

Southend Health and Wellbeing Board

Report by

Alex Khaldi, Independent Chair, A Better Start Southend

to

Health & Wellbeing Board on 6th September 2023

Report prepared by:

Tara Poore, Director, A Better Start Southend

	For discussion	X	For information only		Approval required
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A Better Start Southend - update

Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide an update from the Chair of A Better Start Southend (ABSS) on key developments since the last meeting.

2 Recommendations

HWB are asked to:

1. Note the content of the report and raise questions or comments with Alex Khaldi, Independent Chair of A Better Start Southend (ABSS) or Tara Poore, ABSS Director
2. Note the progression of the ABSS Legacy and Sustainability Strategy.

3 Governance

The ABSS Programme continues to benefit from strong Partnership engagement, with positive participation at a range of levels for all core Partners, including:

- Early Years Alliance
- Southend City Council
- Essex Police
- Mid and South Essex Hospital Trust
- Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (EPUT)
- Mid and South Essex Integrated Care Board
- University of Essex
- SAVS

As a reminder, the ABSS Programme Governance structure comprises the following Groups:

- Partnership Board - Chair, Alex Khaldi, ABSS
- Executive Consultative Board - Chair, Alex Khaldi, ABSS
- Programme Group - Chair, Krishna Ramkhelawon, SCC

- Insight and Analysis Group - Chair, Michael Freeston, EYA
- Finance and Risk Group - Chair, Paul Grout, SCC
- Parents' Group - Rolling Parent Champion Chairs
- YourFamily Partnership Group - Chair, Emma Hawker, Parent Champion.

All ABSS governance meetings continue to take place regularly and are aligned to the governance schedule, to aid with oversight and scrutiny of ABSS Programme activity.

Engagement of Parent Champions within ABSS (Governance) Meetings and wider Co-Production

All committees and groups include the active participation of engaged parents, with Terms of Reference stating that no meeting is quorate unless there is parent and Partner presence at each forum.

Southend Family Centres

Southend Family Centres and ABSS continue to work together to meet the needs of children and families in Southend. Exploration of opportunities to integrate further are currently taking place, with increased emphasis being placed on the pre-natal period, anti-poverty response and parenting support.

The National Lottery Community Fund (TNLCF)

ABSS continues to have a strong relationship with the TNLCF, the four other A Better Start (ABS) sites (Bradford, Blackpool, Lambeth and Nottingham) and evaluation partners. This sees a coming together to share learning and plan for the wind down of the national programme.

Recently, TNLCF, the five ABS sites, National Children's Bureau and renowned experts in childhood development came together to develop and deliver a virtual conference that showcased the most impactful elements of the programme and spoke to the challenges partnerships are facing due to the ongoing recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, cost of living crisis on child development outcomes, families experiences and the need to be ever flexible in provision and the distribution of funding.

Over the next few months, ABSS will be developing a clear list of items to which intellectual property (IP) pertains. This will then form the beginning of a register of the IP items that will transfer to partners and delivery bodies.

4 ABSS Legacy and Sustainability

Commissioned Services

The ABSS Programme Team continue to work with commissioned delivery partners to determine their vision for services beyond 2025. All delivery partners are currently in the process of completing a Legacy and Sustainability plan which will set out their aspirations for the future, avenues of alternative funding sources, partnership working and interdependencies with other projects or services, impacts on staffing/team resource and beneficiaries, and the support needed to deliver these aspirations beyond 2025 as the ABSS Programme comes to an end.

Plans are underway to facilitate a commissioner's symposium, which will see bodies with commissioning responsibilities come together to explore the gaps in provision ABSS funding (ending) could leave in 2025. This is also an opportunity to ensure that priorities are not set in silo and is anticipated to bring the wider system together to align resources to ensure the most impact can continue to be made in Southend in years to come.

The Workforce Development Programme

The Workforce Development Programme consists of both an internal team focus and external early years and health professionals' focus. The internal programme is progressing at pace. The external programme is also developing, with planning taking place to deliver a schedule of learning events in 2024. Community development and resilience is also being considered in the external programme and events some events will be aimed at families and community members. The first of these events is expected to take place in early November 2023, and is likely to focus on Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD). Other events will look at sharing learning or evidence from the ABSS programme or on particular topics relating to child development. A working group has been established from the ABSS' Insights and Analysis Group (IAG) to oversee this work.

City Family Community Interest Company

In May 2022, approval was received to progress the ABSS Legacy and Sustainability Strategy (LSS) by the Partnership and The National Lottery Community Foundation (TNLCF). This was a pivotal moment in ABSS' journey and laid out the tangible plans required to ensure the legacy of ABSS and TNLCF investment can be felt in Southend for many years to come.

City Family CIC was established in September 2022, tasked initially, with driving forward key parts of the Legacy and Sustainability Strategy and set to become the nucleus of excellency in early years (EY) health, development and support provision in the area. City Family is now a formal strategic partner of the ABSS programme.

The ABSS Executive Consultative Board and The National Lottery Community Fund have undertaken a review of what is anticipated to deliver the final phase of the funding period to ensure the legacy and sustainability of ABSS can be driven forward most effectively, whilst the responsible and proper wind down of the programme is managed. This has culminated to a point where there is a requirement to split some of the programme functions to allow the right kind of focus on the main strands of activity.

ABSS will continue managing the core business functions of the programme – Commissioning, Research and Partnership, whilst City Family will become the delivery partner of Creche, Talking Transitions and YourFamily, aligned to the aims set out in the LSS.

Tara Poore has held the leadership roles across ABSS and City Family for the last year and it was previously agreed that this arrangement should be reviewed frequently to ensure capacity and potential conflicts of interest are considered and addressed. Furthermore, plans to outsource ABSS direct delivery services to City Family requires substantive, full time, leadership and administration in order to undertake business operations and provide stability and reassurance to transferring (and then transferred) staff. A solid infrastructure should also provide reassurance and commitment to EYA/ABSS, SCC, TNLCF and any potential new funders.

Tara Poore will be moving to the Chief Officer role (City Family), full-time, from October 2023, along with administrative support. Tara is the current MD and co-founder of City Family; and the City Family board unanimously agreed she should take on the Chief Officer role substantively and exclusively. The signatories to ABSS grant agreement (EYA, Southend City Council and TNLCF) also support this transfer as well as the ABSS Partnership Board.

Once the initial transfer (Infrastructure) has concluded, the process of transferring the Direct Delivery services will begin. It is anticipated this will happen in two stages. ABSS Creche and Family Hub coordination to be outsourced to City Family by November 2023. YourFamily and Talking Transitions outsourced to City Family by January 2024

An internal process will take place to appoint the ABSS Director, who we hope will be a candidate that has strong, strategic knowledge of the programme, and is well placed to steer the wind down. It

should be noted that Tara's substantive transfer to City Family is not being treated as a resignation, it is the natural progression point linked to the ABSS LSS and all efforts will be made to ensure there is stability across both ABSS and City Family.

5 Research and evidence

Programme Evaluation Partnership

The University of Essex Research team is conducting semi-structured qualitative interviews with beneficiaries and project delivery partners for the seventh round of reporting for the Formative Evaluation to be shared with ABSS in the first week of August 2023. The interviews allow the team to analyse beneficiaries' and staff narratives about the impact of the ABSS programme on families and how services are being delivered. More specifically, IDVA and Talking Transitions will receive their first round of reporting, which includes data from qualitative interviews with staff and professionals who participated in the Elklan Training. The new online survey instrument developed for Families Growing Together will be uploaded for online data collection.

The research team together with ABSS colleagues defined which projects to continue evaluating in the current form and which to move to a form of reporting that will summarise findings and recommendations from the wealth of evidence collected to date. This forms part of a wider conversation about how evidence from the formative evaluation can be used to support ABSS's legacy and sustainability strategy and programme of work. A summary report model, including snapshots of the projects' evaluation throughout their lifespan will be shared with ABSS by the end of September.

The second research paper arising from ABSS work: 'Making sense of organisational challenges and community resilience during Covid-19: A case-study of a multi-agency intervention tackling child poverty in England' is co-authored with ABSS colleagues and is in submission with 'Practice' journal.

Independent Programme-wide Summative Evaluation

Data collection for Phase 2 of the Summative Evaluation completed in June 2023. RSM interviewed a range of stakeholders, including strategic partners, delivery partners and members of the wider community. Surveys were used to explore the experiences of parents who have participated in ABSS activities, parents who have not participated in ABSS activities, and staff and volunteers working to deliver the ABSS programme and its projects. Participatory Action Research (PAR) has continued, with focus groups for each workstream meeting and using a range of activities to explore what has had impact in each area. The RSM team are now analysing the collected data and writing up their findings, with the Phase 2 report due to be published in late September 2023.

Data Analysis and Insights

The SCC OPI Data Team has been updating the ABSS Programme Outcomes dashboard with the latest annual data for 2022/23. This includes outcomes for maternity metrics, ASQ scores and educational attainment. An EYFS-specific analysis tool has been developed and will shortly be shared with the wider team. A significant piece of work was also conducted to provide 2 years' worth of outcome data to support the evaluation partner, RSM, together with estimates of the numbers of individuals participating in ABSS activities that potentially contributed to these outcomes. Other work conducted by the OPI Data Team has included a number of ad-hoc requests for support with data enquiries, such as early years funding take up, ethnicity and language data, and breastfeeding rates. Support has also been provided to prepare for the migration of Family Centre support worker data to the Inform2 system. Regular work updating and maintaining the ABSS data dashboards also continues, and the team have provided sessions to colleagues in the programme office to demonstrate these tools and seek ideas for future developments.

6 Programme Activity and Reach

An extract of the ABSS Data Dashboard titled 'Partnership Board Programme Activity Summary' is shown in **Appendix One**

Between 1st April 2015 and 30th June 2023, a total of 6,636 unique primary beneficiaries engaged with the programme (from 5,541 by 30th June 2022). The programme is reach in the areas with highest deprivation continues to steadily grow month on month.

A further 1275 children accessed the Talking Transition Programme (aged 4-5) and are not captured in the above figures due to reporting differences and being out of the ABSS age range.

YourFamily

YourFamily's mission is 'to give children the best start in life, YourFamily builds trusting relationships with expectant parents and parents with young children to develop their strengths and resilience and connects them to community resources'. Alongside the mission, the emerging service principles are: YourFamily has trusting relationships at its heart, YourFamily works in partnership with parents, YourFamily builds on family's strengths, and YourFamily is part of an active community.

The activities delivered by YourFamily range from initial contact to group activities, such as workshops, play and learn and support groups, and one to one support. Underpinning the activities of the service are a number of outputs and outcomes that are centred on parent and family motivation, capability and opportunity. The service has recently developed measurement tools to capture outcomes and are working to generate a body of evidence to demonstrate impact across those areas through delivery of their activities. Currently, a data dashboard is being built and refined to provide easy access to impact data. Clearer oversight of the data will support the service to develop aspirations for the future.

The new Facebook group continues to grow with almost 150 parents now being part of the online YourFamily community. The new Toddler group at St Luke's Community Hub and the new Sunshine Stay & Play sessions at Labyrinth House have had an encouraging start as word of the new provisions begins to spread amongst parents and carers. The YourFamily team continue to support the monthly Family Centre Bibs & Bobs baby bank session, and due to the high demand seen at Bibs & Bobs, the team are developing a new weekly drop in baby bank facility in partnership with the One Love Project.

A new evidence-based Sleep Workshop with creche facilities was tested recently at Centre Place Family Centre. The high level of attendance and positive parent feedback confirmed the much-needed benefits of the session. The workshop is available to all families with children under 4 years and the aim is to provide information and advice relating to sleep to provide better outcomes for children and help reduce the need for specialist services at a later stage.

Community Ideas and Development Fund (CID Fund)

There has recently been a review on how this community fund is administered, this has seen an increase in applications being received, which has led to funding awards being made across Southend.

Three projects are now in mobilisation stage, with a further three going through the final contracting stage. Mobilising projects;

- Sunshine Baby Bank will be offering a 'bank' of equipment, a parent and toddler group based on early education supported by an educational psychologist and a music and movement session for families to attend.

- Trustlinks will be supporting families to get involved in improving the green areas around Centre Place Nursery and Family Centre, encouraging the community to come together and offering access to any support families require.
- Welcome to the UK will be able to meet the increased demand for support with form filing, understanding the health system and supporting the development of their children where English is an additional language.

Details of all ABSS programmes in delivery are attached for reference - see Appendix Two

7 Programme Management Office

Human Resources

A number of vacancies have recently been filled within the team and new team members joined in mid-July. The Communications and Marketing team welcomed Alicia Bannister as Communications and Marketing Officer, Joanne Armstrong as Communications and Marketing Assistant and the YourFamily team welcomed Rosslyn Allen as Volunteer Coordinator.

Recent interviews for the Business and Planning Lead and Research, Evaluation and Impact Officer roles were also successful with the Business and Planning Lead joining the team late August. Recruitment checks are still being completed for the Research, Evaluation and Impact Officer with the aim to start in September.

Recruitment for the Information Systems Project Manager has commenced with interviews taking place mid-August and the role of YourFamily Link Worker, to be based at Centre Place and dedicated to families attending the childcare setting there, will be advertised in the coming weeks.

All future vacancies within ABSS will be reviewed by the Senior Programme Team as they arise to ensure they are aligned with the Legacy and Sustainability plans and the end of the funding period in 2025.

Inform2 Customer Relationship Management System

Inform2 is the cloud-based customer relationship management (CRM) system which is initially being used by the YourFamily Team and Southend City Council's Family Centre's Family Support Team for case management and future reporting purposes, with a vision to roll-out wider in the coming year.

8 Reasons for Recommendations

ABSS Governance have reviewed and approved activities at the appropriate level. The Health and Wellbeing Board are asked to:

1. Note the contents of the report and raise opportunities with Tara Poore, ABSS Director or Alex Khaldi, Independent Chair of A Better Start Southend (ABSS).
2. Note the progression of the ABSS Legacy and Sustainability Strategy.

9 Financial / Resource Implications

There are no financial/resource implications for this report.

10 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications for this report.

11 Equality & Diversity

There are no equality and diversity implications for this report.

12 Appendices

Appendix One – ABSS Partnership Board Programme Activity Summary

Appendix Two - ABSS Project Names and Workstreams

Tara Poore, Director, ABSS

6th September 2023

Partnership Board Programme Activity Summary

Produced by the Operational Performance and Intelligence Team

21/08/2023

This short extract is based on the ABSS Programme Activity Dashboard for the period ending **31-Jul-2023**.

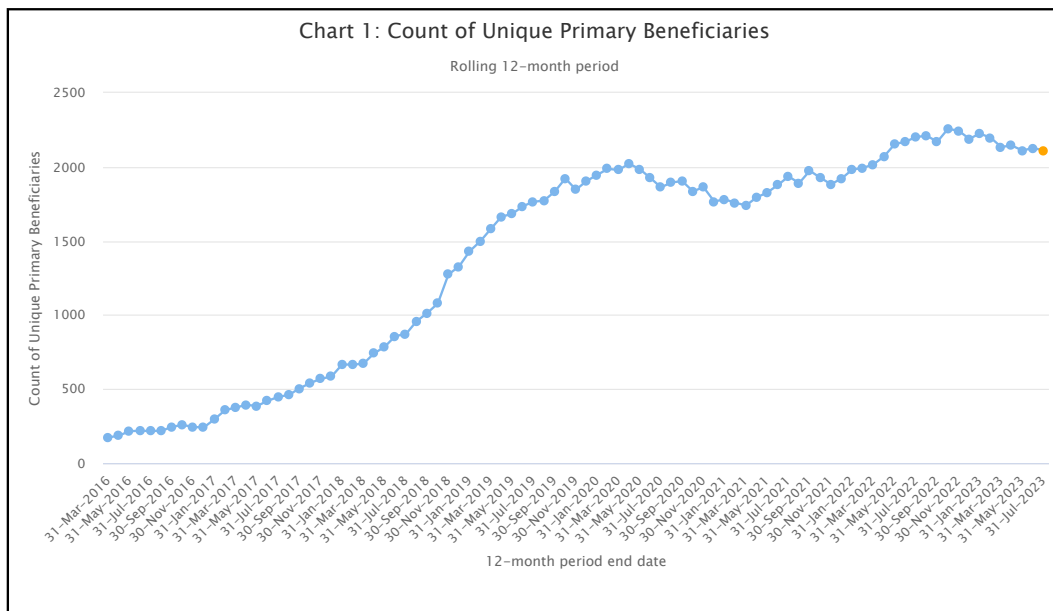
For further details please click the following link to view the full dashboard:

https://sbcddata.shinyapps.io/ABSS_Programme_Activity/
(https://sbcddata.shinyapps.io/ABSS_Programme_Activity/).

Section 1 - Programme Reach

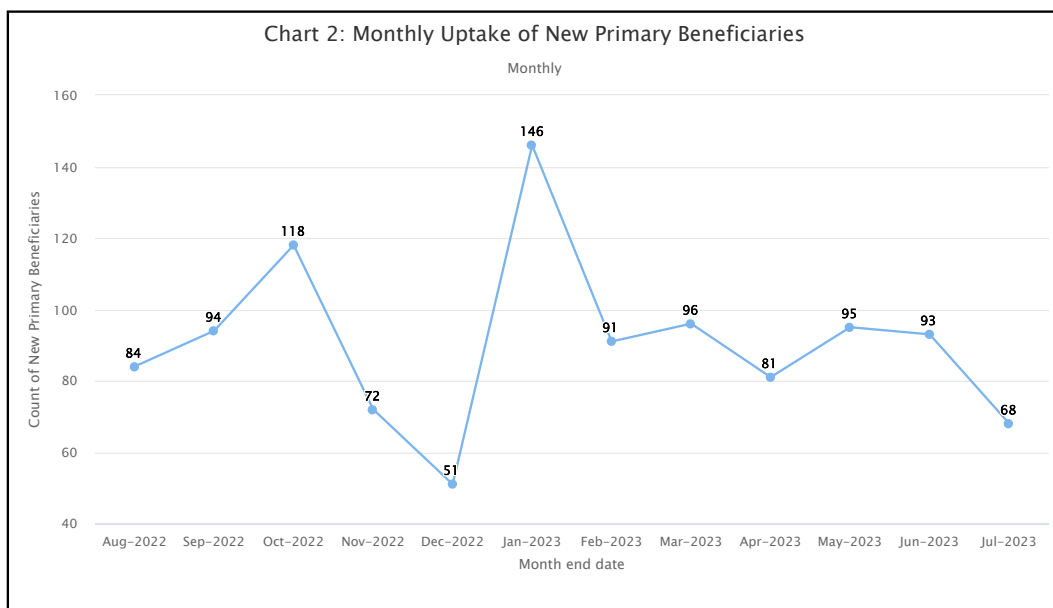
The total number of beneficiaries of the A Better Start Southend programme since April 2015 is now **6724**, which has risen from **6656** at the end of the previous month.

As chart 1 below shows, reach has continued to grow during the life of the programme and the total number of beneficiaries of A Better Start in the past 12 months was **2112**. This represents **47.9%** of all potential beneficiaries and is among the highest proportions achieved since the start of the programme. There has been an upwards trend in reach since March 2021 indicating a recovery from the effects of Covid, although there has been no short-term growth since October 2022.



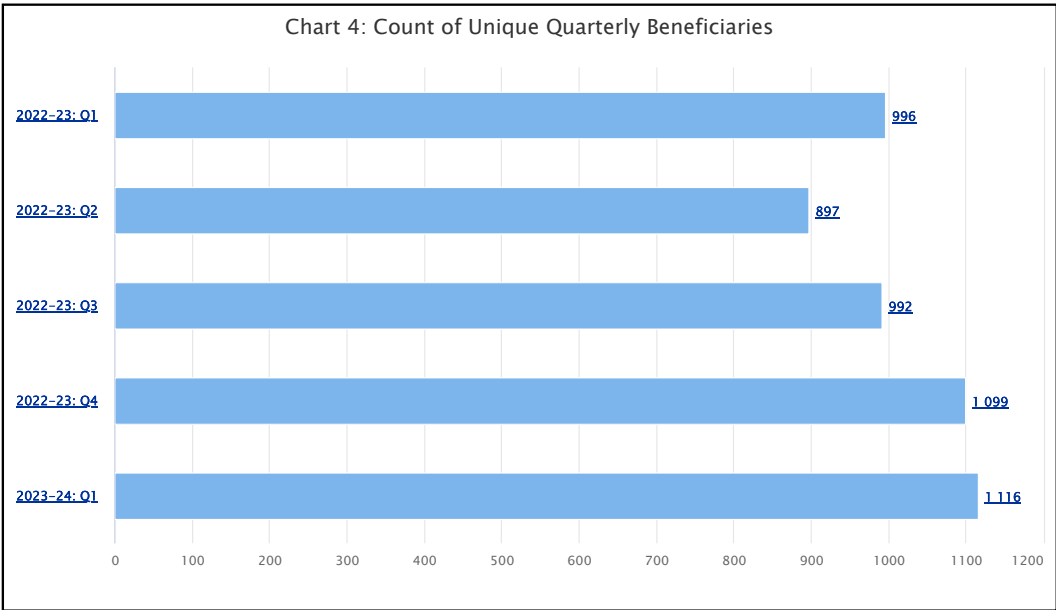
Section 2 - New Primary Beneficiaries

Chart 2 shows that new families continue to be introduced to the programme each month and the number of new beneficiaries shows a peak at the start of the new calendar year.

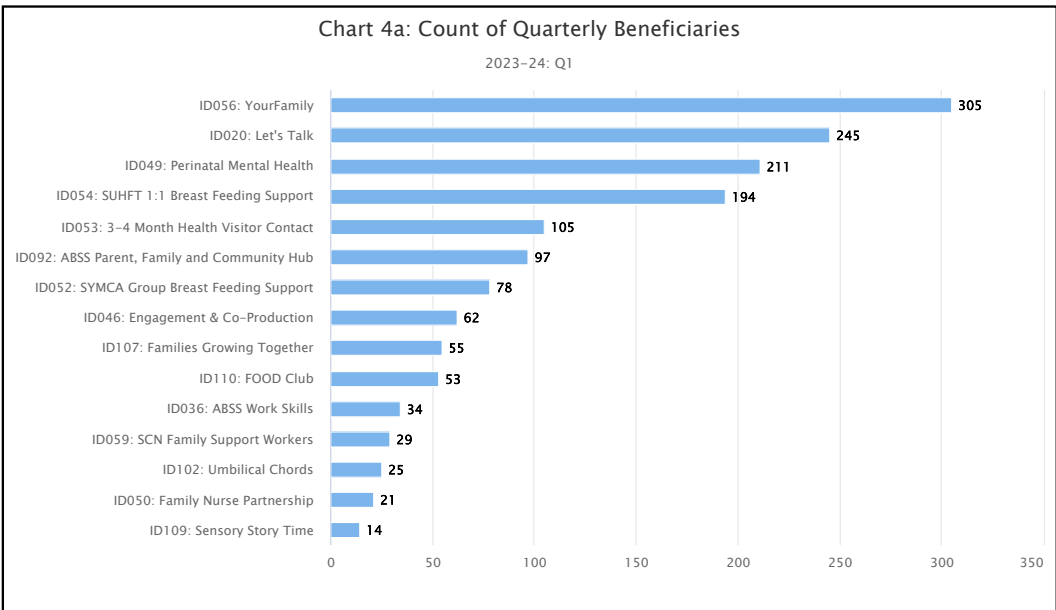


Section 3 - Project Delivery

As Chart 4 from the Programme Activity Dashboard shows below, activity was fairly consistent throughout the 2022-2023 financial year with quarter 1 (Apr - Jun) of 2023-2024 being busier in comparison to Q1 of last year.



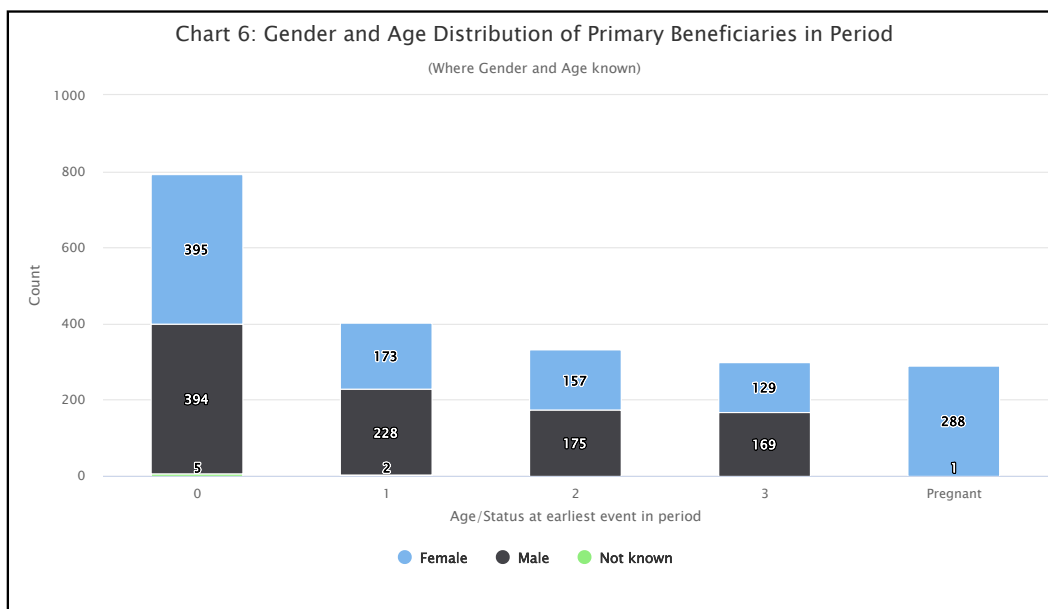
Quarter 1 of 2023-24 is displayed in Chart 4a at project level, showing the relative reach of each project in terms of numbers of primary beneficiaries. Note that the YourFamily project, which went live in April 2022, has shown significant growth and is now reporting the largest number of primary beneficiaries of all projects.



Section 4 - Age and Gender

Chart 6 extracted from the Programme Activity Dashboard below shows that there is a fairly even distribution of male and female beneficiaries and that there is an emphasis on engaging children from the earliest stage in their lives (i.e. age 0).

The number of pregnant primary beneficiaries that participated in the past 12 months has decreased from **301** for the equivalent 12-month period ending one year ago.

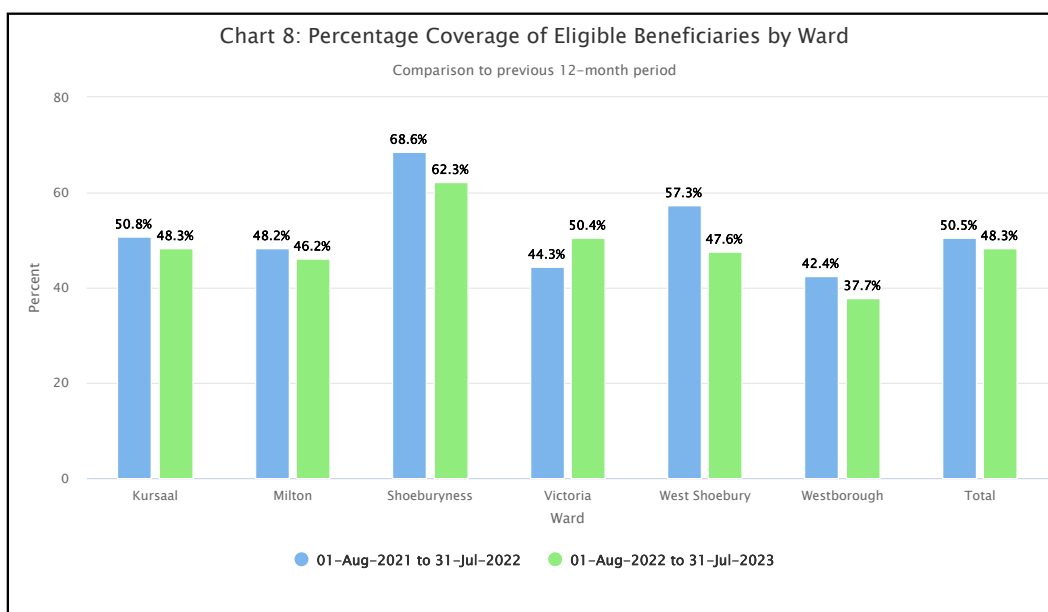


Section 5 - Delivery by Ward

Chart 8 extracted from the Programme Activity Dashboard shows a comparison of the percentage of eligible primary beneficiaries that have participated in an ABSS project during the past 12 months compared to the previous 12-month period. Over the combined ABSS wards (see the far right-hand bars) this percentage has slightly decreased and this is also the case for many of the individual wards.

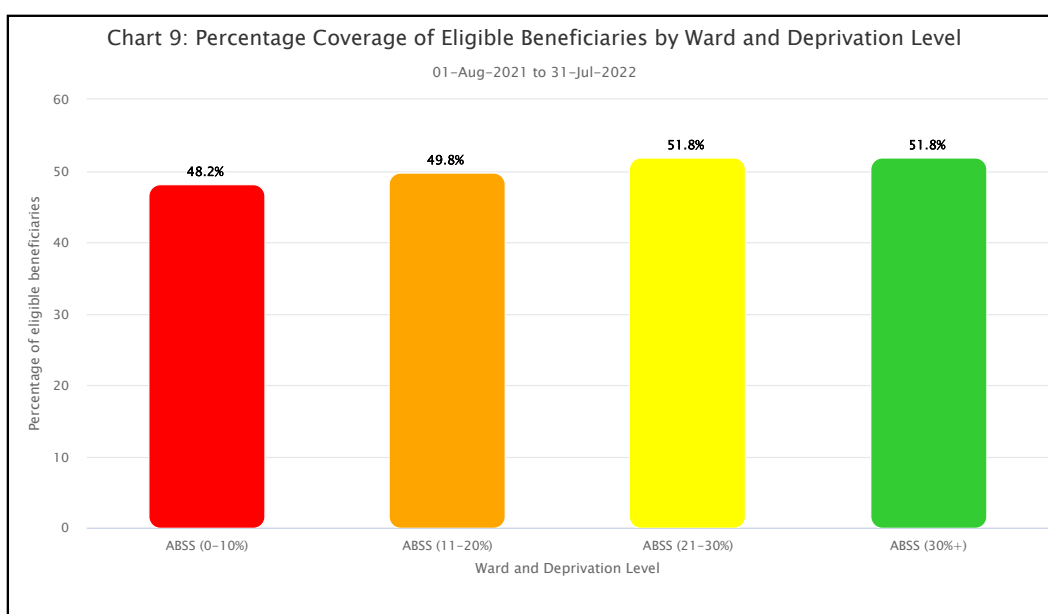
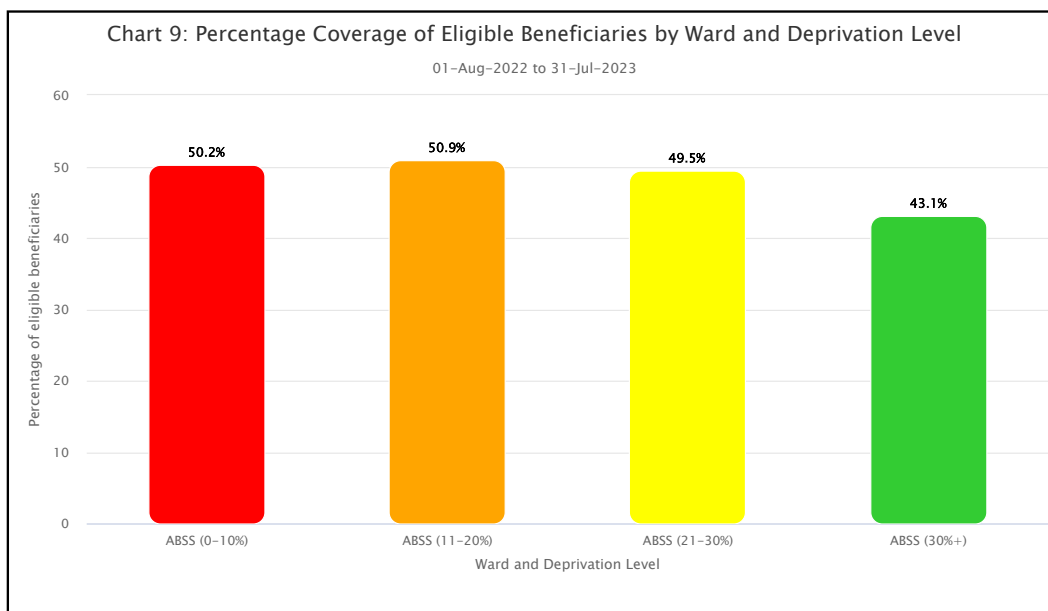
Reach within the Kursaal, Shoeburyness and Victoria wards all equal or exceed the average reach across the entire ABSS wards and reach in Milton, West Shoebury and Westborough is below the overall average.

The difference in reach between the wards with the highest (Shoeburyness) and lowest (Westborough) reach is **24.6** percentage points.



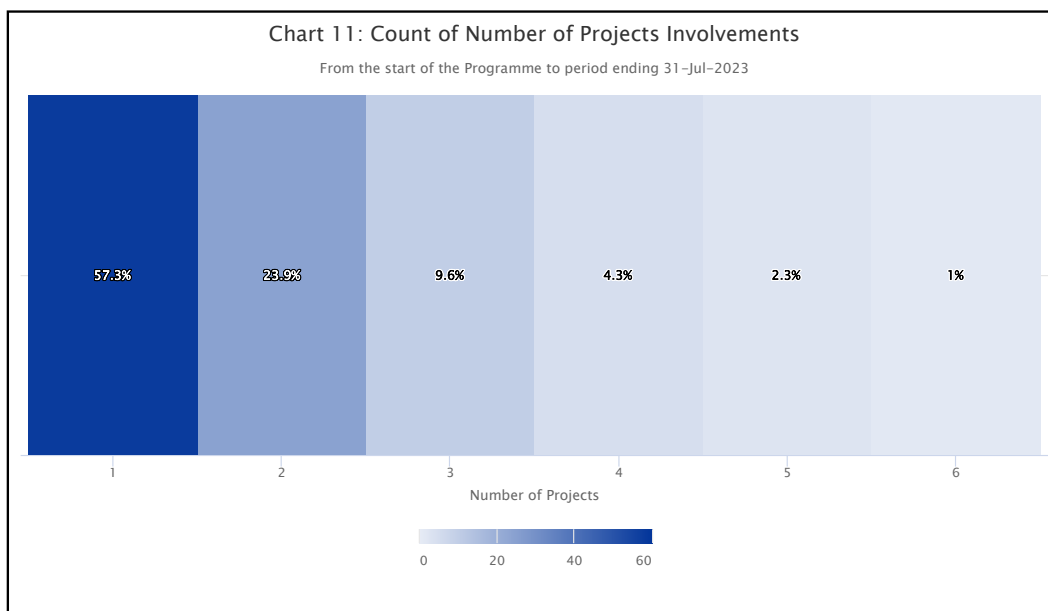
Section 6 - Delivery by Deprivation Level

The two charts below are partial extracts from the Programme Activity Dashboard and show a comparison of percentage delivery to all eligible beneficiaries for the current and previous 12-month delivery periods, by deprivation deciles. The top chart shows the most recent 12-month period and displays a slightly higher level of reach in the 11-20% (the second decile, orange bar) most deprived areas. The percentages for the top two deciles have increased from the previous 12 month period, emphasizing the focus on delivery within the more deprived areas.



Section 7 - Participation in Multiple Projects

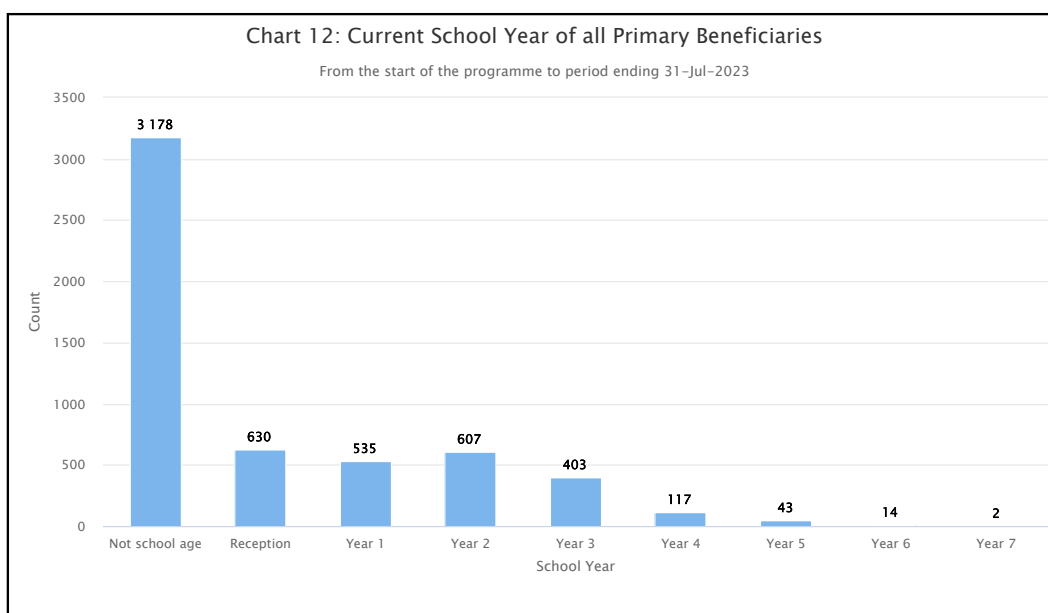
This chart shows the percentage of beneficiaries that have been involved in multiple projects over the course of the programme. For example, **42.7%** of all beneficiaries have been involved in more than one project, which demonstrates a good linkage between projects and retention of beneficiaries.



Section 8 - Current School Year of Primary Beneficiaries

This final chart shows the current school year of all current and past primary beneficiaries. This is helpful when considering that a number of outcome measures reported to the National Lottery Community Fund are age-related. For example, the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) and one of the National School Measurement Programme (NCMP) measures are taken during the reception year. The ability of A Better Start to improve these population-level outcomes is dependent on a significant proportion of those children being reached by the ABSS Programme.

For further details of outcome measures please click the following link to view the full dashboard:
https://sbcddata.shinyapps.io/ABSS_COF_Tool/ (https://sbcddata.shinyapps.io/ABSS_COF_Tool/).



End of document.

Appendix Two- Project Names and Workstreams

Project ID	Project Title	Work Stream	Budget Work Stream	Delivery Status	Delivery Partner
ID054	121 Breastfeeding	D & N	D & N	In Delivery	MSE Hospital Trust
ID052	Group Breastfeeding	D & N	D & N	In Delivery	SYMCA
ID053	3 - 4 Month Contact	D & N	D & N	In Delivery	SCC
ID025	HENRY Healthy Families	D & N	D & N	Closed	HENRY
ID087	Southend Supports Breastfeeding	D & N	D & N	Mobilisation	SCC & ABSS
ID088	Infant Feeding Supervisor Lead	D & N	D & N	In Delivery	SCC
ID089	Maternal Healthy Weight	D & N	D & N	Paused	TBD
ID095	UNICEF Accreditation	D & N	D & N	Closed	
ID097	Public Health Midwife	D & N	D & N	In Delivery	SCC & MSE Hospital Trust
ID110	FOOD Club	D & N	D & N	In Delivery	Family Action
ID050	Family Nurse Partnership	S & E	S & E	In Delivery	EPUT
ID049	Perinatal Mental Health	S & E	S & E	In Delivery	EPUT
ID061	Preparation for Parenthood	S & E	S & E	Closed	HENRY
ID083	Volunteer Home Visiting Service	S & E	S & E	Closed	Home Start
ID107	Families Growing Together	S & E	S & E	In Delivery	Trustlinks
ID104	IDVA	S & E	S & E	In Delivery	Safe Steps
ID020	Let's Talk	C & L	C & L	In Delivery	EPUT
ID082	WellComm Screening	C & L	C & L	In Delivery	ABSS
ID091	Talking Transitions	C & L	C & L	In Delivery	ABSS
ID109	Sensory Story Time	C & L	C & L	In Delivery	Chaos and Calm
ID101	Story Sacks	C & L	CR	In Delivery	SAVS
ID102	Umbilical Chords	C & L	CR	In Delivery	SYMCA
ID046	Engagement	CR	CR	In Delivery	SAVS
ID064	Engagement Fund	CR	CR	In Delivery	SAVS
ID084	CID Fund (Process and applications)	CR	CR	In Delivery	ABSS
ID086	Coproduction Champion	CR	CR	Closed	SAVS, EYA, SCC
ID036	Work Skills	CR	CR	In Delivery	SCC
ID103	Engagement Fund COVID-19	CR	CR	Closed	SAVS

ID115	Hamlet Court Road in Harmony	CR	CR	In delivery	ABSS/Trustlinks
ID116	Festival of Conversation / Events Assignment 2023/2024	CR	SC	In Delivery	Bromfield Events & various partners
ID059	Peer Support Workers for Social and Communication Needs	SE	S & E	In Delivery	EYA
ID056	YourFamily	DD	S & E	In Delivery	ABSS
ID092	ABSS Parent, Family and Community Hub	DD	CR	In Delivery	ABSS
ID081	Welcome to the UK	SC	SC	In Delivery	Welcome to the UK
ID099	Data Input - ESTART	SC	SC	In Delivery	SCC
ID080	First and Foremost	SC	SC	Closed	EYA
ID079	The Dartington Service Design (0-19 mapping)	SC	SC	Closed	Dartington
ID078	SCC Data Analysis	SC	SC	In Delivery	SCC
ID048	Joint Paediatric Clinic	SC	SC	Closed	TBD
ID090	Programme Evaluation Partnership	SC	SC	In Delivery	UoE
ID106	RSM Summative Evaluation	SC	SC	In Delivery	RSM
ID098	Information Governance Specialist Consultant	SC	SC	In Delivery	Data Protection People
ID108	Digital Strategy (Inform)	SC	SC	In Delivery	SCC & ABSS
ID114	Centre Place	SC	D & N	Service Design	