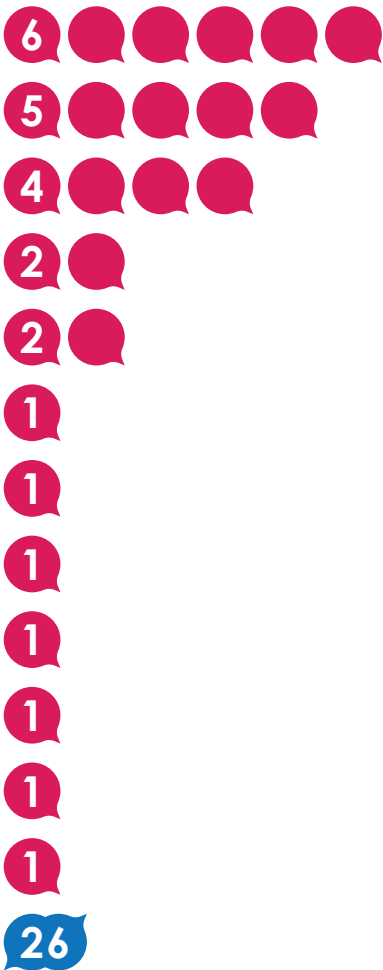
Department of Work and Pensions

Children and Young People Improvement Collaborative

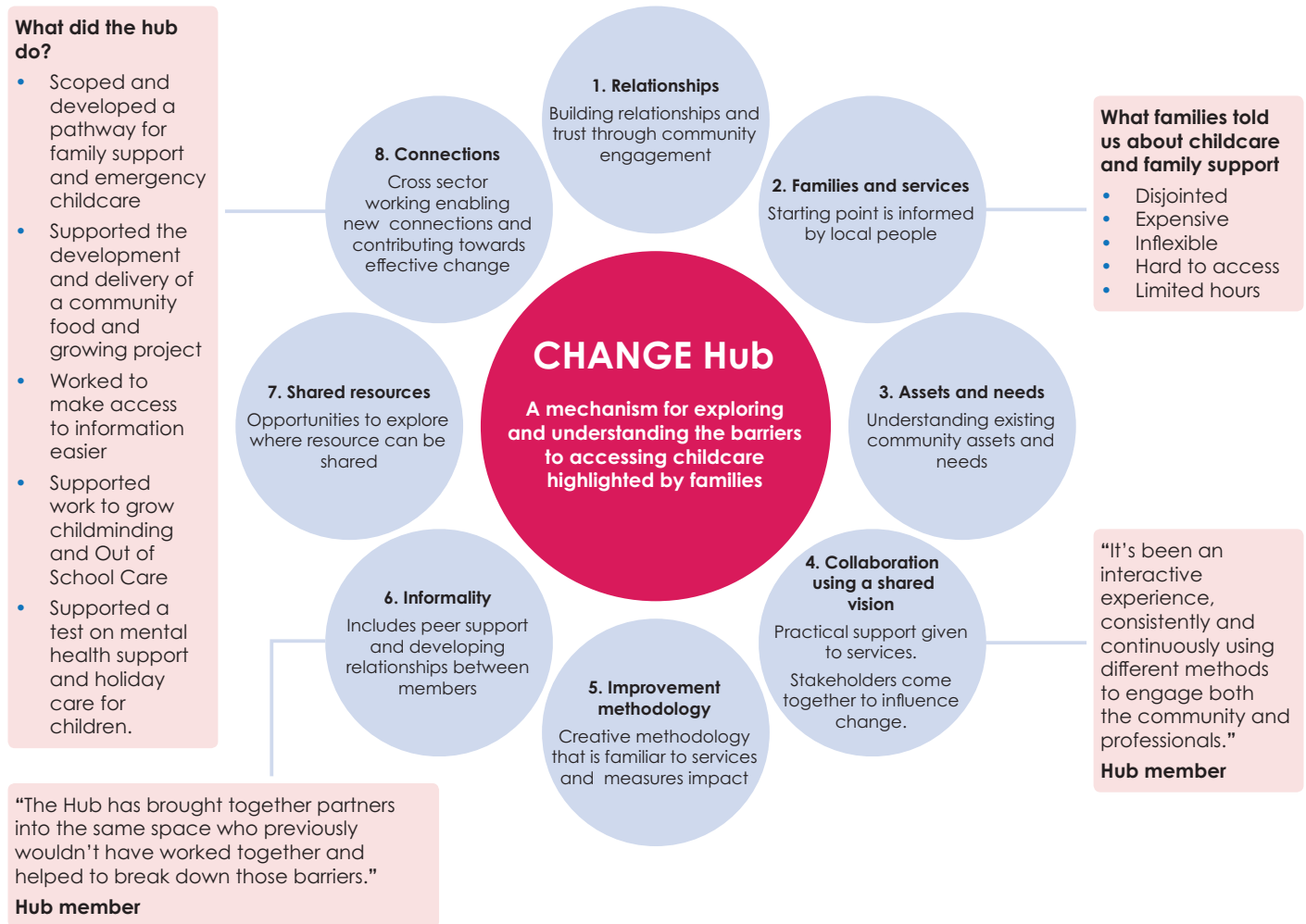
Local childcare forum

Total

No. of individual services



The CHANGE Hub



Hub members created a ‘driver diagram’ which mapped the direction of travel partners wished this work to take and the type of evidence which would be needed.

The primary drivers for this work included:

- Resources and accessibility for children and families
- Robust transition processes in place throughout a child’s journey
- Effective collaborations which are responsive to the needs of the family
- Communication and information-sharing.

The work that emerged included creating a local directory with key food contacts and information about resources and then transferring this information into ALISS (A Local Information System for Scotland) and NHS Inform sites, contributing to engagement sessions on OSC, and assisting with the development of holiday provision which supported positive mental health for local children (see Chapter 9).

The Hub had the support of four family champions. All were local parents who had experienced difficulties accessing childcare and could help advise what changes were required. They would gauge whether Hub activity would be beneficial to other families in similar situations and feedback developments into the community.

*"I would love to help my community to find their voice and achieve the changes that they would like to see happen."*¹⁴

Family Champion

After 20 months in operation the Hub was nominated in the 'Most Inspiring and Innovative' category at the Children and Young People Improvement Collaborative Quality Improvement Awards 2019.

"The Change Hub built an approach which was recognised for its ingenuity within the Quality Improvement awards shortlisting process. This approach involved structuring space and opportunity for genuine collaboration across multiple people and organisations which resulted in the generation of creative ideas, galvanised into actions which made a difference to families. Quality Improvement was used throughout to evidence impact and understand what works. The achievements of the Hub are truly inspirational."

Quality Improvement Adviser



At the Children and Young People Improvement Collaborative Quality Improvement Awards 2019

What happened next

During the project's extension year, 2019-2020, the Hub was responsible for two of the four key areas of development being looked at by CHANGE. These were:

1. Developing emergency or crisis childcare provision
2. Supporting sustainable food provision.

The development of both features in future chapters of this report.

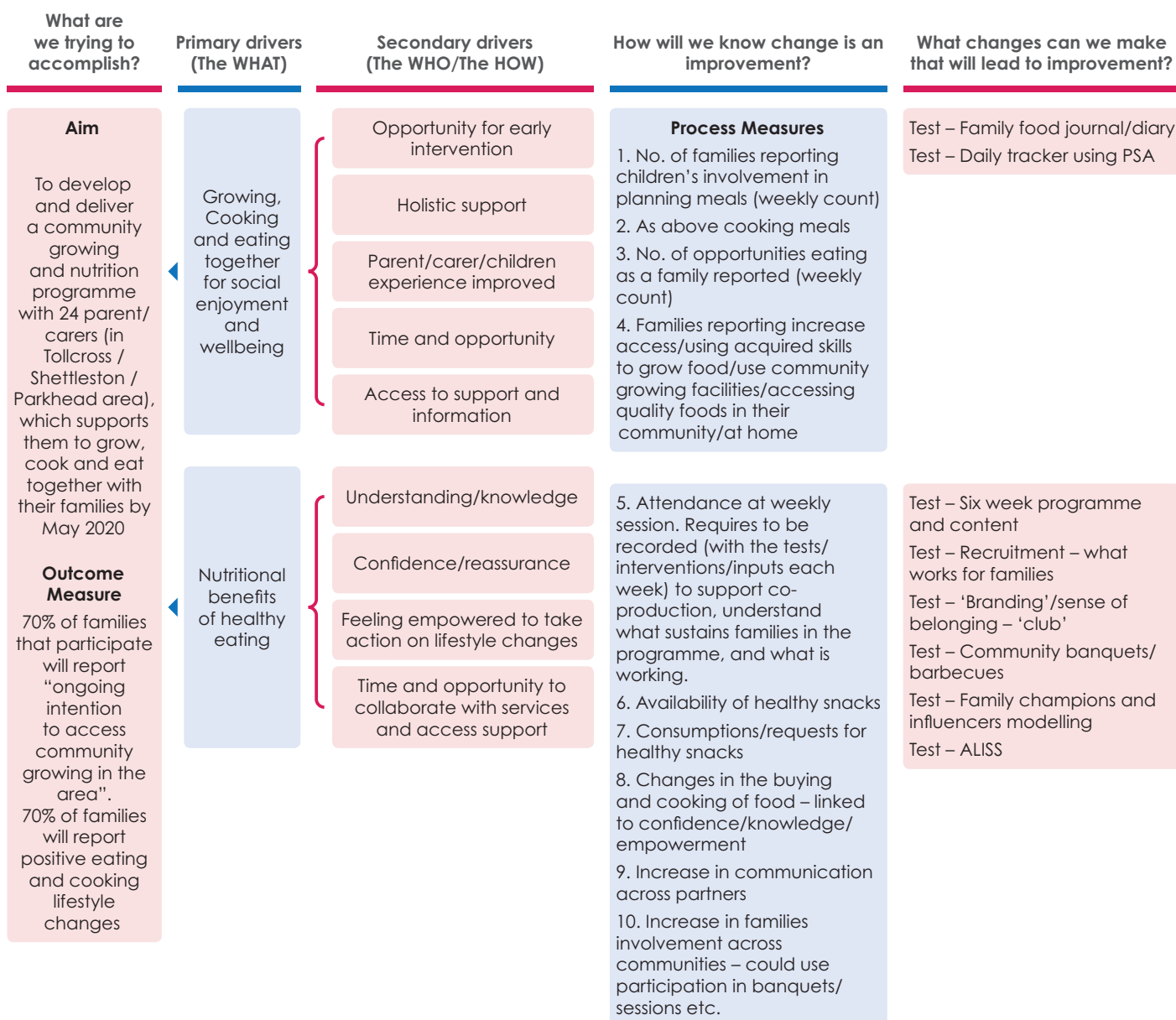
The Hub created two driver diagrams (one featured opposite and the other available on request) to chart the work that would be required to make a difference within the community, define actions and evidence impact.

¹⁴ CHANGE Bulletin 19 October 2020. Available at: change-childcare.org/change-bulletin-19-october/

Members worked on a family support emergency childcare scoping proposal (see Chapter 4) which was shared extensively with strategic partners. They also supported the development of the Plot to Plate Club (see Chapter 7) and the collation of evidence.

As well as working on these two priorities, the partnership with the ALISS team continued and the Hub members were instrumental in providing advice and support at NHS Inform sessions for the new website layout.

Driver diagram: Supporting sustainable food provision



For most of 2020, members were unable to meet in person due to Covid. Instead, they connected virtually, mainly using Microsoft Teams as most members were able to access it. CHANGE staff consulted and considered the best ways to format the meetings to ensure involvement that would work for all, enabling members to continue to feed in and remain engaged. The Hub retained a good attendance throughout this period, demonstrating how much value members placed on the opportunity to be able to connect with each other during such a difficult period.

However, some previously regular participant members were not able to join meetings. There are many reasons for this, including IT and the impact of Covid on their already extensive roles.

As the CHANGE project reached its conclusion, Hub members were keen to explore the opportunities for the Hub to remain operational in some form.

Members' views included:

*"Keeping the link to the families as the focus, with their needs/thoughts/things they are saying co-ordinated into determining what the actions should be."*¹⁵

CHANGE Hub member

The CHANGE team presented three options to all members:

- Disbanding in December 2020 in line with the end of the CHANGE project
- Moving to sit within an existing organisation
- Becoming constituted as a community group with charitable status.

All members were consulted to ensure their voices were heard, including those who had found recent involvement difficult due to Covid pressures.

Next steps and recommendations

Hub members' preference was to sit within an existing organisation (ideally one which already had charitable status) to enable the group to access support from an established body. However, members understood they would still be required to assist with leading on identified actions, so time commitment would still be necessary.

The identified advantages of this option were:

- Members' links were maintained
- Plans could be carried forward without significant delays
- Further actions could be developed.

The CHANGE team found a potential partner in the North East Childcare Forum, a key partner throughout the duration of the project work, and the transition process began.

Going forward, the project's experience would support encouraging those who work with children and families to join the Hub and continue to feed the Hub work and learning into strategic groups.

*"The model is robust and universal. It might need slight tweaks as there will be specific issues for each community, so the workers involved on the ground need to be aware of those community issues. Staff need to be embedded otherwise it would take a lot of time to build trust and engagement."*¹⁶

CHANGE Hub member

*"The CHANGE Hub was crucial in creating conversations which enabled the partners to form new working relationships, work with the same aim and make plans together."*¹⁷

CHANGE Hub member

¹⁵ CHANGE Hub development session, 15 September 2020

¹⁶ Harkins Research & Consultancy Ltd., CHANGE Evaluation – Year Three. Available at: childreninscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CHANGE_Year_3_Evaluation.pdf

¹⁷ CHANGE Year Four final evaluation report: Interviews with key stakeholders (2020). Available at: childreninscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CHANGE-Year-Four-Evaluation-Interviews-with-key-stakeholders-2020.pdf

Chapter 4 – Emergency childcare and family support

What CHANGE heard

During the initial project phase, a recurring issue was highlighted by families and professionals: the need for a supportive service which could provide emergency childcare during stressful or difficult times. Often parents and carers need to attend emergency appointments, sometimes at short notice, and require a safe childcare option they can access, with qualified professionals. Parents and carers report that they often need to bring their children along with them to healthcare appointments, as an alternative childcare option is unavailable. This means they are unable to fully disclose their feelings or symptoms during their appointment due to the sensitivity of the discussion or because their child needs their attention, making assessing the support and care they need difficult.

The following situations were identified by parents, carers and services as creating the need for emergency childcare:

- A sudden illness or accident
- Feelings of desperation or helplessness
- Emotional distress or frustration
- Domestic violence
- Homelessness
- Drug or alcohol treatment
- A medical or mental health situation
- Legal obligations
- Financial situation
- Employment, training or housing situation
- Other crisis situations which require support.



How CHANGE responded

The CHANGE team carried out scoping with families and services locally to ascertain the difference this type of support would make in the community. Planning sessions with CHANGE Hub members and the CYPIC Improvement Advisor were held to investigate levels of support required and potential solutions based on the community response. Stepping Stones for Families (SSFF), who have extensive experience of providing support to families in the area, provided input into a proposal, providing outline costs involved.

The team met with the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) Locality Engagement Officer and regularly attended the Locality Engagement Forum, particularly to share the evidence regarding the need for emergency family support in the area and keep informed about the development a new Health and Social Care Hub in the Parkhead area, a potential site for a service.

The Hub was represented on the HSCP Project Board to keep this issue highlighted and kept on the agenda. A local Health Visiting Team lead and CHANGE Hub member agreed to do this on the Hub's behalf. The team also met with officers from Children's Services Planning to share the scoping report and then acted on actions given, including more information about local families' circumstances and providing costings.

The scoping paper was shared with the North East Vulnerability Subgroup for their mental health subgroup action plan, Member of Parliament David Linden, and the Child Poverty Leads Network.

Progress over the lifetime of the CHANGE project was slow, there was agreement across local networks about the need for a service, but no commitment secured. CHANGE Hub members submitted questions relating to an emergency childcare service to the Parkhead Health and Social Care Hub consultation and were then signposted to the Family Support Services tender, which opened for applications in November 2020.

Next steps and recommendations

At the end of 2020, the impact of restrictions due to Covid resulted in a different landscape for establishing this type of service: healthcare facilities would likely be used predominantly for the roll-out of the vaccine, while social distancing procedures would not make delivering a service during the life of the project possible. SSFF advised there was also a suspension in creche registration. This meant that responding to the Family Support Service tender process was not possible at this time.

The CHANGE team and the Stepping Stones Family Wellbeing Service instead looked at adapting their service model so that families not accessing childcare could be referred to their service. This would provide some family support as well as the potential for a creche when restrictions are eased. A Family Wellbeing Worker will be working in the area from January 2021. The CHANGE team has committed to identifying potential venues to host the service. CHANGE Hub members and other local organisations will have the opportunity to complete referrals and the Family Wellbeing worker will join the CHANGE Hub.

The CHANGE team has recommended that the CHANGE Hub looks again at the scoping proposal with families when more certainty returns to the area. The team also recommended investigating ways in which it could be included in the Parkhead Health

Hub facility, promoting a holistic approach to family health and wellbeing, and providing feedback to families regarding any potential developments.

The Parkhead Health Hub consultation also highlighted accessibility issues for families in local consultations which were raised as part of the CHANGE team's response - families had difficulty accessing the consultation session and completing the evaluation due to being unable to access the digital technology required. This further exacerbates the feeling of local parents and carers views not being sought or heard.



“Health Improvement observe that people with the most limited social connections are often the most vulnerable e.g., women that have been trafficked, women fleeing domestic abuse, refugees and asylum seekers. These women often have no one available to provide the sort of ad hoc childcare that allows them to attend support services or indeed to try to improve their life circumstances.”¹⁸

HSCP Health Improvement team

¹⁸ CHANGE Family Support Emergency Childcare Services Scoping Paper (2020). Available at: childreninscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CHANGE-Family-Support-Emergency-Childcare-Services-Scoping-Paper-2020.pdf

What CHANGE heard

From the outset the CHANGE team was aware that childminding numbers were very low. Initial information gathering found that within the CHANGE project area there were three childminders operating in 2017, and these were all in the Shettleston area.

The benefits of childminding to children receiving the service and parents and carers using it – providing care in a home with a smaller number of children and potentially with more flexible hours than other settings – were therefore generally not available to families in the area. Childminders can look after children from birth into secondary school stage, often providing continuity, stability and flexibility for the child and family throughout childhood.

As a result of low numbers, childminding had a very limited profile locally, some communities had no recent experience of registered childminding, and there were misunderstandings about what a childminding service looked like. Parents were unsure about costs and often believed it would not be affordable for them. It was commented:

“We had to fight the cause around childminding; because it’s not about the national picture. It has to be tied to local area and this area is more complex.”¹⁹

Local stakeholder

In addition to childminding, across Glasgow and nationally a Community Childminding service exists that provides intervention for families at a time of crisis. It aims to prevent circumstances deteriorating and a more substantial intervention being required. The Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) provides training and local support to childminders, who in turn offer short-term placements to families in need, allowing children to remain looked after in their communities.

The Community Childminding Service in Glasgow has supported families struggling with illness, bereavement, post-natal depression, and isolation. Project partners felt a Community Childminding service which would meet many of the needs of families in the area (and also highlighted in Chapter 4) was generally not available to local parents and carers. It was felt particularly by health professionals that, due to the low numbers of childminders locally, there was not enough of this type of support for parents and carers in the project area. Families accessing the service at the time were travelling outside of their communities to use it.

How CHANGE responded

In looking at baseline data and engagement with people in the community, project partners noted that childminders would be particularly well placed to meet some of the identified local childcare needs, especially around provision for children aged zero to two, emergency childcare, and contributing to meeting the expansion of ELC.

This was also the message from members of the CHANGE Hub. Initial meetings explored how this could happen locally, considering ways to support the growth of childminding across the area with partners, including the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

¹⁹ Harkins Research & Consultancy Ltd., CHANGE Evaluation – Year Three. Available at: childreninscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CHANGE_Year_3_Evaluation.pdf

The CHANGE team took evidence of childcare needs from the community to Clyde Gateway to seek a partnership approach to meeting some gaps identified. This led to a specific childminding project with Clyde Gateway adopting the role of project manager and involving SCMA and Jobs and Business Glasgow. A successful funding application was made to the Scottish Government and Hunter Foundation Social Innovation Fund. Its aim was to grow childminding in the area by recruiting a potential 20 childminders from within the Clyde Gateway area.

The CHANGE team used its platform of community engagement already underway to gather further evidence. A survey was distributed to almost 1,000 local people to assess knowledge, awareness and potential interest in childminding. A total of 255 copies were returned. There was a mixed response about childminding and although 72% of respondents said they would use a childminder if there was one available there were also questions raised about homes and safety, based on a lack of understanding about the childminding setting:

“Not a fan as it is in a home. May have their own children. Nursery is better, more space, socialise better. Develop all the skills in nursery.”²⁰

Local parent

“I like nursery as the children are similar ages. My experience is childminders do babies up to 10 years old. Also, childminders often have their own children in the group.”²¹

Local parent

“I find its safer at nursery when there are other workers around and there are policies and supervision in place. Also, there are more children for kids to play with.”²²

Local parent

When a nursery was said to be a preferred option by parents, this was usually because a nursery setting was viewed as being better at preparing a child for school. Some parents were unsure how to check the accreditation of a childminding service, which made them wary. Other reasons parents expressed for preferring a nursery included a larger number of children (more opportunity for social interactions), a smaller age range and more adults being around (which was said leads to a safer environment).

In terms of making sure that childminding was visible locally, a balance of raising awareness with families and managing expectations of the availability of childminding needed to take place.

Respondents to the survey were asked about becoming a childminder and 78 individuals expressed an interest. SCMA went on to make links with these individuals.

The first phase was completed with three new childminders being recruited in early 2020. A further four childminders were recruited but are not linked to the Hunter Foundation Clyde Gateway project. This was much fewer than hoped, and the reasons are outlined below.

²⁰ Clyde Gateway Childminding Project - Survey Report (2019). Available at: childreninscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CHANGE-Clyde-Gateway-Childminding-Project-Survey-Report-2019.pdf

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

CHANGE staff also visited local schools and a local OSC service to gauge the children and young people's understanding of childminding services. They found that the view of those who had attended childminders was more positive compared to those who had not experienced the service and who were primarily concerned about being in someone's house. The CHANGE project produced a comic strip outlining a typical day with a childminder and the characteristics that make a good childminder. This was informed by the information shared by children and young people during the engagement sessions and distributed widely.

Community Childminding

The CHANGE team also sought to investigate and support growth of Community Childminding locally. This service fulfils the need for support for families (in addition to fulfilling a childcare need) over a short period of time. It is mainly provided to families with children under three but can be available to families with older children. SCMA receives referrals in this area from the North East Early Years Joint Support Team, with representatives from early years education services, health visitors, third sector organisations, housing services and, when required, addiction and other community services.

Scoping exercises on Community Childminding were carried out with representation from the DWP, SCMA, the NHS North East Health Improvement team and Health Visiting teams. The focus of the sessions was to understand the reasons why the number of referrals received through the Joint Support Team does not reflect the perceived need on the ground.

Health Visitors reported that they felt they were not fully aware of the remit and criteria necessary to refer to the service and asked if this pathway for referral could be widened to include generic referrals to SCMA. The HSCP Health Improvement staff indicated that there are many families who struggle and require childcare to enable them to seek out further education and ways to improve their family's outcomes. This indicated the need to raise the profile of Community Childminding as well as sharing a clear referral processes for all involved in making a referral.

The DWP suggested that the Dynamic Purchasing System was an option to provide training for childminders to further develop the skill base needed to provide Community Childminding. They also indicated that Universal Credit may be beneficial to childminders as they would be able to use this to subsidise their finances if numbers of children attending dropped or they did not manage to fill their places.

What happened next

This strand of the CHANGE work unveiled deep-rooted scepticism of and barriers to providing a childminding service locally.

The Clyde Gateway-led childminding project did not achieve its ambition to train 20 childminders locally, reflecting some of the complexity of trying to shift local perceptions. End of project analysis identified a number of barriers that were project, locality and timing-specific.

It was agreed by project partners that there was useful learning from the model in relation to sustaining interest within communities from initial scoping to uptake of childminding, both as a flexible childcare option and as a career. Any future staffing model would

need to include the dual competencies of childminding experience and the ability and capacity to provide enduring support to applicants over a suitably sustained timeframe.

Committed participants dropped off, those whose interest was in early years did not always translate to an interest in childminding and running a business. A key aim of the project was to assess the financial viability of the opportunity well before any training or induction commenced for individuals. Fundamentally ensuring participants would be more financially secure and understand the impact of the business model of a childminder was critical and should be enhanced in any future work.

Critically, not knowing a potential candidate's housing type in advance of starting training presented challenges in terms of Care Inspectorate regulation. Many individuals coming forward as potential trainees lived in private rented properties and landlords would not agree to the property being used for a childminding business. For any future work it was agreed that stronger links would be required with the Care Inspectorate and housing bodies.

This meant that the growth of childminding locally did not contribute to the intended consequence of extending the number of practitioners who would then be able to offer Community Childminding in the area.

However, the learning was and is very valuable. The experience of this project will be shared as extensively as possible through the Social Innovation Partnership and other platforms to inform the building blocks of any similar work.

Covid implications

The pandemic has had major implications for the CHANGE project's ambitions in relation to childminding and for the service overall.

Although the Clyde Gateway partnership had undertaken an end of project review, going into lockdown prevented a face-to-face meeting to conclude the final lessons learned report. Partners were all engaged in providing emergency support to their respective stakeholder groups which removed the capacity to focus on growth and development work. It is anticipated the final lessons learned report will be concluded and submitted via the Social Innovation Partnership for wider circulation.



The Covid outbreak has resulted in significant challenges for childminding services. SCMA reported in summer 2020 that only 19% of childminding businesses believe they will be viable within 12 months without financial support or an increase in business.²³

²³ SCMA briefing on Covid-19 and blended care (July 2020). Available at: childminding.org/Media/Docs/Common/SCMA%20Briefing%20on%20Covid%2019%20and%20Blended%20Care%20Final%20version%20PDF.pdf

Next steps and recommendations

There is still much to do to lift the profile of childminding in general in the area and for families to recognise this as a viable childcare choice and a potential career opportunity.

The extent of the task must be recognised through adequate resourcing. Following the project work, one national partner noted the need for a stronger degree of input to develop childminding locally and that “we might not have been as aware that a lot more support and resource needs to go into a deprived area without the CHANGE project.”²⁴

The variation in opinions expressed and circumstances highlighted by the childminding survey responses demonstrates that families require a variety of childcare options to find the right childcare for them and their children’s needs. Increased childminding provision in the area would help increase the number of childcare options available locally, corresponding to what families in other areas of the city currently experience.

In line with all other aspects of the CHANGE work, links must be built between and across services. For childminding this means creating opportunities for childminders to be familiar to practitioners in nurseries, schools and OSC services. It is important to be visible and to be considered part of the offer for children and families locally, in parity with all other support for families.

Changes to the housing tenure locally has made childminding more feasible but the use of outdoor spaces, and support available to utilise these for childcare providers, means that in the East End childminding and Community Childminding is a source of untapped potential. To realise this potential this work must continue using the lessons learned to date.

“Childminders are angels in my opinion. Would be good to encourage more people to take on this role in the community.”²⁵

Local parent

“Childcare in the East End of Glasgow is a nightmare especially for those wanting to return to work or increase hours. There is a massive demand and not enough affordable childcare. Childminders would help to tackle this problem.”²⁶

Local parent

²⁴ CHANGE Year Four final evaluation report: Interviews with key stakeholders (2020). Available at: childreninscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CHANGE-Year-Four-Evaluation-Interviews-with-key-stakeholders-2020.pdf

²⁵ Clyde Gateway Childminding Project – Survey Report (2019). Available at: childreninscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CHANGE-Clyde-Gateway-Childminding-Project-Survey-Report-2019.pdf

²⁶ Ibid.

What CHANGE heard

An important driver for the project was the low number of registered Out of School Care (OSC) places available to local families compared to other communities in Glasgow and Scotland. From a national perspective, this is also reflected in the Out of School Care in Scotland Draft Framework 2019:

“Most staff we talked to share a vision for out of school care in Scotland that is accessible and inclusive for all children. It was widely recognised that services could support many more children and families if provision was more affordable and accessible to those on low incomes, and that it could have a much bigger role in supporting those who experience food insecurity and poverty.”²⁷

Creating more registered OSC places that are affordable and accessible has been a longstanding challenge in the East of Glasgow. There is a lack of suitable community spaces to host services and a gap between what people can afford to pay and how much quality services cost to run. The most recent numbers gathered in September 2020 indicate that there is an overall working capacity of 176 registered OSC places in the wider CHANGE project area, provided by five services. In an area with a four to 14 years population of 5,335 children, this equates to one OSC place for every 30 children.

This inequity has been particularly prevalent in Parkhead, a densely populated area where there are two primary schools, St Michael's Primary and Quarry Brae Primary, neither of which has an OSC service located within their catchment area boundary. As well as providing childcare, OSC offers a number of benefits to children and families. It provides opportunities that can have a positive effect on children's learning and wellbeing. This is regularly highlighted by the Scottish Out of School Care Network (SOSCN):

“Children attending quality Out of School Care will be provided with a variety of play opportunities both indoors and outdoors, as well as stimulating and challenging physical and mental activities, and access to cultural activities. Through all of these they learn and develop cognitive, physical and emotional skills. Children should also be able to relax in the company of friends and have a say on how the service is run.”²⁸

The main concerns reported by OSC providers in Glasgow East are access to suitable premises and the recruitment and retention of staff.²⁹ There are very limited opportunities for OSC services to be based in their own premises and many other community venues are unsuitable for registered childcare. Having sole use of a space is highly valued by services as it allows them to tailor it to the needs of the children and give children a sense of ownership of the space, for example by decorating it. It also allows staff to use the space outside of operating times to engage with parents and conduct staff training.

Staffing is reported as an issue for OSC services because many can only offer their staff part-time working hours. OSC providers reported that it is becoming increasingly difficult to retain those staff due to the ELC expansion, with many staff leaving the sector for full-time

²⁷ Out of School Care in Scotland – draft framework: consultation. Available at: gov.scot/publications/out-school-care-scotland-draft-framework-2019/

²⁸ Guest blog, Out of School Care – Believing that children matter (2018). Available at: childreninscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CHANGE-Guest-Blog-Out-of-School-Care-Believing-that-children-matter-2018.pdf

²⁹ What have we learned so far? Feedback from OSC providers (2019). Available at: childreninscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CHANGE-Learning-Summary-Feedback-from-OSC-providers-2019.pdf

work in nurseries. OSC managers described how it is common for them to have to cover staff shortages by carrying out duties usually held by practitioners. This has the knock-on effect of reducing the amount of time a manager can spend on required administrative tasks and forward planning.

Play and youth services

As previously indicated, a range of very popular, free or low-cost play and youth services were operating in the area. This provision for children and young people outside of school hours is one of the area's key strengths.

Community organisations in the CHANGE area have adapted and evolved in response to local conditions, and the opportunities provided by charities that deliver play and youth work is phenomenal. These services provide play and activity sessions for children and young people across the CHANGE project area. They are usually based in community venues or 'pop-up' locations, such as local parks or streets. The combination of low-cost and location makes them very accessible to families.

These services do not provide registered childcare, but it is clear that for many children and young people and their families they are immensely important and greatly valued. Individuals working in play and youth services are highly skilled and have usually developed relationships with families over time. There are also good links between services, and an important signposting system in place for families.³⁰



In terms of sustainability, play and youth services face a continual struggle to ensure they have adequate funding and resources to deliver their programmes. For example:

“You have to decide whether you should be providing a service or whether you should pull yourself away from that service to find funding for the project. It is quite a balancing act but so far, regardless of the amount of funding, it is important for us to keep up the link to the community and the young people in it.”³¹

Manager, local provider

³⁰ What have we learned so far? Play and youth services in Glasgow East (2019). Available at: childreninscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CHANGE-Learning-Summary-Play-and-youth-services-in-Glasgow-East-2019.pdf

³¹ Youth project 1 case study (2020). Unpublished

*"We jump through hoops to get money and it is constant. You've got to weigh up, is it worth it? So, when it works you are glad that the young people are getting that support. Our young people very much drive things here and if there is an enthusiasm, we just hope it will get funded somewhere because the young people believe in it. I know we do good in the community."*³²

Manager, local provider

Services told us they need longer and more secure funding, which would ideally measure outcomes for children and families rather than simply numbers attending. Families told us they need services that are longer term, not operating for a year or often less.

Case study

Innovation has been a feature of childcare services in the area for a long time. This case study was carried out by the CHANGE team to highlight the efforts being made locally to meet need.

The Carbon Footprints nursery was set up as a not-for-profit enterprise in 2012 by Milnbank Housing Association. It was developed using funds from Milnbank Housing Association, the Big Lottery Fund and the Climate Challenge Fund. The service is housed in a purpose-built building, constructed using environmentally sustainable materials and provides day-care space for children aged six weeks to five years and an OSC facility for children aged five to 14.

The service is the only service currently offering nursery and OSC provision from the same premises and has a unique fee structure with the inclusion of a small number of subsidised places. The need for the enterprise was identified by Milnbank Community Enterprise Committee, made up of local people. The aim was to create childcare provision that would be affordable to local families, while also providing a flexible service that would support families with a range of personal circumstances.

The original aim was to create 19 subsidised places. This proved challenging but over time parents were able to apply for a limited number of subsidised places, covering a range of circumstances such as a change in employment or salary and parents returning to work or further education.

The ELC and OSC services under the one roof offers the opportunity to address the staffing issues highlighted by OSC providers. This may make the recruitment and retention of staff easier, as full-time hours can be offered. Being based in their own premises also allows OSC staff to use the space in different ways, such as hosting training and allowing children and young people to decorate the space, increasing a sense of community ownership. A service for different age groups also offers families continuity and convenience and being able to cater for different types of childcare under one roof makes it easier to respond to individual families' needs.

³² Youth project 2 case study (2020). Unpublished

How CHANGE responded

In October 2018 the CHANGE team supported the establishment of an OSC service at the new Riverbank Primary School in Dalmarnock. A newly formed Parent Council had carried out engagement with families and identified a need for OSC provision. The CHANGE team facilitated an expression of interest process and acted as the intermediary in communications with local childcare providers, contacting all OSC providers that operated in the East and North East (the area covered by an OSC Forum) and inviting services to submit an expression of interest. The team met with the Parent Council to review the submissions, offering guidance on sector-specific issues such as quality grades and good practice. Interviews were held with the interested services and the Parent Council identified a preferred provider.

The local service, Connect 2 OSC, was selected. They planned to relocate their existing service from a community room in a Baltic Street high-rise building to Riverbank Primary. This move would also help to create more OSC places, increasing Connect 2's capacity from 30 spaces at their Baltic Street location to 40 spaces in the new Riverbank Primary School setting.

A key objective for the Parent Council was to ensure that any children that had attended Connect 2 at Baltic Street, and continued to use the service when it relocated, were given adequate support with this transition. The CHANGE team carried out engagement sessions with children alongside Participation and Engagement staff from Children in Scotland. These sessions gathered children's views on the relocation of the service and included activities to capture any concerns or worries they may have had. This was shared with the OSC service to support the transition process for children. A local parent who was involved explained:

"Having someone impartial who knew that area particularly and knew the area in terms of after-school was really useful for us."

"The impact of it was that (CHANGE) was somebody that knew their stuff, sharing their knowledge with us at a time when we didn't know that stuff... I feel confident that we got the right provider rather than just 'a provider'... Had we not went through that kind of diligence with CHANGE then we wouldn't have had that."³³

Additionally, due to the significant gap in OSC provision in the Parkhead area, the CHANGE project made securing a new OSC service in Parkhead one of its priorities. The project team invited local OSC providers to submit expressions of interest in establishing a new service. An OSC provider was identified and the project team worked extensively with this partner to explore options for local venues from which a new OSC service could operate. At different stages some of these options showed promise, such as a local community centre, a vacant building run by a local housing association and a local sports facility.

³³ Interview with member of Riverbank Parent Council, 11 December 2020

What happened next

Securing space in the Parkhead area for a service provided a real challenge and over the project's lifetime the team was unable to secure a venue. Throughout 2019, the CHANGE team engaged with a local community centre. The centre was interested in exploring the possibility of their premises hosting a new service, but the nature of the community centre space meant that OSC provision would impact on the centre's existing activity provision. In partnership with a local housing association, a vacant building within easy reach of both schools, considered suitable for use by OSC, was identified. However, this venue only offered a temporary solution for up to a year, as a new tenant was due to move in. Therefore, it was decided that it would not be pursued as moving could be disruptive to local families, so another longer-term solution would be sought.

At the start of 2020 a third potential venue, a local sports facility, was identified. The CHANGE team and OSC provider met the management team who expressed interest in hosting a service. A suitable space within the venue was identified and a proposal was presented to the management board. The costings were considered viable in the first instance and it was suggested that the venue host may also be able to support with applications for funding if required. An issue was identified that centred around the provision of food; however, all parties were hopeful that this could be resolved.

Unfortunately, due to the Covid pandemic and lockdown this venue temporarily closed. This resulted in negotiations being paused indefinitely.

Next steps and recommendations

From March 2020, the CHANGE project maintained regular contact with OSC partners, all of whom highlighted the significant impact Covid has had on their services. Public health restrictions, changes to work patterns, redundancies, reduced mixing and isolation rules have led to local OSC services experiencing a reduction in demand and numbers in attendance. This has presented a challenge to current business models and sustainability.

Results from the SOSCN Reopening Survey, published in October 2020, indicated that 87% of OSC services who responded from across Scotland have reopened following the national lockdown in March 2020. Most of these services reported a significant drop in numbers attending. When asked what impact those attendance levels would have if continued over a couple more months, 45% stated this would affect their long-term financial viability and 18% were unsure.³⁴

This evidence suggests that for the time being there is no justification for setting up a new OSC service in Parkhead whilst providers are experiencing significantly reduced uptake. Although circumstances have changed dramatically in a short space of time, the evidence gathered by the CHANGE project pre-Covid indicating a gap in OSC provision in Parkhead remains valid. A registered childcare deficit exists and children and young people who grow up there miss out on opportunities that those residents in a different postcode may benefit from.

This highlights the stark inequity that families in the area experience and should inform future steps in the community. With increased job insecurity, reduced incomes and

³⁴ Scottish Out of School Network Reopening Survey. Available at: soscni.org/downloads/research/reopening-survey-oct-2020.pdf?fbclid=IwAR1F3W7-KGjfeOIky37wpeFF-P4Q8ZDeSlu9YSDSIFZypRq-almUH255o8U

changing work patterns, the gap between demand and affordability of OSC may increase and there is a risk that this pre-existing inequity is exacerbated by the effects of the pandemic.

In the final months of the project, the CHANGE focus shifted from establishing a new service to supporting the providers already operating in the area. It is important that the current OSC offer is maintained and provides a strong foundation to build from as soon as this is possible.

In a wider sense, the learning of the CHANGE project around OSC highlights the fact that childcare cannot be viewed in isolation and that it must be recognised as part of core services for children and families. This is also reflected in the Scottish Government's Out of School Care in Scotland Draft Framework 2019. Its central vision is to achieve:

“A rights-based, dynamic out of school care offer for all children and young people which supports choice and growth, enabling families and communities to reach their full potential.”³⁵

This is of particular relevance to areas like Parkhead, where families have lived with very limited childcare options for decades. Such areas need help to break through from a situation where there are no OSC places to offer local families, to a situation where OSC is accessible and affordable and not only meets the childcare needs of parents and carers but is valued for providing children and young people with life-enhancing experiences.

There are **176 OSC places** in the CHANGE area.

This is now the equivalent of **one place for every 30 children**.



³⁵ Out of School Care in Scotland – draft framework: consultation. Available at: gov.scot/publications/out-school-care-scotland-draft-framework-2019/

What CHANGE heard

One of the access barriers that local families reported from initial engagement activity was the cost of food in childcare services, such as additional charges for lunch or snacks or in providing a packed lunch. They also highlighted a lack of knowledge about where they could access affordable quality food generally, and what local community resources were available.

How CHANGE responded

In 2018, CHANGE Hub members and other local services began to develop an affordable quality food template. Over time this formed a directory which identified existing food suppliers, community growers and other related initiatives. The aim was to make information around food easier to access for both childcare services and local families.

One issue highlighted by members was the need to ensure that the information in the directory created did not go out of date and could be easily accessed by both services and families. It was commented:

“Families highlighted that information was really poor so we’re trying to turn that around. People don’t want any more new websites; they just want all the information to be together.”³⁶

Local stakeholder

The CHANGE Hub was working with A Local Information Service for Scotland (ALISS), (Chapter 8) NHS and local authority partners to try to make getting information about childcare and family support services easier. The ALISS system was chosen by Hub members to also host the food directory and the information contained within it was incorporated into the system.

As services contained within ALISS are automatically transferred into the NHS Inform site, via **Scotland’s Service Directory** (SSD). NHS Inform is a partnership between NHS 24, Macmillan Cancer Support and the Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE). The information from the food directory being available in both places will support a holistic approach to health and wellbeing.

What happened next

Cooking and nutrition

As the directory was being collated another food related issue was raised by a local service. Hub member TICTACS (To Invest in Children to Assist the Community of Shettleston) After School Service had been trained by a nutritionist on the Grub4Life programme and wanted to create a strong evidence base which highlighted the impact this programme could have on children and their families’ knowledge of healthy foods and diet. Following the training TICTACS worked on a campaign to increase healthy foods in lunch boxes with

³⁶ Harkins Research & Consultancy Ltd., CHANGE Evaluation – Year Three. Available at: childreninscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CHANGE_Year_3_Evaluation.pdf

families. Through strengthening the children's understanding of healthy foods, the service began to see a change to the content of the children's lunch boxes from home.

However, finding support for their initiative was proving difficult, buying from local shops was costly and the service wanted to know how to access fruit and vegetable barras or markets. It was hard to know what resources were available. The manager of the service suggested they visit some local supermarkets to investigate what healthy foods were on offer. The service contacted several supermarkets to ask if a member of staff would be available to take the children on a tour, but the supermarkets could not commit to a time. The logistics of taking a group along to find no staff member was available would have proved too disappointing for the children and young people. In seeking change for local families TICTACS partnered with CHANGE and the CHANGE Hub for assistance with accessing support.

Community growing

TICTACS operates from two sites – Wellshot Primary School and St Serf's Church. The service hoped to develop an outdoor area which would include a patch for growing at their St Serf's site.

One of the schools they work closely with in the community is St Paul's Primary School in Shettleston - also CHANGE Hub members. Together they collaborated with the CHANGE team to explore ways of taking a community approach to growing to enable the services to support each other and work together.

The CHANGE team brought a nutrition consultant who had previously worked with TICTACS and a local community growing social enterprise in Parkhead (Greenheart Growers) together to discuss a collaborative approach to food and growing with the two services.



St Paul's Primary was able to assign a piece of land for growing shared between TICTACS, the school and nursery. Developing this site and using this alongside other community resources would further connect the local families to food and nature and the team would support staff and children and show them how to grow their own produce.

Over the summer holiday period until the new school term started, the CHANGE project funded Greenheart Growers to attend TICTACS to provide advice for the development of this site and work with the children and service to lay the foundations of a gardening site. This worked well with the children looking forward to the growing sessions and the TICTACS service having their own growing space. After the summer, the partners re-grouped and decided that the community growing, and nutrition had potential to become a combined project.

In 2019, as a way of celebrating the work that has been carried out across the sites previously, the CHANGE team, St Paul's Primary and TICTACS arranged a community banquet for families and services to attend and enjoy a meal together. The banquet was attended by 84 adults and children and was intended to lead into the first phase of this project in Shettleston and Tollcross, which was to form a growing, nutrition and cooking club with families. Services spoke with the families attending about the potential of the club and some of the families expressed an interest in joining. This became the Plot to Plate Club. The vision for the club was that some of the families may wish to become Nutrition Ambassadors and gain a Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS) qualification in nutrition and community growing, they would then go on to recruit and work with other families and help to keep the project sustainable over time.



Community banquet, November 2019

The CHANGE role involved facilitating connections and supporting the development of ideas, CHANGE actions and evidence of impact included:

Phase 1

- Brought together community growing and nutrition partners
- With partners organised and hosted a community banquet
- Provided financial support to the TICTACS service to help establish a community growing summer project. Including carrying out sessions with the children to ensure they were also involved in the evaluation of the impact of growing and nutrition
- Sourced school, nursery and OSC services for tests to take place.

Phase 2 (halted mid-way due to Covid)

- Supported progression of the work by engaging other nursery and secondary schools in discussions
- Supported funding applications and award applications with services
- Worked with the services on their vision for their club, phase 1 services focus was on good nutrition and supporting positive mental health and phase 2 services focus was on using community growing and nutrition to strengthen their transition process. The aim was to provide opportunities for growing and healthy eating throughout a child and young person's educational journey from nursery to secondary school
- Led a session with families on the barriers and goals to starting a Plot to Plate Club
- Gathered data at Plot to Plate sessions for the evaluation process including the change in the number of families reporting children's involvement in planning and cooking meals at home, the number of opportunities to eat as a family, using acquired skills to grow food and use of community growing facilities.

Through this, the CHANGE team collated its evidence of impact and shared this as extensively as possible including with those working on the Good Food Nation Bill.

Next steps and recommendations

The success of the initial phases of this work are evident but the confidence for families to take part was identified as a barrier to participation. Similar initiatives should investigate with partners ways to support families' confidence levels prior to joining the club and throughout the sessions.

Continuing support for the families' needs after the six-week course ends might help to increase sustainability with more families going on to become Nutrition Ambassadors. Similarly, increasing the duration of the club beyond the six-week period would be helpful as it would support ways to keep participants connected, continuing to retain that "family feel", as described by a participant.

The families who participated felt that the club could be sustainable, however consideration must be given as to how recruitment will take place, the distance to venues and making sure food is not wasted. The CHANGE team carried out mapping of transport options and found that costs and limited access to some routes created barriers to families being able to easily access services.

It is important to consider how services are identified to take part in such projects and how future cycles will be funded. For example, the Pupil Equity Fund has been utilised in

the past for sessions, however with the impact of Covid on the community this funding may need to be used to support children and young people in other ways within the school. This fund is not accessible to ELC services which means a collaborative approach between a school and nursery could not be funded in this way.

Evidence shows that community gardens should work more collaboratively together where possible, with staggered opening days, as many operate at the same times. For example, Thursdays were highlighted as a particularly difficult day to access the gardens, with families stating this is a day when their children are often participating in clubs and sports activities.



Chapter 8 – Information

What CHANGE heard

Finding information

Finding information about registered childcare and family support services was a key issue for local families and services from initial conversations.

Parents and carers said that they were aware of the Glasgow Family Information Service and other sources of online information, but they often just wanted someone they knew to talk through what was available and how everything worked. Families reported that meeting other families was a valuable source of information. Parents said that local networks including schools and word of mouth are an important source of information regarding childcare. They wondered why information about local OSC services and other childcare is not readily available in their child's school.

Knowing where, when or how to apply for childcare was reported as a challenge. In relation to ELC, parents wanted clearer information about what was available and how their nursery entitlement worked, including that they needed to have three choices of nursery in their application. Many also reported that understanding their place or allocation of waiting lists for local authority nurseries was difficult.

The way a service provides information to parents was highlighted as a barrier to accessing childcare for parents with learning disabilities. This was also highlighted in relation to parents and carers with English as an additional language and particularly those that were new to Scotland and trying to understand how everything works.

Families with children with additional support needs reported that they don't have time to trawl lots of different websites. Instead, a "one stop shop" is needed.

Sharing information

Childcare providers described the difficulty in keeping their information up to date and linking to everything else. Some providers said that they issued handbooks and flyers to parents, but some lacked the time and resources to do this.

Practitioners reported not being up to date with what was in the area for families despite the range of partnership groups in place.

It was not only information about childcare for parents and carers that was proving difficult for local people; schools in the area reported that children were looking for information about what support was available to their parents who were struggling with mental health difficulties and addiction.

How CHANGE responded

The CHANGE approach to this barrier was twofold – firstly, to work to make information provided by services more accessible to local parents and carers and secondly to work with information providers to combine information so that those supporting families have one source of reliable data.

The CHANGE team made specific suggestions based on the feedback from parents and carers to the Early Years team at Glasgow City Council about the Glasgow Family Information Service (managed by Glasgow City Council) and letters about waiting list placement sent to parents from Glasgow City Council.

Early contact with a health visiting team found that they had built up a directory of family support services available locally that was to help inform health visitors and health practitioners in the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) about who they could refer families to, where there was a support need or in relation to childcare. The Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector (GCVS) also contributed to this directory.

The CHANGE team met staff from the ALLIANCE who were in the process of developing the Scottish Government-funded ALISS service and collaboratively identified that this platform could provide a solution to some of these issues given its focus on health and wellbeing.

A third source of data was identified in the form of a family support directory for services in the third sector, which was being developed by the Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector (GCVS). Initial meetings took place with GCVS to investigate if there could be an opportunity for collaboration.

The GCVS family support directory content is now part of the [Glasgow Helps](#) website. This online directory online is searchable and aims to assist both professionals and parents to find out what is available in their neighbourhood. This is an important local resource.



What happened next

This test of change was developed and owned by the CHANGE Hub members and resulted in the following:

- Mapping of what relevant information was already on ALISS to identify the gaps
- More than 200 health and wellbeing services from the HSCP directory, were incorporated into the ALISS system
- Support was provided to these services to input and keep their information up to date. Non statutory services (which were by far the majority) were encouraged to add their information to ALISS
- A Scotland's Service Directory (SSD) NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde representative was involved in reviewing and cross-referencing the directory to ensure that relevant statutory and SSD content was identified
- The team from ALISS alongside staff from the HSCP and Public Health Directorate and the CHANGE team ran two events for local services on putting information into the platform. A further two sessions were run with NHS 24 in relation to SSD / NHS Inform. This provided an opportunity to convey the needs of families and professionals across sectors and communities
- Groups and organisations were able to claim their information to manage and maintain it
- Editor training was provided for Plot to Plate partners
- The ALISS team presented at a CHANGE Knowledge Exchange event to share their ambition for seamless information about local services with delegates and conducted some user research to ensure continued commitment to the work
- The work was shared widely, including presentations at a Digital Health and Care Learning Network Day and the ALLIANCE's annual conference.

As things stand, information provision is not designed or resourced sufficiently to maximise accessibility for those who would benefit from it. Within the timescale of the CHANGE project some fundamental steps were made to make improvements locally but to secure this improvement in the long term the core principles of good information provision must be more widespread.

The Scottish Government has invested heavily in ALISS, but it will only serve its purpose if staff in local organisations are able to engage with it. It can also not be a substitute for communication and networking locally ensuring that those supporting families know who is there to signpost to and are providing reliable information.

Next steps and recommendations

Information about childcare and family support must be available in the places parents and carers locally are and use and it has to be accurate and up to date. Making sure information is suited to the intended recipients takes time and resource and is often overlooked. Ultimately everyone who works with children and families has a responsibility to make it easier to navigate what childcare and family support is available for both families and practitioners.

Information about childcare and family support services is largely online. It is hard to find and trust this information. People working with families find it difficult to know what support and childcare is available to families and how to access it. There are different directories

and people do not want to give up ownership of their information resource. This is understandable but confusing for the community.

A combination of an extended ALISS platform, making it much better utilised and promoted across sectors, with advice for practitioners about finding information to share, is needed. A similar call was made in 2016 in the guidance for Children's Services Planning (Part 3) of the Children and Young People Act 2014.³⁷ Improved information means that families can access the information in different ways if they need support. If more people are aware of and confident in the information, there are then more options for families to access it from whoever they trust or are in contact with.

Specific activity is needed with families and must be planned into routine contacts with Children's Services, as laid out for example by the Universal Health Visiting Pathway, to make sure parents know what information is where, what can be trusted and how to use it.

*"Myself I can't use a computer, I need a leaflet or a letter or something, I wouldn't know how to get on to the computer and use it."*³⁸

Local parent

*"There is so much information out there, but we need to bring all the resources and information together, so it works for us and the families."*³⁹

Nursery practitioner

³⁷ Statutory Guidance on Part 3 (Children's Services Planning) of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. Available at: gov.scot/publications/statutory-guidance-part-3-childrens-services-planning-children-young-people/

³⁸ Family voices, Glasgow East: a series of short interviews with parents, carers and grandparents (2018)

³⁹ Taken from presentation to ALISS event by CHANGE Hub member, 2019

What CHANGE heard

During early engagement work with children and young people in local primary schools, the team heard from children trying to access support for their parents and how worry for their family can manifest itself. One local primary school – St Paul's Primary School, Shettleston – highlighted that these discussions continued after the CHANGE input and later when the children were asked to contribute ideas to the School Improvement Plan through the Rights Respecting Committee and Pupil Council, 75% asked for supporting mental health to be included.

The main points for action in the school session 2019/2020 were:

- Continue to develop a nurturing ethos within the school and nursery class
- Ensure that planning to meet the needs of all children is fully in line with the principles of GIRFEC
- Support children and families to develop emotional resilience
- Work with partners to reduce the impact of poverty on the outcome for children and families.

How CHANGE responded

The school was a member of the CHANGE Hub. The CHANGE team worked with the head teacher to find out how they could best support the school. Supporting mental health for the children and their families was explored in more detail using improvement methodology conversational tools from the Children and Young People Improvement Collaborative.

A multi-agency team was formed to offer support to the school with a test of change. The team, including a CHANGE representative, consisted of:

- A Health Improvement representative
- **Soundsational** community music (a not-for-profit community arts-based organisation)
- **Achieve More Scotland** (delivers programmes of diversionary activity to young people from areas of high social deprivation)
- A **Community Links** worker (workers based in **Deep End GP practices**, supporting people to identify barriers to their overall wellbeing and link them with the appropriate tools, community support or agency to overcome these)
- **Launch Foods** (maximise food surplus by feeding children in communities with free, hot, nutritious food after their school day and during holidays).

Partners explored how their individual services could combine to offer a package of support. Most of the families in the school community are from Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation areas 1 and 2 and the incidence of anxiety is high. The head teacher asked the CHANGE team to facilitate a circle of concern and influence exercise which would enable any barriers or strengths to be identified.

This piece of work centred around increasing the numbers of children who attended the school's holiday club. The head teacher noted that these numbers were low with only five children in attendance during the last holiday period, despite staff trying to engage

families in several ways. It was felt there were families who had previously asked for assistance during the holidays and would particularly benefit from this club but had not engaged with it.

The CHANGE team shared a data dashboard template from the improvement tools with the school which enabled them to capture evidence of the children's attendance levels at the club and any impact on their health and wellbeing.

Soundsational carried out an emotional scoring exercise with the children and young people and the staff team every morning in school. If anyone scored low, high, or average, there was the opportunity to explore why they were feeling that way. After the music sessions emotional scoring took place again to assess how the input had impacted the children. Music workshops were provided which the headteacher reported not only helped with the children's emotional wellbeing and ability to express themselves but also in fully engaging them in an activity they look forward to. This was shared with Achieve More Scotland to help them consider using this as part of the holiday club programme.



Achieve More Scotland provided an active holiday activity programme while Launch Foods provided the food in an American Airstream Rocket truck which the children said was “cool”.

The Community Links practitioner was on hand to give any support to families who attended the Dr Cairns Practice and staff from the Health Improvement team were able to signpost to mental health services.

By the following holiday period, the numbers of children participating had risen from five to 75 and increased to 90 children by the following school holiday. These numbers have been consistently maintained since then. The club proved so successful that an after-school activity club was formed, working with the same partners as the holiday provision. This has now been incorporated fully into the life of the school. During the pandemic, the holiday club has moved into the school, it is hoped that in future years this will continue.

Next steps and recommendations

Children and young people need to be able to find information easily and safely if they or their family need support. Parents, carers and their children favour services in the area working together to create a school community approach to supporting mental health. This collaborative approach led to significant impact in a short time frame and was successful due to good relationships established between participating partners.

The headteacher shared the school's findings with Glasgow City Council's Mental Health Strategy Group and with other headteachers locally. The learning from this test should continue to be shared widely in particular with the HSCP and at a Scottish Government level.

Chapter 10 – Conclusion and recommendations

What did CHANGE achieve?

The CHANGE project managed to become immersed in the local community, building relationships based on trust. This worked both with local families at a community level, and among local services, and led to the development of a thriving CHANGE Hub.

The CHANGE model

Learning



What children and young people told CHANGE:

- We are not sure about childminders if we haven't used them
- Staff need to be kind
- Activities need to be fun and have the right equipment
- I'm worried about what support is available for my mum and dad
- It is important to be able to easily identify OSC services as different staff do pick ups.

What parents/carers told CHANGE:

- Local services are good – when you get them
- Knowing what is available and how to access it is hard
- Costs associated with attending are hard to meet
- Times do not suit working and family patterns
- Services and people come and go.

What services told CHANGE:

- Funding comes and goes
- Funding is not focused on outcomes for children and young people
- Family need locally is increasing
- It is hard to keep staff
- The same things have been discussed in forums for years
- It is difficult to know where to signpost families.

Actions



What did CHANGE do?

- Brought people working with families together to work collaboratively
- Helped local assets be realised. For example around family growing
- Identified where Out of School Care is needed
- Listened and supported parents as family champion volunteers
- Made efforts to grow childminding then Community Childminding
- Shone a light on the local impact of play services
- Supported the need for more universal family support
- Addressed fractured information – online and in person.

Longer term impact



On the community

- A sustainable childcare model in the local area based on meaningful community engagement
- Improved experience of and access to childcare in the area
- Families exposed to the project feel more supported
- Local economic benefits
- Increased knowledge and awareness of what works and why, in providing childcare services across different communities
- Improved health and wellbeing
- Increased knowledge of and participation in local growing and food activities.

BIG outcomes

▶ **Children and young people have improved wellbeing and maintain better relationships with their families and community.**

▶ **Families are more resilient and have improved relationships.**

▶ **Local residents feel their community is a better place to live.**



The project gathered evidence to make a genuinely informed case about local need in accessing and providing childcare. In doing so it created a more connected community. The focus on learning from local people was supported by services and policy professionals who wanted to listen.

Four years of project work enabled a thorough exploration of what childcare is on offer in the East of the city; how families encounter services; and how practitioners swim against a tide of increased need and less resource.

Local solutions were identified and – through the CHANGE Hub and partnership with local services – change was achieved to integrate childcare services into the mainstream support infrastructure. However much more needs to be done.

Securing lasting change

Glasgow's four priorities in the **Family Support Strategy** are wholeheartedly supported by the CHANGE experience. Our conclusion is that childcare strategy must now be owned by local communities.

Quality childcare and play and youth services allow children and their families to thrive. This universal provision creates an environment for children and young people to flourish and their parents and carers to feel empowered. However, if childcare is placed on the edges of provision its benefits will not be realised for children and their families. Childcare in Scotland is a fragmented, piecemeal system that needs to work a lot better.

The chapters above include recommendations based on what the project has seen, heard and achieved. Some are specific about a service, but the overall theme is the effect of what collaboration feels like when achieved alongside everyone with an interest in children's futures, and when there is no hierarchy getting in the way.

The **Glasgow Integrated Children and Young People's Service Plan 2017-2020** includes two explicit references to childcare, one about ELC and the other about its significance:

"The Healthier, Wealthier Children approach undertaken by maternity and community child health services, is another good example of helping families to maximise their income, resolve housing tenancy issues, refer to employment services, obtain childcare, manage debt repayments and overcome fuel poverty."⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Glasgow Integrated Children and Young People's Service Plan 2017-2020. Available at: glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=38782&p=0

Families require a variety of childcare options to be accessible and available locally. Parents, carers, children and young people generally know what they need and what helps. In relation to childcare in the East End of Glasgow this is:

1. Parents and carers need childcare to enable them to attend emergency appointments and access public services
2. More childminders. We need to help to grow childminding so that families have more choice about how and when their child is looked after. This service has so much to offer families in the East End. More opportunities are required for childminding services to build links with nurseries, schools and Out of School Care services
3. For Out of School Care services to be sustainable they should be treated as a core service. This should include considering school and community buildings as everyone's spaces
4. More opportunities for families to play and learn together. In particular, all food-related work needs to be funded in a way that allows it to be part of the mainstream offer. Multiple reports⁴¹ demonstrate the impact of well-planned and delivered activities that bring families together around food. Community services should be built around these
5. Information that is easy to find and understand. The childcare and family support available must be made easier to navigate for both families and practitioners
6. Services that are here to stay. Any service providing childcare or play for children and young people needs to be funded on a long term, secure basis.

Whilst these changes require transformation, the mechanism to shift experiences and opportunities lies in supporting collaboration and partnership. People delivering services for children and families have no or very little excess time. Creating a mechanism for practitioners working with the same families to collaborate and support one another is key. The CHANGE Hub demonstrates the impact of this, and the key features of this hub will be shared widely based on the CHANGE model.

Risks

Like work with any community, a range of barriers made progress in some areas slow. The short term nature of the CHANGE work makes this challenging but where achievement or progress has not been possible, there is a will locally to move this on.

Understanding what was and was not working locally requires time and resource. This was feasible as a result of CHANGE's project funding, but regular and sustained dialogue and assessment with children, families and practitioners is frequently significantly underestimated in project and service planning.

Locally and nationally, we are making progress, but culture change and real transformation is required to make the involvement and empowerment ambitions for local services a reality. Huge societal pressures exist for families and services, even more so following a pandemic that represented one of the biggest challenges for generations.

⁴¹ For example see: gov.scot/publications/dignity-ending-hunger-together-scotland-report-independent-working-group-food/ and childreninscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/FFF-SY-Report-Final-UPDATE.pdf

Opportunity

It is our hope that the essence of the East End, combined with effective local and national policy drivers and the possibility of post-pandemic transformation, will result in local community childcare and support services that can thrive.

Networks developed across the course of the project are sufficiently embedded in the local community to mean that elements of the project will continue.

CHANGE's legacy must be a movement to contribute to better outcomes for children and their families with a sense that childcare is for everyone who wants it and is here to stay.



'It's our future': Childcare in Glasgow East

**The final report of the CHANGE: Childcare and Nurture Glasgow East pathfinder project
(2016-2020)**

February 2021

Illustrations by media co-op



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