



# Love Driffield: One Year On

An Impact Report

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## About Healthwatch East Riding of Yorkshire

Healthwatch provides an independent voice for the residents of the East Riding of Yorkshire. We listen to people's lived experiences of health and social care services and report these experiences back to service providers. As well as seeking the public's views ourselves, we also encourage services to involve people in decisions that affect them. Our sole purpose is to help make care better for people.



### Our vision

To bring closer the day when everyone gets the care they need.



### Our mission

To make sure people's experiences help make health and social care better.



### Our approach – what is important to us?

- **Listening** to people and making sure their voices are heard.
- **Including** everyone in the conversation – especially those who don't always have their voice heard.
- **Analysing** different people's experiences to learn how to improve care.
- **Acting** on feedback and driving change.
- **Partnering** with the Government, health and care services and the voluntary and community sector to make care better whilst retaining our independence.

# Love Driffield: One Year On

## The Love Driffield Foodbank Project

In March 2024, we published a report which detailed the experiences of people who visit Love Driffield Community Hub and Foodbank. This report was the result of a 4-month project which gathered feedback through face-to-face engagements. The primary aim of this project was to hear and share the voices of seldom heard communities. You can read the report on our [website](#).

### What did we do?

- We visited the community centre every Thursday from September 2023 until the end of December 2023. During these visits we got to know the clients and their backgrounds as well any difficulties they were facing.
- We spoke to clients about their experiences of using healthcare services as someone who lives in or near Driffield and may be from a low-income household.
- We recorded the experiences of the clients in an anonymous report, in which we identified common themes.
- We supported both Love Driffield and Cherry Tree Community Centre in providing information and signposting to clients in need of advice.

### What did we find?

From the feedback, 4 main themes arose:

#### Digital Exclusion

- Many healthcare providers are moving to online-based appointment booking systems. This is better for some patients, but not all. We heard from many people who do not have access to the internet or a smartphone so are unable to book appointments this way.

Whilst this issue is not exclusive to Driffield residents, it is one that is contributing to existing health inequalities.

#### Access to GP Appointments

- Many residents expressed concern that they have never met their GP face-to-face, and some residents complained at a lack of continuity of care, as they see a different person at each appointment and are frustrated at repeating their medical history again.

## Rural Challenges

- The rurality of Driffield and the surrounding Wolds can prove very challenging. Some residents told us how they can struggle to access some healthcare appointments, such as ultrasounds and other investigatory procedures, due to needing to travel long distances.
- A number of residents expressed a desire for more services to be available at the Alfred Bean Hospital in Driffield.

## Pressures from the Cost-of-Living Crisis

- Many people who receive support from the foodbank are working people. However, the cost-of-living crisis means that there is often not enough money left for food after paying increasing rent and energy bills.
- During the four months of this project, three incidents of homelessness occurred at the Love Driffield foodbank.
- The regular visits emphasised the need for in-person support services, such as The CTC Advice Centre, as many people fall through the cracks of the online services and require the support of local charities.

## What happened with this information?

Once the report was published, it was distributed to many providers and commissioners of health and social care services around the East Riding. It was and still is available to the public to read.

We presented the report to Driffield Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INT) – a meeting of service managers and providers focussed on improving the health and wellbeing of the Driffield community.

The publishing of this report coincided with the launch of the Stronger Together forum – the work of Love Driffield, Cherry Tree Community Centre and Jacob's Well Charity. The aim of Stronger Together is to provide a wrap-around approach to the clients of the foodbank.

This report provided an independent perspective and evidence of some of the difficulties residents of Driffield and the surrounding Wolds experience.



## The Impact: One Year On

Since publishing the Love Driffield report, the Stronger Together Forum was launched and Love Driffield became a focus of the Driffield INT meetings. In these meetings, awareness of the challenges faced by Driffield residents was raised and solutions were discussed.

The Love Driffield project and report was met with support, particularly by Yorkshire Health Partners (YHP). YHP have since arranged for in-person support to be available at Love Driffield with both a Respiratory Social Prescriber and a Children and Young People Social Prescriber visiting to talk to clients.

YHP also identified opportunities for volunteers of Love Driffield to undertake further training to support them in their roles. As highlighted by Angela, the trustee manager of Love Driffield, often the need for emergency food parcels is just one aspect of a person's difficult circumstances. Many clients also face mental health difficulties with some having experienced domestic abuse or even human trafficking. By completing Safeguarding and Suicide Prevention training, volunteers of the foodbank can be better equipped to appropriately respond to the client's challenging circumstances and follow safeguarding protocols.



In addition to this, YHP liaised with Citizens Advice to support them in providing a drop-in service for Love Driffield clients. After the project ended, Cherry Tree Community Centre were forced to stop their weekly drop-in advice service due to lack of funding. During the usual Thursday visits after this, we saw for ourselves how many clients were going to Love Driffield hoping to get advice not knowing the service had been stopped. Fortunately, Cherry Tree were later able to obtain funding from Brehlms Trust to restart the Driffield advice service which has been greatly appreciated by their clients.

Since the end of the project, Techy Tea CIC have established a weekly drop-in at Love Driffield. The aim of these free sessions is to bridge the technical knowledge gap, improve digital skills, and support clients in using their own devices. Techy Tea are also providing their expert experience by volunteering their time and equipment in support of the Stronger Together network. Love Driffield have also secured funding from UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to buy laptops to be used by clients for free. The availability of laptops and Wi-Fi to use at the community centre will benefit many people who may otherwise struggle to access online services, as documented in the Love Driffield report.

Love Driffield Community Hub now supports many health and wellbeing services. Active Communities, along with Xyla, are currently running tasters sessions of 12-week Health and Activity Session which aims to increase levels of physical activity and offer support on healthier lifestyles.

Also, in response to the Love Driffield project, we were invited to a 'Deep Dive' hosted by East Riding of Yorkshire Council's Health and Wellbeing Board in January 2024. The deep dive was titled '*Working Effectively as a System to Address the Impact of the Cost-of-Living Crisis*' and it included professionals from many local charities and organisations as well as from local health and social care services. This workshop involved table-based discussions focussing on current work being carried out in response to the cost-of-living crisis and any barriers we face in supporting clients with this. The discussions led onto how we can create a collaborative response to the cost-of-living crisis, and what each organisation can offer in regard to this. This deep dive was an excellent opportunity to present feedback from clients of Love Driffield foodbank and ensure their voices and experiences are heard by decision makers, such as those who commission NHS services. The discussions and issues raised at the deep dive were recorded and we look forward to reading and sharing the resulting report from East Riding Council.

The Humber & North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) are taking a population health approach to working within the various neighbourhoods

across East Yorkshire. This approach is designed to reduce health inequalities within specific communities based on the need of those communities. This project was able to feedback some of the local challenges residents of Driffield face which has led to the Driffield INT hub being established and continues to thrive. The effectiveness of this coproduced piece of work is now being used as a template / inspiration to other newly established Integrated Neighbourhood teams, as well as being recognised by Healthwatch England and NHS England. Since the end of the project in December 2023, we have provided a monthly Healthwatch drop-in service for clients to get any information or signposting they may need, and this is planned to continue throughout 2025. These drop-ins provide us with an opportunity to continuously monitor changes and challenges within the Driffield area whilst collecting feedback about the health and social care services. We hope that maintaining a Healthwatch presence at Love Driffield will allow us to build and keep positive relationships with clients and other local organisations to offer our support for the years to come.



# healthwatch

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