



Common Ground'26

Strengthening relationships between
Liverpool's public and third sector.

Event programme
Wednesday, 29th April 2026



**Who we are
and what
we do.**

Well Placed is a collaborative group, that brings together strategic leaders from Liverpool's third sector health, wellbeing and care providers.

We're here to transform our shared experiences of public sector partnership, with the aim of creating bigger change and better outcomes for the people we support. To achieve this, we're investing time and energy in raising the profile of our sector's work, breaking down misconceptions around what we can and can't do, and building a simpler route into the sector for commissioners and other partners.

Our sector's greatest value lies in early-stage involvement, before needs gaps are filled, before commissioning plans are set and before tenders are issued. We want to co-create local sector strategy from the outset, demonstrating the vital role we can play in shaping solutions. By engaging earlier, we can work alongside our NHS and Local Authority partners to highlight the insights and solutions the third sector offers for the system-wide challenges we all face.

By shifting away from transactional relationships with our public sector commissioners and building recognition for what the third sector has to offer, we believe we can help drive real transformation on a local level.



Welcome

A warm welcome from the Well
Placed Chair, Ellie McNeil.

It is my genuine pleasure, as Chair, to welcome you to our first Well Placed Conference, Common Ground. We have gathered people from different places, professions and perspectives, all of whom share a common purpose: to improve outcomes for the communities we serve. Your presence here matters, and I am grateful that you have chosen to give your time, energy and insight to this shared purpose.

Common Ground speaks to our collective responsibility to position ourselves, thoughtfully, ethically and collaboratively, where we can make the greatest difference. Today is an opportunity to pause, reflect and reconnect with why we do this work and how we can do it better together.

I encourage you to arrive as your open, transparent selves. This conference is a space for honesty, curiosity and generosity. Progress rarely comes from pretending we have all the answers; it comes from listening deeply, sharing experience, challenging assumptions and being willing to learn from one another. Whether you are here to speak, listen, debate or connect, your voice and your perspective are valued.

Throughout the conference, I hope you will take the opportunity to build new relationships, strengthen existing ones and explore practical ways we can collaborate across boundaries. The challenges facing our communities are complex and interconnected, but they are not insurmountable when we step out of our organisations and work together with trust, respect and a shared sense of purpose.

Thank you for being here. I look forward to the conversations, ideas and partnerships that will emerge from this conference, and to what we can achieve together.

Ellie





Our panel host.

Emma Lord, Director of Designing
and Doing at Capacity.

Today's panel discussions will be facilitated by Emma Lord, Director of Design and Doing at Liverpool based service design agency, Capacity.

So what is Capacity? Our purpose is to make public services people services, to make every pound of public money work harder and do more for local people.

Every day, public and third sector leaders face tough internal and external challenges. We work with many of them, people with big ideas and the bravery to tackle these challenges head on. People working against increasing demand and reduced funding, often dealing with the backlash when the two don't match up.

By bringing big-picture thinking, imagination and hard graft, we help leaders not just think differently, but do differently. We get them moving on the projects that really matter; the ones that make the most impact on everyday lives.

We want to create real change for people in our region. We want to think bigger and focus on the things that take up the most time and brain power.

Why? Because we want the Liverpool City Region to be the best place to grow up, grow wise and grow old.





Our exhibitors & event supporters

Today is possible thanks to a key group of local third sector organisations. We'd like to thank everyone who has contributed time and funding to make it happen.

All of our supporters are members of Well Placed and are exhibiting in the Marketplace area throughout the day. Each brings deep knowledge, experience and commitment to improving lives across our communities.

Over the next few pages, you'll find a bit more about who they are and why they were keen to help make today happen. We'd love you to take time to visit them, start a conversation and find out more about the work they do – especially if you haven't connected before.

BE FREE

C A M P A I G N

Be Free Campaign is a youth-led charity working with young people aged 11 to 25 across the North West. Our mission is to ensure young people are not only supported, but recognised as leaders, decision-makers, and changemakers.

Our work focuses on early intervention, using mental health and wellbeing as a foundation to build confidence, critical thinking, and a sense of identity and belonging. We work alongside schools, universities, and community organisations to create environments where young people can thrive.

Alongside our delivery, we contribute to wider systems change, working with partners across sectors to challenge stigma, improve access to support, and influence how mental health is understood and approached at a local and national level.'

befreecampaign.org





Bradbury Fields offer services to those who are blind, partially sighted or have dual sensory impairment.

We provide rehabilitation services covering mobility, communication and independent living skills.

We deliver health and wellbeing programmes including gym and yoga sessions, walking club, reading club, cooking classes, a choir, braille lessons, peer support groups, swimming sessions and tech classes.

We provide advocacy and offer disability benefits advice. Our services help to reduce isolation, increase independence and improve quality of life.

We are delighted to attend this event as we recognise the value of shared learning, good communication and collaboration across the sector.

bradburyfields.org.uk





Citizens Advice Liverpool has supported residents for over 85 years, evolving into a trusted, intelligence-led social safety net for the city. Our robust digital case-recording system captures real-time data, enabling early identification of emerging issues and transforming lived experience into evidence that influences policy and improves outcomes.

In 2025 we supported over 31,000 Liverpool residents, resolving issues across debt, benefits, housing, immigration and well-being. Our work secures over £25.3m in annual income gains, reduces pressure on public services, and is award-winning, recognised in 2025 for tackling health inequalities through data-driven impact

North West Coast
Research and Innovation
Awards 2025



Winner 2025
**TACKLING HEALTH
INEQUALITIES AWARD**

**citizens
advice**

Liverpool

citizensadvice.liverpool.org.uk





C.I.C.

First Person Project is a not-for-profit social enterprise delivering trauma-informed mental health and wellbeing support. We work with people who may not access traditional services, using a barrier-less, person-centred approach based on trust, flexibility and real human connection. Our work includes 1:1 support, counselling, coaching and community-based activity, delivered in partnership with statutory, voluntary and community organisations.

This event is important to us because it brings together senior decision-makers from across Liverpool's public and third sectors to have honest, practical conversations about how services are designed and delivered, and to influence a move away from short-term, reactive approaches.

It aligns strongly with our ethos at FPP — collaboration over competition — and creates space to build relationships, share learning and champion community-led approaches. For us, it's a chance to help shape a more responsive and sustainable system for the communities we serve.

firstpersonprojectcic.co.uk





We're a community-developed social enterprise supporting health and wellbeing, incorporating a thriving Therapeutic Garden and low carbon Therapy and Wellbeing Centre.

The Therapeutic Garden's mission is increasing urban connections to nature and bringing people together inclusively in a beautiful nature-based setting. The Wellbeing Centre offers affordable, regenerative space to physical and talking therapists.

We work with 100–200 people per week of all ages, offering a range of services like Therapeutic Horticulture, Forest School, Nature Therapy.

Our funded work targets people with SEND, long-term health conditions or other adverse experiences.

Well Placed helps us achieve better reach and networking to thrive as a small but effective organisation.

growing sudley.com





Health Equalities Group is a public health charity working to improve the wellbeing of communities across the Liverpool City Region. We have been an independent voice for preventative public health in the region for over 20 years.

We believe everyone deserves to live a long, healthy and happy life. But right now, not everyone gets that opportunity. That's why we work with local authorities, charities, the NHS and central government to create the right conditions for everyone to thrive.

Together, we can develop smarter policies and create the right foundations to help unlock the potential in our communities. Together, we can create a fairer, healthier society.

heg.org.uk





**Together
For Liverpool
For Good**

For over a century, LCVS has been working to improve the wellbeing of individuals and communities in Liverpool by supporting voluntary action and charitable giving. LCVS is a trusted intermediary between communities and statutory partners, and we lobby for changes that enable the sector to thrive. LCVS deliver high impact activities including VCFSE capacity building and fundraising support, grant distribution, business support services (accountancy, payroll, ICT), and a broad range of health and wellbeing programmes.

Well Placed, which LCVS hosts, is an important example of how LCVS supports sector networking and enabling others to take leadership roles. We consider Common Ground to be of huge importance to cementing the relationship between the third and public sectors. At a time of great uncertainty and tension, we need to realise the alignment between our missions and the value of working in partnership.

lcv.org.uk





naturalbreaks
it's all about **people**

Natural Breaks has proudly supported people with physical and learning disabilities, neurodiverse needs, acquired brain injuries and complex health care needs across the Liverpool City Region to live independent and extraordinary lives since 1992.

We provide high-quality, person-centred support for individuals at home and in the community, promoting choice, dignity and opportunity. Our committed teams work with compassion and creativity to empower people we support to live healthy, happy, full lives filled with meaningful relationships and experiences.

We are proud to support Common Ground '26, promoting collaboration across health, social care and the third sector to create impact through partnerships and deliver better, more connected support for people we support and our communities.

naturalbreaks.co.uk





PSS is a social care charity that supports people to live happy, healthy and hopeful lives. whether they're:

- adults who have learning or physical disabilities, challenges with their mental health or difficulties as they're getting older;
- people in and around the criminal justice system; or
- families who've been through unsteady times.

Our mission is to create support that's shaped by real lives, real voices, and the belief that everyone should have the power to live life on their own terms.

Coming together on 'Common Ground' with our public and third sector partners is so important. It brings all our expertise together, helps us understand our shared priorities and lets us work together to find sustainable ways of making co-designed, life-changing support a reality for everyone who needs it, while taking the strain off our public services.

pss.org.uk



I The Reader

The Reader, based in Calderstones Park, transforms lives by sparking connection and creating closer communities through the power of Shared Reading.

In Liverpool, we read aloud with a range of communities to help us live well, including people living with dementia, asylum seekers and refugees, care experienced children and adults across mental health services and in recovery.

We believe this event is important because our city is full of amazing organisations who could collectively build a better society. Yet to truly shape shared outcomes and solutions, it starts with people – building understanding and trust within and across sectors.

thereader.org.uk





rotunda

Rotunda delivers an integrated, all under one roof model of community-based services, offering adult education, skills development, early years provision, wellbeing services, family support and more recently community led housing for young women and children – strengthening resilience and reducing inequalities in North Liverpool.

Participation in Well Placed's Common Ground Event will bring together multiple organisations across Liverpool's third sector health and wellbeing and care landscape, fostering collaboration and active listening so communities are meaningfully heard, by commissions and decision makers alike, thus enabling a proactive, grassroots approach to building stronger, long-lasting relationships, driving improvement in the communities that need it most.

therotunda.org.uk





We're Turner and we provide specialist, complex nursing and residential care for men with mental health, challenges, memory loss and acquired brain injuries. This support is delivered from our unique 59-person home in South Liverpool.

As a Registered Charity we have delivered support to men with complex needs and behaviours for over two centuries, continually developing our understanding of need and our unique offer of person-centred support.

Our support is delivered from our Grade II listed building in Dingle, designed by renowned British architect Alfred Waterhouse and commissioned by philanthropist Anne Turner in memory of her husband and son. It was purpose-built to support men whose conditions led to profound social exclusion. That founding purpose continues today.

Turner is supporting Common Ground because it creates space for honest conversation, shared learning and collective action on the things that matter most to the people of Liverpool.

turnerliverpool.org.uk





The Whitechapel Centre is a leading homelessness and housing charity working across the Liverpool City Region, supporting people facing some of the most challenging moments of their lives. We work alongside those sleeping rough, living in hostels or supported accommodation, or struggling to hold on to their homes.

Through compassionate, tailored support and expert housing advice, we help prevent homelessness wherever possible. When it can't be avoided, we help people secure new accommodation and develop the skills needed for independent living, empowering them to build stable, long-term futures.

whitechapelcentre.co.uk



YOU · MATTER

HOPE + HOMES SINCE 1846

For over 180 years we've been supporting people across the Liverpool City Region through some of life's hardest moments. Working with people when things feel unstable, overwhelming or uncertain, offering safe homes and help that starts with listening.

Our work covers homelessness, mental health, addiction and domestic abuse, complex issues that often overlap and can't be tackled in isolation.

We provide 800 homes with psychologically informed support. When people work with us our role is about guiding them to rediscover their strengths, rebuild their confidence, and lock-in the belief that they can get their life back on track.

you-matter.org.uk



Today's lunch has been prepared by fellow third sector organisation...



Bay Tree Catering is a Liverpool-based business that has been running successfully for over 15 years. It was set up by professional chef Michelle O'Dwyer, who has cooked at major national and international events including the 2012 Olympic Games, the Ryder Cup, and as Executive Chef at Event City.

Michelle is also a qualified teacher and previously worked in adult education delivering cookery workshops across Merseyside. This led her to establish Bay Tree Cookery Academy CIC as a not-for-profit Community Interest Company.

The CIC works to improve access to healthy, nutritious food, helping people develop cooking and nutrition skills, reduce food waste, and tackle poverty, hunger and poor nutrition in areas of high deprivation across Liverpool.

Working with food suppliers and local community organisations, Michelle helps ensure surplus food reaches those who need it most, supporting access to fresh food, building skills, reducing isolation and bringing communities together.

Michelle is passionate about creating inclusive and equitable communities, working across diverse backgrounds to break down barriers and create welcoming spaces where everyone feels able to participate.





**Today's
running
order.**

9.30am

Arrivals, coffee and meet our Well Placed members.

A chance to settle in, grab a brew, meet new people and reconnect with others.

10.15am

Welcome and why we're here today

Ellie McNeill, You Matter CEO and 'Well Placed' Chair

Setting the tone for the day, its purpose and what we hope comes out of it.

10.30am

Panel Q&A: Better earlier, what changes when we join the dots ?

A conversation about prevention, partnership and the critical role of the third sector in this work.

Panel members:

- Matt Ashton Director of Public Health, Liverpool City Council.
 - Kath Wallace, Strategic Commissioner, Liverpool City Council.
 - David Carter, CEO Whitechapel and 'Well Placed' member.
 - Matty Caine, CEO First Person Project CIC and 'Well Placed' member.
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11.30am

Table discussions: Food for thought, how do we work better side by side?

Thoughts and reflections on what blocks and what powers public and third sector partnership.

12.00pm

Lunch & networking

Time to eat, talk and build some new relationships.

1.00pm

Panel Q&A: Being brave, doing things differently with courage and freedom.

Exploring public and third sector partners and how we can work together to take risks and find opportunities.

Panel members:

- Jenni Glennard, Corporate Director of Children's and Young People's Services, Liverpool City Council.
 - Anne-Marie Lubanski, Deputy Chief Executive, Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Health, Liverpool City Council.
 - Shantanu Kundu, CEO, Be Free Campaign and Well Placed Member.
 - Diane Hesketh, CEO, Natural Breaks and Well Placed Member.
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2.00pm

Grab a quick coffee.

2.15pm

Panel Q&A: Being Social Value, built in, not bolted on.

Exploring how the third sector creates social value through everyday relationships and embedded community work.

Panel members:

- Jacqui McKinlay, Chief Operating Officer, Liverpool City Council.
 - Dave Sweeney, Associate Director of Partnerships and Sustainability, Cheshire and Merseyside ICB.
 - Jeff Scales, CEO, LCVS.
 - Kevin Peacock, CEO, Options for Supported Living.
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3.15pm

Looking ahead, what happens next?

Ellie McNeil, Chair: Closing thoughts, shared reflections and next steps.

3.30pm

Keep the conversations going..



wellplacedliverpool

visit our website



hosted by



Together
For Liverpool
For Good

