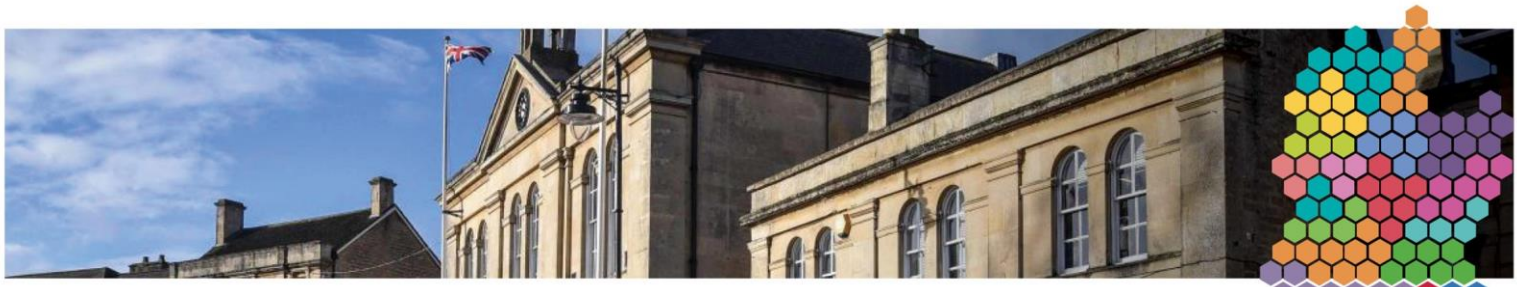

Engagement and Partnerships report

The Melksham Area Board in June 2022 reviewed available local data and evidence, and integrated this with local knowledge and community conversation to agree the following local priority themes:

- **To engage with young people to improve employment opportunities and provide positive activities**
- **To protect and enhance the environment**
- **To reduce isolation and loneliness**
- **To support low-income individuals and families**
- **To reduce anti-social behaviour**

Each priority theme has a series of more specific local actions that the Strategic Engagement and Partnership Manager and Area Board Delivery Officer will work with the Melksham Area Board to deliver. Some of the actions that the Area Board Members and officers has led on or supported since the last meeting include:

1. **To engage with young people to improve employment opportunities and provide positive activities**
   - Melksham Oak School has set up a youth council. This is linked to the area board via Cllr Oatley and increases the voice of young people within the community area
   - Following discussions with the healthy schools team we will be in early 2023 contacting all schools and those not already engaged will be encouraged to participate in the healthy schools project.
   - 4 Youth have further extended their support of young people with the establishment of anger management counselling and the establishment of a youth club for those who have been through counselling previously. The latter helps address the issue of young people being left without support once the counselling finishes.

2. **To protect and enhance the environment**
   - The Area Board is involved in discussions to identify pieces of land that can then be enhanced providing additional environmental gain. Further information will be available shortly

3. **To reduce isolation and loneliness**
   - The Age Friendly Melksham report and the Carers Champion's survey were discussed at the Melksham Health and wellbeing meeting. As a result, a sub-group met and have committed to trying to provide additional coordination and support for vulnerable and isolated people.
   - The first event for young carers is scheduled for the 3rd December and will provide free activities in the Campus as a recognition of the immense contribution they make to our community. Further events are planned, including an event for young adult carers in March 23
   - Discussions have taken place with the NHS regarding an estate plan for Melksham being produced in 2023. A follow up meeting will take place in Feb 2023 to discuss progress and community involvement

4. **To support low income individuals and families**
   - The Area Board has provided funding for slow cookers that are being distributed to those who need them most by Melksham Foodbank. Simple recipes and ingredients will also be provided. If feedback is positive and more are required, the Area Board will consider providing additional money
   - Energy cafes are being run in various locations in and around Melksham by Wiltshire Wildlife Community Energy to offer people trips and advice to help stay warmer at home and reduce energy bills. Details can be found at https://ocm.wiltshire.gov.uk/melksham/energy-cafes-in-wiltshire/
   - An interactive map of warm spaces and community providers as well as a wealth of helpful information on helping with the cost of living is available on the Wiltshire Council web site. Council tax, benefits and financial support - Wiltshire Council