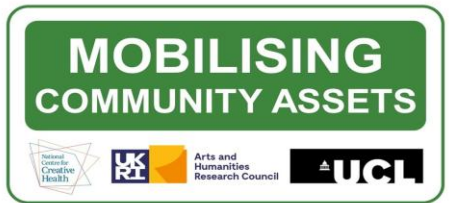




MigRefHealth ESOL

Please put your microphone on mute!



MigRefHealth ESOL findings, recommendations and best practice



15th October 2026

Agenda

10.00 Introduction to MigRefHealth

10:10 Key ESOL findings

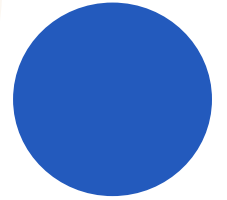
10:20 Key recommendations & expert report

10:30 Best practice examples

- UK Welcomes Refugees
- NAMYSTO
- Stamford Diversity Group
- ISpeakFootball

11:00 Let's talk!

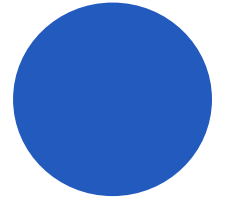
11:30 Finish



Co-creating asset and place-based approaches to tackling refugee and migrant health exclusion.

Project Goal

To investigate **community assets** used by **local communities** to **improve the health outcomes** for refugee, asylum-seeking and migrant communities





**A “community asset” = advice
and information services,
community hubs, community
groups, religious organisations,
open spaces, food banks, leisure
centres.**

MigRefHealth Partners



LRMN



GYROS



Qicn

a.r.u. | Anglia Ruskin University



Eight field sites in the East of England and four in London



Islington

Barnet

Lewisham

Greenwich

Colchester

Wethersfield

Ipswich

Lowestoft

Great Yarmouth

Norwich

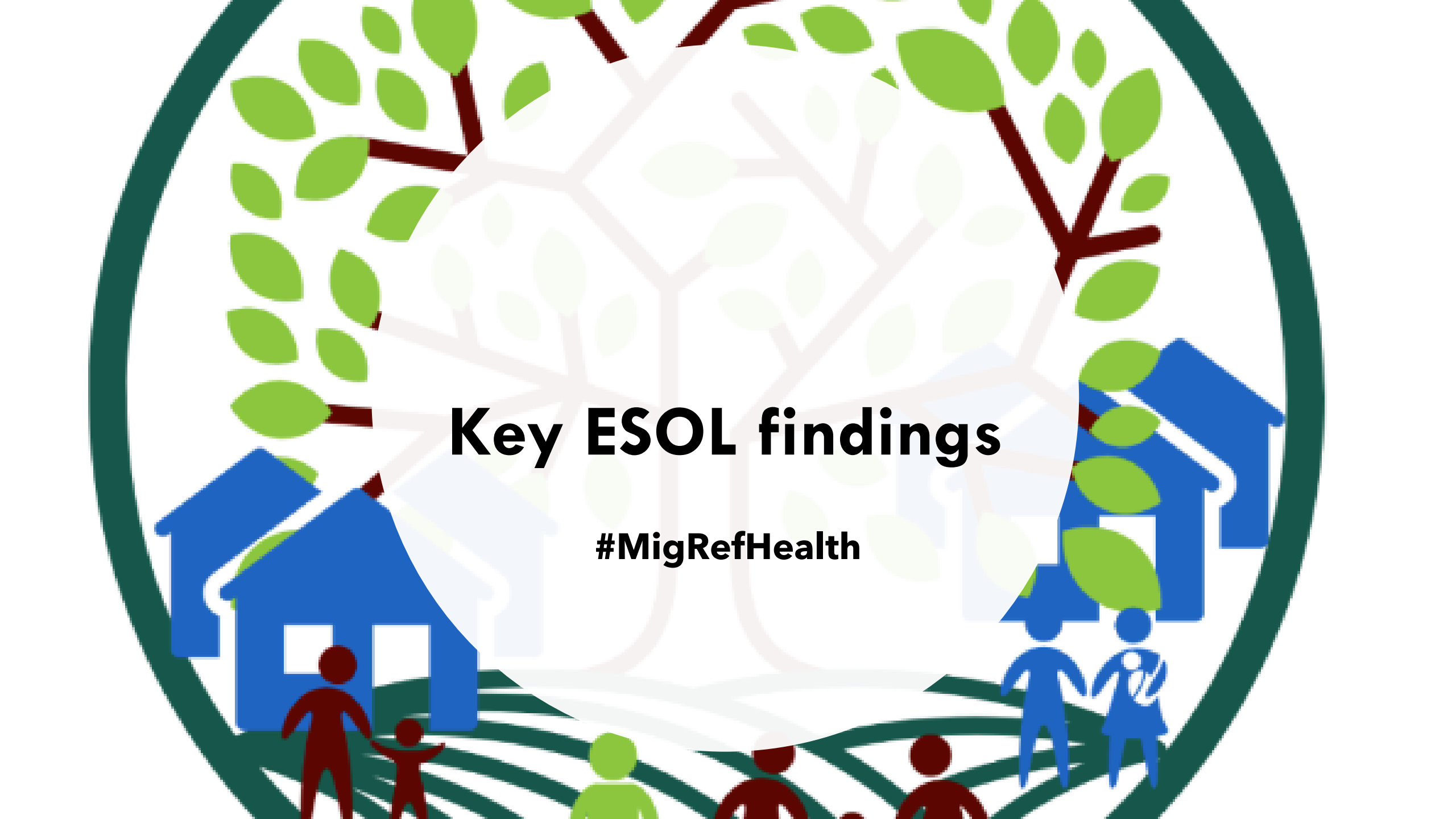
Cambridge

Peterborough



MigRefHealth Project statistics

- 21 community co-researchers (CCRs) - speaking 10 community languages
- 85 walking interviews
- 21 one-on-one interviews (Wethersfield residents/former residents)
- 77 community fora (CFs) across 12 field-sites.
- 988 participants (632 unique participants from 47 countries)
- Over 1300 professional photographs capturing events/community assets
- 10 discrete creative methods
- 240+ stakeholder participants so far
- Interactive map v1 and v2 = over 5500 assets plotted.
- Literature scoping review has reduced over 7900 references (incl. grey literature) to <85 for full screening, subset by theme.
- www.migrefhealth.co.uk



Key ESOL findings

#MigRefHealth

ESOL



Key barrier to settlement, participation and inclusion



Negative effects on multiple aspects – health, education, housing, welfare



Compounded by poor digital literacy

Key findings relating to ESOL

Formal and informal provision
is usually available but
demand outstrips supply



Key findings relating to ESOL

Barriers:

- Eligibility criteria, long waiting lists, limited suitable classes and inflexible provision
- For Hong Kongers: also costs
- Classes do not match working hours/shifts
- Childcare
- Lack of progression leading to multi-level classes
- Difficult to navigate and access courses
- Travel time and cost in rural areas



Key findings relating to ESOL

Participants wanted more intensive,
more frequent provision

Community-based provision was
highly valued

Lack of opportunities to use
English outside of classroom

Informal interpreting puts strain on
family and community members,
especially women



Key findings relating to ESOL

Summary:

People want ESOL that is easy to access, has sufficient structure and pace in order to progress and acquire a suitable level of English for employment and participation in society.

Language support and cultural understanding were viewed as critical forms of empowerment.





Recommendations

#MigRefHealth



Overall recommendation

Improve access to ESOL and conversational English classes, through simpler registration processes & increasing number, levels and locations of provision





Expert report





Expert report

Fundamental change to the ESOL system to make it fit for purpose and enable migrants to be included in British society, whilst recognising the financial and social return on investment that this generates.



Expert report recommendations

Entitlement to and funding for classes with a clear progression route up to Entry 3 / B1.

Resolve key barriers: child supervision + transport time and costs

Digital support and removing digital barriers

After Entry 3/B1: vocational courses & more advanced and exam courses, including for settlement

Denmark has 3 tracks depending on previous educational level.



Danish 1 (15% of learners): illiterate and non-Latin alphabets. Target: A1/A2

Danish 2 (43%): Low previous education. Target: B1/B2

Danish 3 (42%): Multilingual learners with higher education. Target: C1

Germany has specific courses for the following groups:



people who are illiterate;

people who are literate but are learning the Latin alphabet as a second script;

people with limited literacy;

young people, parents and women;

people with particular learning needs;

intensive courses for faster learners.

Expert report



Informal and
community
courses have high
social value

Single points of
contact for central
registration and
assessment

Expert report



WHY?

Financial and
social return on
investment is
undeniable



Return on investment

- Commission on the Integration of Refugees:
- Offer English language and employment support to asylum seekers from day one
- **Net economic benefit of £1.2 billion to the UK economy in five years**
- [CIR_Report-1.pdf](#) (2024).



Return on investment

- Not only did STEP Ukraine help people find employment, but it also helped them to stay employed for longer [and] increased participants' monthly wages.
- STEP Ukraine (2023-25) **generated £17.5 million in total benefits to the UK Exchequer.** This translates to **total net savings of £8.9 million.**
- When **wider economic and social benefits are included,** STEP Ukraine generated **£31.5 million in benefits to society** overall, with a **net societal benefit of £22.9 million.**
- [Evaluation of the STEP Ukraine Programme, July 2026 | World Jewish Relief](#)



Best practice examples

#MigRefHealth

**Joy Lam
UK
Welcomes
Refugees**

[UK Welcomes Refugees - Building
Communities Together](#)







Yvette Diaz- Munoz Stamford Diversity Group

[Stamford Diversity Group - Stamford Diversity Group CIC](#)

Stamford Diversity Group

As well as delivering 26 ESOL Functional Skills sessions over 3 months to Afghans in Wittering we added in some numeracy sessions, facilitated an Eid celebration and held a block printing workshop. One of the Ukrainians helped with the workshop.





Stamford Diversity Group

- Topics covered included Housing Rights & Responsibilities, How to use the NHS, Understanding the English School System, Know Your Employment Rights & Financial Literacy



Stamford Diversity Group

We facilitated an Eid celebration which included crafts, music and a food share. It was during this session that one of our volunteers, Eleanor Turner, a harpist, learnt an Afghan lullaby from the attendees. The Afghans also invited the local Ukrainians.

Stamford Diversity Group

Harpist Eleanor Turner performed a concert in Wittering before playing it in Canada at the World Harp Congress. She played lullabies from around the world including the one the Afghans had taught her.

One lady, Paola, who is half Ukrainian, and is a seamstress, was inspired to head up the Threads project with us after chatting to some of the Afghans and to Eleanor at the concert.





Rend Platings NAMYSTO, Cambridge

[Namysto | Every Child Belongs. We All Count.](#)

NAMYSTO PRESENTS



Digital Freedom

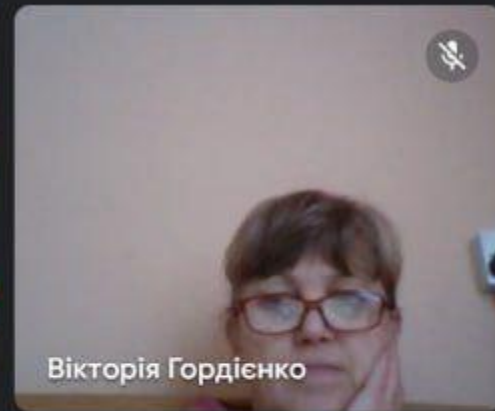
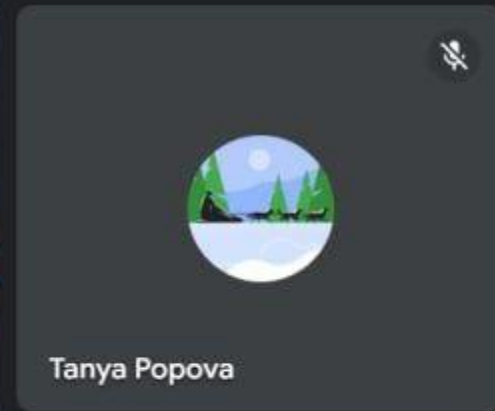
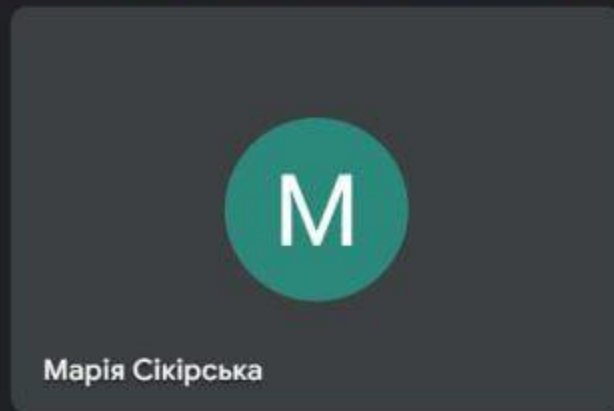
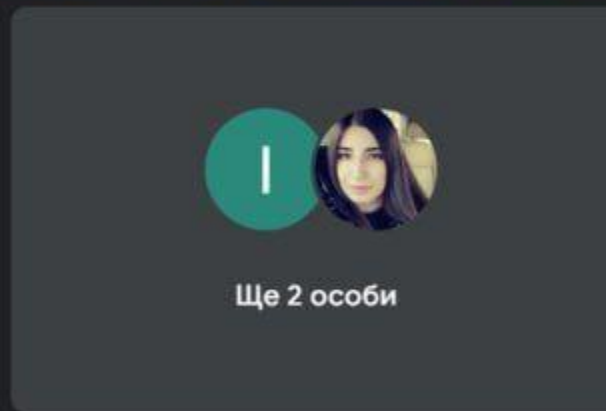
Free, in-person support helping refugees overcome barriers,
access essential services, build confidence and improve their wellbeing

5 Awards

£40,579

Currently running · Join any time

Fluency First



Цей виклик невдовзі завершиться



Digital Literacy



Getting started: resources and funding



Funded by
UK Government



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Three routes to digital confidence: challenges

LEARN

Digital Fluency Day Workshops

Three hands-on days covering essential digital skills with Ukrainian interpretation.

PRACTISE

Digital Drop-in Clinics

Eight weekly sessions for troubleshooting, practice and personalised support.

SHARE

Peer Digital Mentor Training

Four weeks of training for people who want to support others in their community.



Ministry of Health, Communities, Local Government









A partnership supporting digital independence



Funded by
UK Government



“A necklace is not one bead — it is many, each different, each with its own path to the thread. What makes it a necklace is not sameness but connection. That is what we are: different beads, different paths, yet all parts of a single whole — held together by one principle: **no one should be disadvantaged because of difference...**”







Lessons for replication: DO

TWO DOs

DO 01

Implement formal onboarding

Explain values, social mixing standards and media policies

DO 02

Budget for participation

Include childcare and compensation for people's time



Lessons for replication: DON'T

TWO DON'Ts

DON'T 01

Mistake attendance for enjoyment

Ask participants about their experience and adapt

DON'T 02

Try to be Flash Gordon with wings

Speak honestly to funders when something isn't working







Mark Lewis
ISpeakFootball

[Home | I Speak Football](#)



I SPEAKTM FOOTBALL

play-learn-connect

01 Our Story so far

02 Resources

03 Wins and Losses

04 Feedback

05 Do's and Don'ts



01

Our Story so far..

I SPEAK FOOTBALL



02

Resources



03

Wins and Losses



04

Feedback

I SPEAK FOOTBALL

- ✓ Do: Be flexible.
- ✓ Do: Keep lived experience voices central
- ✗ Don't: Be too tempted into spending funds on “nice to haves”.
- ✗ Don't: Scale faster than your organisation/methodology can handle.
- ✓ Do: Ask for help...

05

Do's and Don'ts



I SPEAK FOOTBALL



**I SPEAK
FOOTBALL**

Mark@ispeakfootball.org

WhatsApp +90 544 744 8124

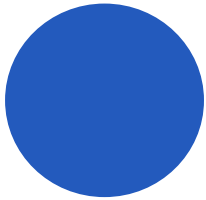
www.ispeakfootball.org



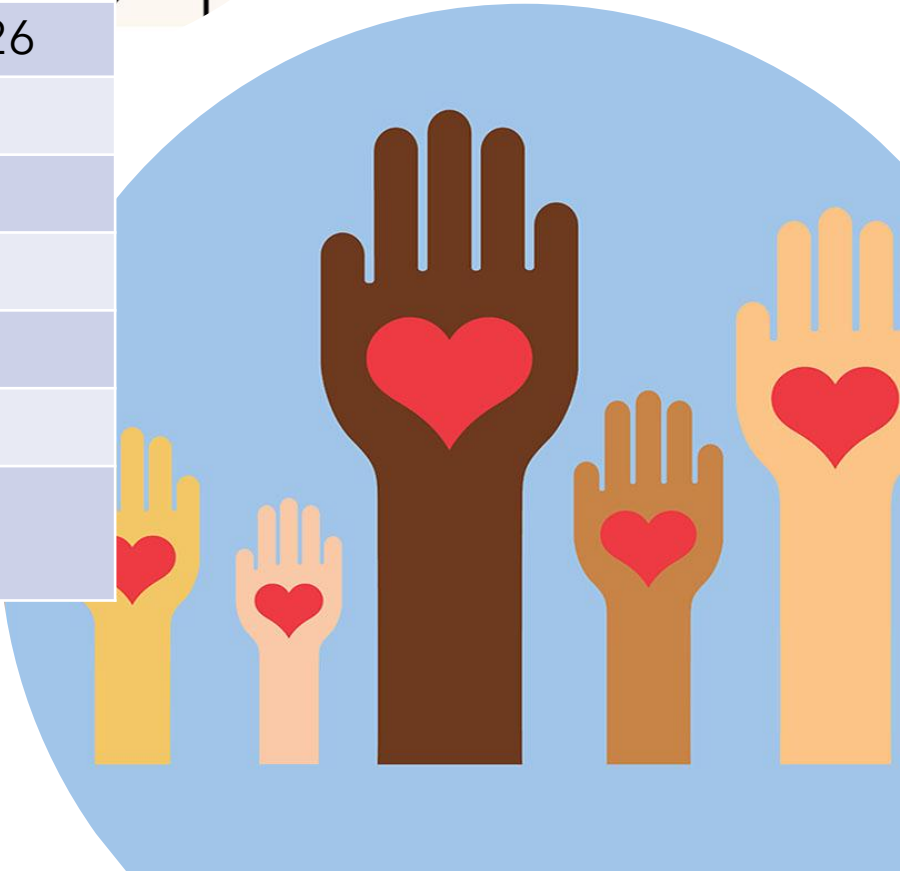
Let's talk

Please raise your hand using the icon or put your questions/comments in the chat.

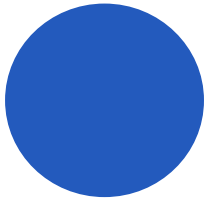
Next Steps – exhibitions and knowledge exchange events – in-person



Location	Venue	Dates
London	Islington Museum	22 Oct - 10 Dec 2026
Norwich	The Forum	19-22 Oct
Great Yarmouth	Prime Yarc	4-11 Nov
Lowestoft	Railway Station	12-16 Nov
Ipswich	The HOLD	17-25 Nov
Peterborough	St John's church	15-18 Jan 2027
End of project event	Wellcome Collection - London	27 Jan 2027



Next Steps – online roundtables

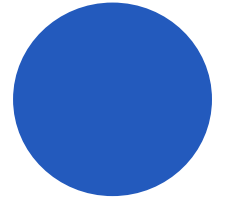


Theme	Date and time
Pathways to inclusion (navigation of systems and services)	12 November 1030-12
Top table discussion on health	23 November 10-11
Strengthening community architecture	25 November 2-3.30
Wider event on health inclusion	1 December 2-3
Food insecurity	11 or 14 December
Digital inclusion	Date TBC



Next Steps

- ❖ Project reports / policy guides / publications on co-production models, community researcher training, creative methods, transferability and impact
- ❖ Impact plans for each fieldsite





Thank you!

**MigRefHealth
Team**

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#MigRefHealth

