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# **Primary Prevention in Battersea: A Social Return on Investment analysis of the Battersea Alliance**

Executive Summary

September 2024



### Background to this research

This work was commissioned by the Battersea Alliance to evidence the work it does in supporting the health and wellbeing of both local residents and the local community and voluntary sector.

There are significant challenges to public health at both national and local levels. [Lord Dazi's recent report](#) on health and social care underlined these issues, finding surging waiting lists for community and mental health services, but a lack of investment in these areas.

There are also challenges with who health services are and are not reaching. The NHS reported that [1 in 5 appointments are for non-medical reasons](#) such as isolation, while [men and those from global majority groups are underrepresented](#) in GP visits in terms of access, continuity of care, and positive experiences.

Challenges are felt locally too. A needs analysis of Battersea conducted by the Alliance in 2021 identified a range of issues that Battersea residents are more likely to face compared to residents in the wider Wandsworth area, including poverty, crowded conditions and isolation and loneliness.

The Wandsworth Health and Wellbeing Board, comprised of Council leaders, local GPs, and the South West London Integrated Care Board have set out [a five-year strategy](#) to support the lives of residents and tackle the public health environment. The strategy's three core tenets (Start Well, Live Well, Age Well) sets out actions and outcomes for the health and wellbeing of local children and young people, adults, and older people.

The Battersea Alliance can be a key player in delivering these outcomes through a method it has developed as 'community prescribing'. The Alliance's highly relational approach means its member organisations (who are funded or supported through the Alliance) and those they support have developed the trust to cross-refer residents to their services. This approach supports residents' physical health, emotional health, and socio-emotional skill development.

The purpose of this work was to evidence these impacts, and therefore build a compelling case to funders to back the Alliance's work by supporting its continued investment in local organisations.



# How the Battersea Alliance meets local need

## Resident need

The Wandsworth Health and Wellbeing Board's [Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#) (JLHWS) comprised of nineteen issue-based steps, sets out required actions and target outcomes to achieve its ambitions.

The Battersea Alliance, through the support it provides to its network of organisations, is already supporting five of these 19 steps. Its funding of organisations delivering counselling and other wellbeing support is helping improve community resilience (Step 1), while its funding and support of organisations working across the community to embed healthy habits such as exercise and healthy eating are improving provision of health promotion interventions and improving activity levels across the locality (Steps 10 and 13).

Our SROI analysis underlines this work. We spoke to six of the 53 organisations the Alliance supported or funded, and our SROI analysis with a selection of service users calculated **a social value of £428,000 for these service users alone.**

## Organisational need

By providing spaces for local organisations to come together, collaborate, and build trust the Alliance is also improving awareness and use of community services (Step 16), while the same mechanisms are also helping develop **social capital** (Step 19).

A need to develop social capital at grass roots level was also identified by the [2023 needs analysis of Wandsworth's voluntary and community sector](#) which highlighted that siloed working, a lack of trust, and a lack of awareness of local services is creating inefficient approaches to delivery. It called for opportunities to strengthen VCS skills, capacity and resources as a result, something the Alliance is already delivering through its network of organisations.

**Battersea Alliance projects we spoke with unanimously described the value within taking a relational approach:** both in their interactions with service users, and their method of working in partnership and collaboration with other support providers in borough.

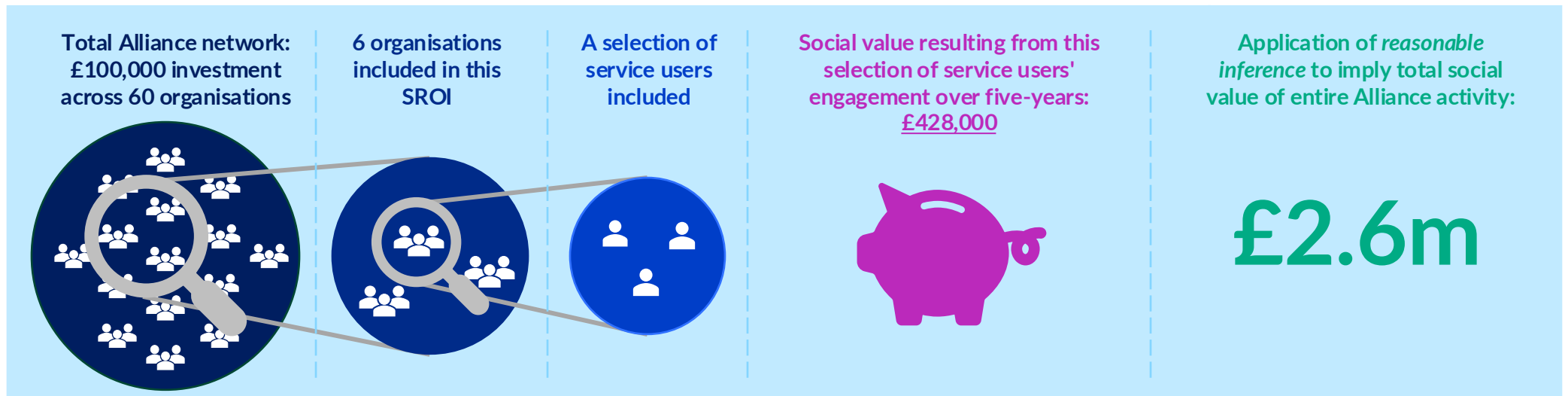


### SROI Overview

Our consultation with Battersea Alliance members, supported organisations, and service users highlighted the varied impact the Alliance has and, crucially, the social value – in terms of social, environmental and financial benefits – it creates. We spoke to six of the 53 organisations the Alliance supported or funded, and our SROI analysis with a selection of service users calculated **a social value of £428,000 for these service users alone**. In total the Alliance has invested £500,000 across the 53 organisations it has supported, and it estimates £60,000 of this went into the six organisations included in this case study, followed by an estimated £20,000 of in-kind support. **This means for every pound invested, these services**

**are generating around £5 in social return.**

We undertook a robust and cautious approach to arrive at these figures and, critically, took a 'bottom up' approach of talking to service users about their views on the difference that projects had made to them. Due to a lack of similar user-led data we cannot replicate this approach to robustly calculate the social value achieved by the totality of the Alliance's work, however **using reasonable inference it implies a total social value of at least £2.6m across the Alliance's activities.**





### Patterns of SROI benefits

The most common benefits across projects were around **health and well-being**, particularly improved mental health. The most frequently mentioned benefits in the case studies were:

- Improved mental and emotional well-being through social connection and reduced isolation (6 of 7 cases);
- Enhanced mental wellbeing, self-esteem and body confidence (4 of 7);
- Increased confidence and self-esteem for participants (4 of 7).

**Social and community benefits** were also often mentioned, although the social value attributed to these was much lower (partly as a result of the reliable proxies available for these benefits). One particularly frequently referenced benefit was:

- *Strengthened social connections, social capital and support networks amongst participants (6 of 7).*

Two other benefits were referenced by 3 out of 7 case studies:

- *Reduced medical dependency;*
- *Increased economic opportunities and mobility for marginalised individuals.*

Theme of benefits	Benefits (n) across all case studies	Total impact
Health and wellbeing	23	£272,967
Social and community	13	£36,004
Education	7	£44,566
Employment and economic	5	£74,622
Grand Total	48	£428,159



### Calls to action

With these findings in mind, the Alliance is making the following three calls to action:

1

Invest in the Battersea Alliance's Community Investment Fund to continue its relational approach to supporting the wealth and health of local residents and organisations.

2

Sign-up to a pilot which brings together public services and the Battersea Alliance's 'community prescribing' approach, so more residents benefit from community and voluntary services available to them

3

Collaborate on the co-production of participatory research to better evidence the impact and effectiveness of the community prescribing model

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