

Welcome!



Welcome to the Autumn edition of the Co-production Network Newsletter!

As the leaves turn golden and the air gets crisp; Slough's Co-production Network is buzzing with warmth and energy.

This season, we're bringing you innovative ideas, heartfelt stories, and partnerships that are shaping services with lived experience at the heart. From coffee groups led by autistic adults to community-led Q&A's and digital tools for carers, this edition is packed with moments that show what happens when people come together, not just to be heard, but truly work together. So, grab a cuppa, get comfy, and read the stories that are making Slough a more inclusive and connected place to live!

How to contact us

For more information about our work please visit: [Slough Borough Council ASC Co-production Network](#)

Useful links

[Community equipment recycling](#)
[Social Care](#)

[Slough Community Directory - Activities and services to keep Slough residents fit and healthy \(sloughhealth.org\)](#)

Minor Illness: Slough Urgent Care Centre in Priors Close is open 8am-8pm seven days a week, providing same day treatment for patients who do not require treatment in the emergency department. More info: [New Urgent Care Centre in Slough | NHS Frimley Health Foundation Trust](#)

Adult & Children social Care: For social care emergencies outside of Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm, please call the Emergency Duty Team on 01344 351999 email: EDT@bracknell-forest.gov.uk or dial 999.



Slough celebrated International Older People's Day with community-led dialogue

On 1st October, Slough marked International Older People's Day with an inclusive Q&A session at Kingsway United Reformed Church.

Organised by the Slough 50plus Forum and the Slough Older People's Steering Group, the session brought together residents, council leaders, Frimley NHS, Public Health and community partners, chaired by Rob Deeks CEO - Together as One. Mayor Cllr Siobhan Dauti attended as a guest.

Feedback from the 2024 Older People's Day Event had highlighted several areas for improvement and action. Cllr Dexter Smith shared development of co-produced dementia resources in collaboration with the Memory Clinic, carers, people living with dementia, and Public Health.

The resources include information leaflets and short films, with some attendees saying that they are better informed and supported. Town centre regeneration emerged as a major topic, with the council confirming the sale of Queensmere and Observatory shopping centres to Berkeley Homes, and redevelopment plans now underway.

Residents also had voiced concerns about the lack of a functioning bus timetable and station. In response, Cllr Smith reported that negotiations with insurers have concluded and proposals for a new



bus station aimed at improving connectivity will begin within six months.

The event began with residents voicing worry over online payment and use of apps which is creating digital exclusion, prompting the council to take a view of redesigning service access non digital support options.

Concerns about air quality linked to construction were also discussed, with the council noting that enforcement is limited to specific environmental hazards and anti-social behaviour. Broader disturbances may fall outside of the councils remit, also pointed out were the challenges of balancing community tolerance with enforcement.

Following the closure of Empire Cinema, residents requested the return of weekly senior film screening, the council will explore options with Norden Farm.

Additionally, issues on Belfast Avenue and Oatland Avenue were raised, including concerns about speeding and unsafe scooter use; in response, the council will review signage, enforcement, and traffic calming measures.

The rising cost of nursing and dementia care was discussed, with the council clarifying that adult social care is means-tested, and highlighted available support for home-based care and deferred

payment schemes. Public Health also emphasised the importance of co-produced resources and outreach through community champions and local hubs, to enhance community health education.

Residents reported communication issues with housing services, and the council will focus on improving responsiveness more closely. Concerns over inconsistent Saturday openings of libraries, and the absence of a Sunday service were also raised, prompting the council to take a view to explore partnerships to expand access. Also, options are being explored for a community advice hub at 27 Church Street.

The council asserted its commitment to support older resident's health ageing through early intervention, integrated wellness, and improved service accessibility. Residents were encouraged to stay engaged through consultations and forums, with emphasis on collaboration.

Comments from residents: This is amazing! We get the opportunity to ask council leaders questions, get answers and better still they are doing what we ask. Somethings may take longer to come to fruition; but things are being done. We look forward to updates next year.



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Comments from the panel

Dr Sarah Rayfield, PH Consultant

"I really enjoyed being part of the event and appreciated the chance to hear directly from people about the issues that are important to them. It gave me useful insight into some of the specifics that can be easy to overlook - particularly around the extent of digital exclusion that people experience. It was a really well organised event, and I very much enjoyed speaking to members of the 50plus forum and hearing about the work they do.

Will Tuckley, CE & Managing Director Commissioner

"It was great to hear directly from local people about the things that

matter to them and affect their wellbeing and enjoyment in the place where they live. There is plenty for us and others to do alongside the people of Slough. My thanks to the members of the Slough Older People's Forum for making the event possible."

David Coleman-Groom, ASC Executive Director

"I was delighted to attend. There were thoughtful and lively discussions, and I was particularly pleased with the level of engagement from everyone who took part. The event was a fantastic example of open dialogue and community spirit, and I want to thank everyone for their contributions which made the event so meaningful."

Have Your Say on Slough's Health and Wellbeing Strategy!

Slough Public Health is inviting feedback on the draft Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2026-2036. This is a bold vision for a healthier, thriving Slough shaped by the voices of those who live and work here. The consultation is open until **Tuesday 11 November**, and your insights will help strengthen the strategy's priorities and ensure it reflects real community needs. Click [here](#) to take part in the consultation and share widely with your networks. Thank you!

Have your say on Council Tax Support

We're asking residents to share their views on some proposed changes to Council Tax Support. These changes may impact how much people pay, so it's really important we hear from as many residents as possible.

Your feedback will help shape the final scheme and make sure we understand how any changes could affect you and your community. Please take a few minutes to read about the proposals and tell us what you think before 21 December 2025.

Find out more and have your say at [Consultation launches over Council Tax Support Scheme - Slough Borough Council](#)

#OneSlough

Community Fund: applications and awards

This year, a total of 49 community groups submitted applications for funding through the local grants programme.

After a thorough review and selection process, 30 groups were successfully awarded funding to support their initiatives. The selection was based on alignment with community priorities, sustainability of impact, and the ability to reach underserved populations. The response from applicants highlights the growing interest and need for grassroots support across the borough.

Services delivered by funded groups

The funded groups offer a diverse range of services that address key social needs within the community. These include mental health support, youth engagement programmes, elderly care initiatives, food distribution schemes, and cultural enrichment activities. Several groups also focus on disability inclusion, domestic abuse support, and employment readiness training. Together, these services aim to foster resilience, reduce isolation, and promote wellbeing across Slough's diverse communities.

National Co-production Week 8 July 2025 - celebrating co-production in Slough

In July co-production took centre stage in a conference, held to commemorate the National Co-production Week. The event was an opportunity for residents and partners from across health, social care, and community sectors to reflect on shared achievements, innovations, and shaping services together.



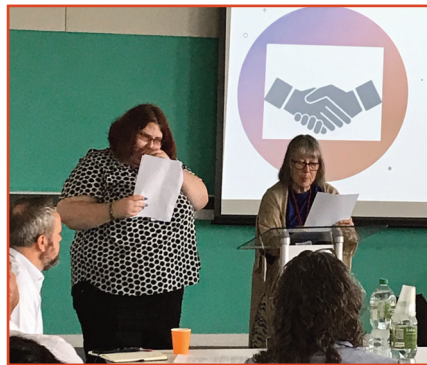
David Coleman-Groom, ASC Executive Director, as keynote speaker opened the event with the message of “The Power and Impact of System-wide Co-production” highlighting Slough’s shift from consultation to true partnership. Focussing on community and people-centred service design, shared ownership, and integration. His message was clear: lived experience, equity, and trust are the cornerstones of transformation.

Dr Atul Bansal of Wexham Park Hospital unveiled a holistic vision for care - treating the whole person emotionally, physically, and mentally by unveiling a new **Acute-to-Community** Task & Finish Group, with focus on early intervention, falls prevention and reducing readmissions.



Naweeda Naqvi showcased the impact of Slough CVS Community Connectors, who help residents find the right community support, joining community activities, and ease pressure on social care and hospital services.

Bernadette and Karen co-chairs of the Learning Disability Partnership Board presented initiatives led by people with lived experience. Achievements included the Safe Places scheme, volunteer mystery shoppers, and inclusive library activities for people with learning difficulties.



Kevin presented the Older People Strategy 2023-26, shaped by older residents themselves. Achievements include dementia information and support, intergenerational projects, digital literacy for older people and expanding access to technology enabled care.

Community Mental Health Team



Slough Mental Health Service's Hope College is a part of Slough Co-production Network. During the national week of co-production, Hope College Volunteer Peer Mentors, carers and staff joined Slough Borough Council's Co-production Network to celebrate National Co-production Week.

Volunteer Peer Mentors, Shahnaz and Jordan, spoke beautifully about how co-producing and co-

delivering Hope College and mental health services in Slough, gives them a sense of purpose, meaning and belonging. Shahnaz shared how co-production helped grow her confidence and return to work, whilst Jordan spoke of his joy at seeing people come out of their shells through Hope College workshops, and how he puts his lived experience to good use throughout Slough and beyond.

Thank you to everyone who works tirelessly to champion the value of co-production in Slough, and of course, thank you to our Volunteer Peer Mentors who give their time and energy to help deliver Hope College, and make mental health services in Slough better for everyone.

Slough Autism Together (SAT)



Sue Benford and the Slough Autism Together (SAT) shared inspiring projects from autism-led coffee groups, and sensory-friendly health checks, to the promotion of the Autism Card. Their vision includes a multifunctional hub to support autism initiatives.

Sue says: “I’m a Slough resident and have a son with autism who receives a package of care from the council. I am also a member of the Co-production Network, since it began in 2019. Since joining the network, I have met some truly amazing and dedicated people who’ve become friends.

“Back in 2019, there was very little in place for autistic and neurodiverse residents, and no dedicated officer in

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the council. So, I insisted on keeping autism on the agenda at our co-production meetings, some might call it persistent nagging! And it paid off: in 2023, a Commissioner for Learning Difficulties and Autism was appointed, and things began to change.

"We worked together to develop the Autism Strategy, and then after that formed the Autism Steering Group with carers, professionals, and autistic community members - all working to make Slough an autism friendly town. We didn't always get things right at first, but our members told us what they needed, and we listened. We have achieved so much over the last few years but for me, one of the most important things was to see services provided for our autistic and neuro-diverse community.

"One of our proudest achievements was launching the Autism Community Coffee Group in December 2024, led by autistic adults at Chalvey Community Hub. It's now evolved into Slough Autism Together a community interest group run by and for autistic adults.

"During Autism Acceptance Month, we brought over a hundred people together at Upton Court Park to share experiences and build understanding. Being part of the Co-production Network and working as equals with Adult Social Care has helped shape services that truly benefit those who use them - and their carers."

Slough Carers Digital Support

Slough Borough Council, in collaboration with the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, is enhancing support for unpaid carers through the Accelerated Reform Fund (ARF).

This initiative introduces digital tools designed to complement in-person services and ensure carers can access help whenever they need it. Both councils worked closely with carers to co-design and inform the development of these digital services, ensuring they reflect real needs and lived experiences.

Marjorie Rae, representing the Co-production Network, played a key role in shaping the offer, helping to ensure that carers' voices were central to the process.

One of the digital resources available is AskSARA, a free online advice tool. It allows residents and carers to answer a few simple questions about their daily challenges and receive personalised guidance from qualified occupational therapists. The advice covers over 90 topics, including mobility, bathing, memory, and mood, and connects users to local services and charities.

AskSARA is available 24/7 and does not require any sign-up, making it an accessible and practical solution

for anyone seeking support. You can explore the tool via the [Slough Borough Council website](#) or access it directly [here](#).

In addition, Slough carers have access to the Carers UK Digital Platform, which offers a wide range of resources including e-learning courses, video guides, and forums to connect with other carers. The platform also supports contingency planning, helping carers prepare for emergencies and changes in care arrangements. To get started, carers can visit [carersdigital.org](#) and use the access code **RBWM-SLOUGH** to create their account.

Another valuable tool is Jointly, a care coordination app developed by carers for carers. Available on both mobile and web platforms, jointly helps users create a circle of care that includes family, friends, and professionals.

It enables carers to track medications, appointments, and tasks, and share updates with everyone involved in the care process. Slough carers can access Jointly for free using the same code: **RBWM-SLOUGH**. More details are available on the [Carers UK website](#) and through the [Slough Borough Council announcement](#).

ASC Director recruitment: continuing to embed co-production into leadership selection



As we continue to embed co-production in leadership selection, transparency, accountability and better outcomes within adult social services, Co-production volunteers once again have been integral to the recruitment of Director of Adult Social Care (Operations).

Panel members assessed candidates, ensuring they reflect

the values of inclusion, empathy, and partnership. The successful candidate was Fadzai Tande who will join Slough in November.

Co-production panel members said

"Being part of the panel was empowering. We weren't just ticking boxes, we were helping choose someone who will work with us, not just for us."

Meet our members

They have been CPN members for just over a year!

Kevin



"I became a volunteer with the Slough Co-production Network because I've always believed that lasting change only happens when people work with each other, not for each other. Co-production gives everyone a voice, and it values lived experience as much as professional knowledge. That's what drew me to it. I wanted to play a part in helping people have a real say in shaping the services that affect their lives.

"For me, the tenets of co-production - mutual respect, equality, and shared purpose are what good work in the community should be built on. When we sit around the same table, listen to each other, and make decisions together, we build trust and achieve better outcomes for everyone. Volunteering in this way has shown me how powerful it is when people come together with openness and understanding. It's rewarding to see ideas turn into action and to know that what we do is helping make Slough a more inclusive and supportive place for all."

Bernadette



"I became involved with the Co-production Network because of my son, who has Down's Syndrome. I was eager to engage in anything that could help us give him the best life possible. When the CPN was first being formed, I was encouraged to join, and I've been a member ever since.

"From the beginning, I've felt that our voices are genuinely heard and that volunteers are truly valued. Through open conversations with fellow CPN members, we're able to offer meaningful suggestions that help shape Slough Borough Council's plans. This ensures that time and resources are used in ways that truly benefit the community and enhance the services provided."