Motivation room

WSA
Roadmap event

WSA
Roadmap event

WSA Roadmap event

13th May 2026

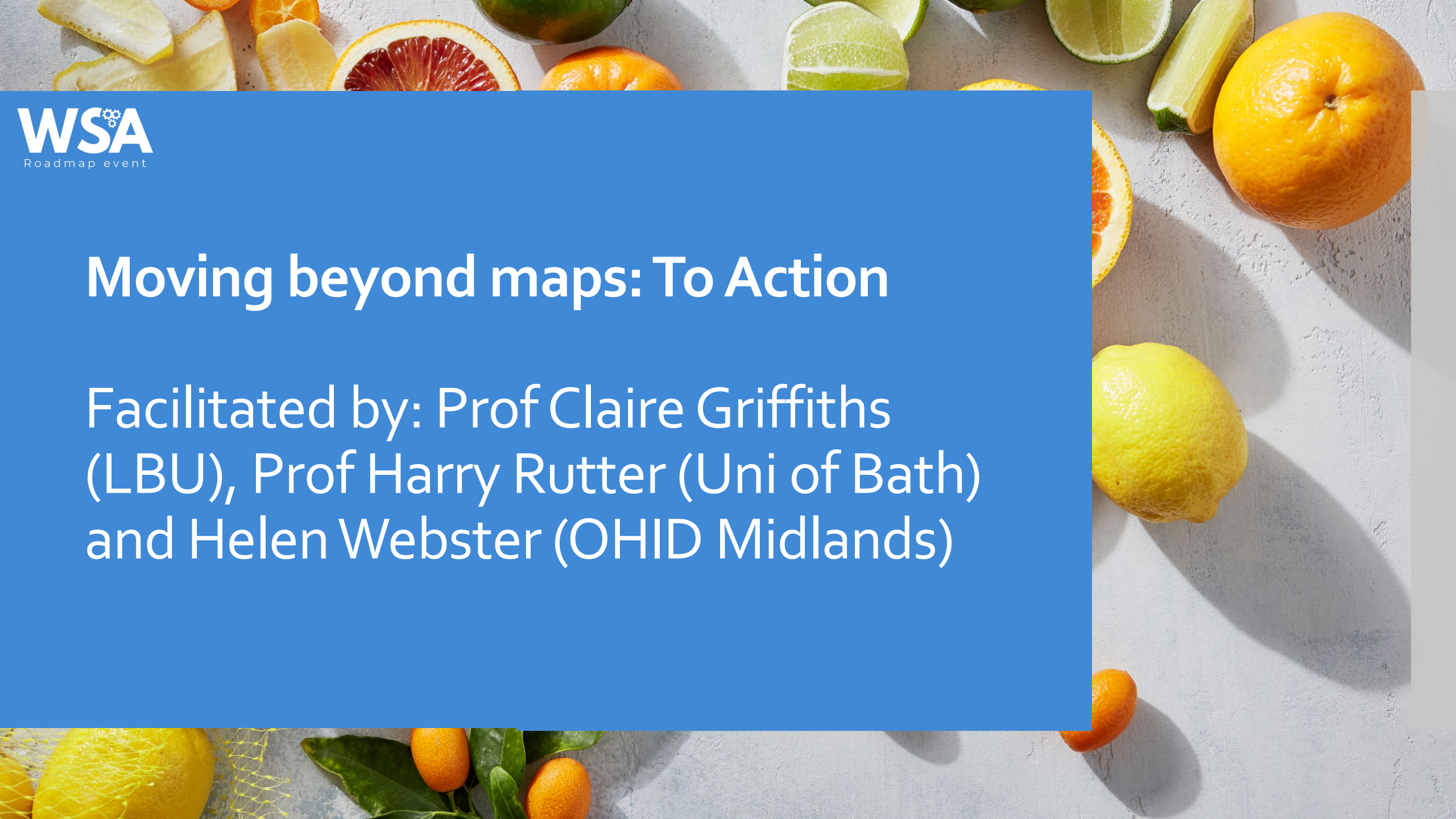
10:00-15:45

NIHR | Public Health Intervention Responsive Studies Teams
University of Hertfordshire UH
LBU LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY
Office for Health Improvement & Disparities
Northumbria University NEWCASTLE
QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST

Parallel Session 1

10.55am-12 noon

WSA
Roadmap event



WSA
Roadmap event

Moving beyond maps: To Action

Facilitated by: Prof Claire Griffiths (LBU), Prof Harry Rutter (Uni of Bath) and Helen Webster (OHID Midlands)

LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY
OBESITY INSTITUTE

Moving Beyond Maps: To Action.

Professor Claire Griffiths

Co-Director of the Obesity Institute, Leeds Beckett University

Exam Question(s)

What insights do policy makers need to inform decisions?

Why do we need to move beyond (qualitative) maps?

What challenges do stakeholders face to moving beyond (qualitative) maps?

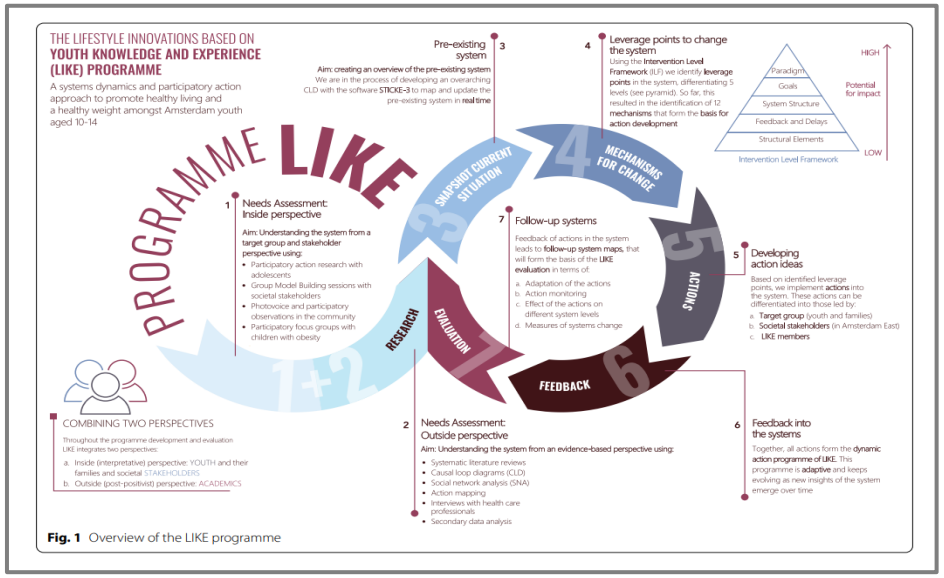
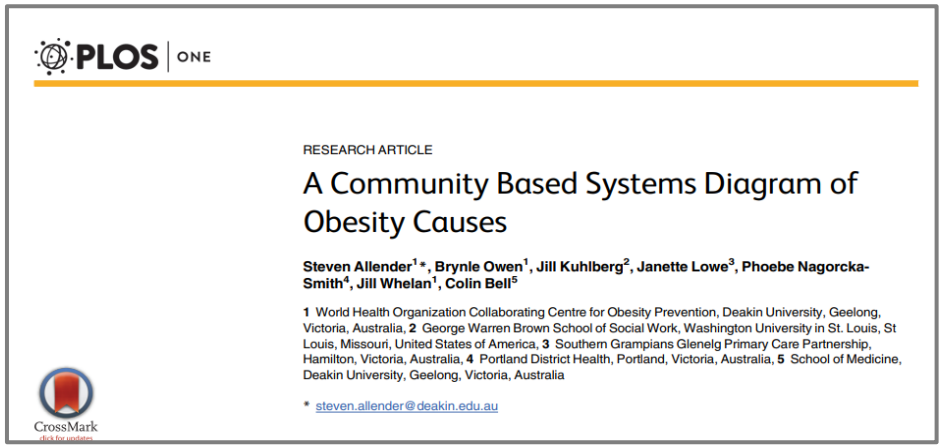
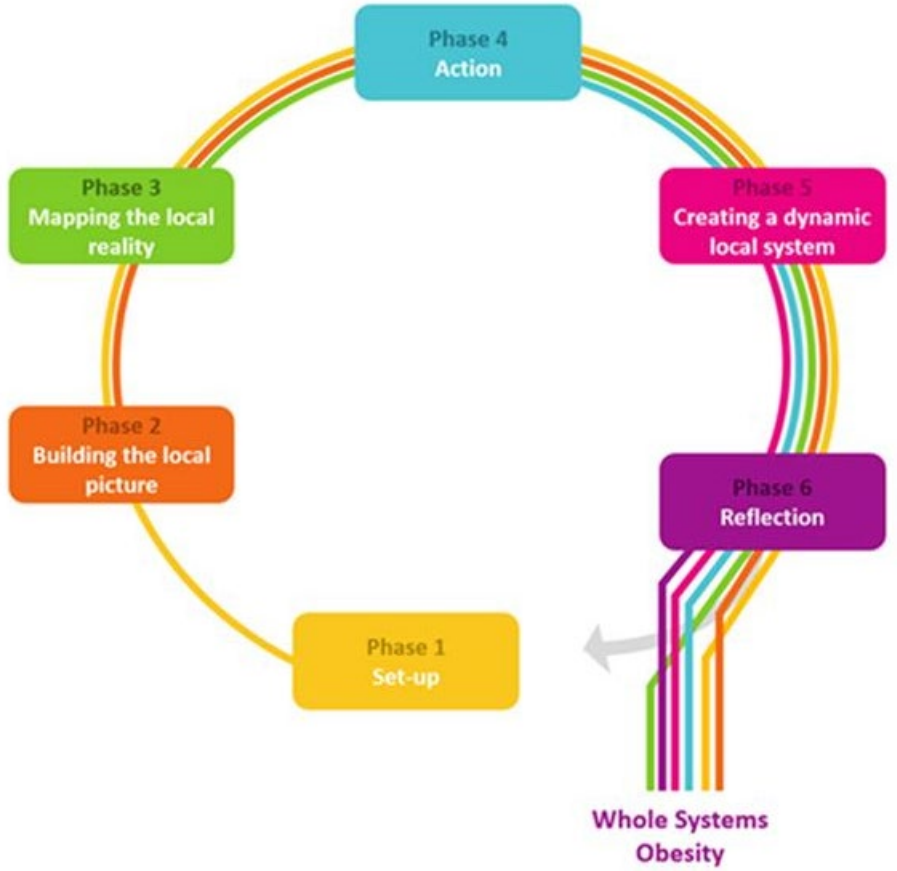


Fig. 1 Overview of the LIKE programme





IMPROVING THE LIVES OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH, OR AT RISK OF OBESITY.

Check for updates

OPEN ACCESS

EDITED BY
Dan J. Graham,
Colorado State University, United States

REVIEWED BY
Zenong Yin,
University of Texas at San Antonio, United States
Hsin-Jen Chen,
National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University, Taiwan

*CORRESPONDENCE
Bai Li
bai.li@bristol.ac.uk

†These authors share first authorship

RECEIVED 09 August 2022

Comprehensive application of a systems approach to obesity prevention: a scoping review of empirical evidence

Bai Li[1*†], Mohammed Alharbi[1†], Steve Allender[2], Boyd Swinburn[3], Remco Peters[1] and Charlie Foster[1]

[1]Centre for Exercise, Nutrition and Health Sciences, School for Policy Studies, University of Bristol, Bristol, United Kingdom, [2]Global Centre for Preventive Health and Nutrition (GLOBE), Institute for Health Transformation, Faculty of Health, Deakin University, Geelong, VIC, Australia, [3]School of Population Health, University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand

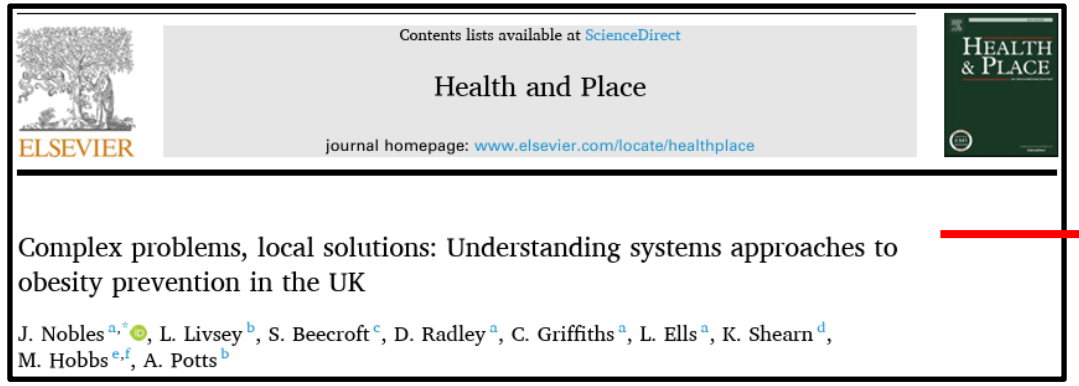
Only three studies (10 publications) met the inclusion criteria

"*studies/programmes that have **comprehensively** applied a systems approach to obesity prevention in intervention development, delivery/ implementation, and evaluation*"

No conclusion of the effectiveness of a systems approach can be drawn

There is limited evidence of the value of a systems-based approaches in public health

At this point it is difficult to draw firm conclusions abut the extent to which systems-based approaches add value, and when and how they should be used



Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Health and Place

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/healthplace

Complex problems, local solutions: Understanding systems approaches to obesity prevention in the UK

J. Nobles [a,*], L. Livsey [b], S. Beecroft [c], D. Radley [a], C. Griffiths [a], L. Ells [a], K. Shearn [d], M. Hobbs [e,f], A. Potts [b]

Local systems approaches to obesity prevention are emerging across the UK but **implementation is largely in early stages**.

Whilst the complexity of obesity is widely recognised, more **support is required to help local teams intervene within the obesogenic environment**.

Crielaard *et al.*
International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity (2025) 22:74
https://doi.org/10.1186/s12966-025-01766-z

International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity

METHODOLOGY Open Access

Systems approaches in public health: beyond mapping the causes

Loes Crielaard[1*], Mary Nicolaou[1], Andrew D. Brown[2], S. Coosje Dijkstra[1], Fleur ter Ellen[3], Leonie K. Elsenburg[1,4], Angie Luna Pinzon[1], Wilma E. Waterlander[1] and Karien Stronks[1]

Current systems-based approaches are limited to “describing the system”

Applying a “**problem framing system dynamic strategy**” could make approaches better positioned to inform responses

The Challenge……

Current system approaches predominantly focus on how complex problems are understood, by describing the causes of the problem - e.g., obesity – as a system.

While this has shifted attention away from individuals to the broader system, it offers limited insight into how complex problems evolve over time or how they might be effectively addressed.

The challenge is not in understanding the complexity of obesity – this is well documented – but in how we work with the complexity

Centre for
21st Century
Public Health

UNIVERSITY OF BATH

Systems approaches to public health action

Harry Rutter
Prof of Global Public Health
Centre for 21st Century Public Health
University of Bath

h.r.rutter@bath.ac.uk

CO-CREATE

Confronting obesity: Co-creating policy with youth (CO-CREATE)

NIPH
Norwegian Institute of Public Health

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 774210

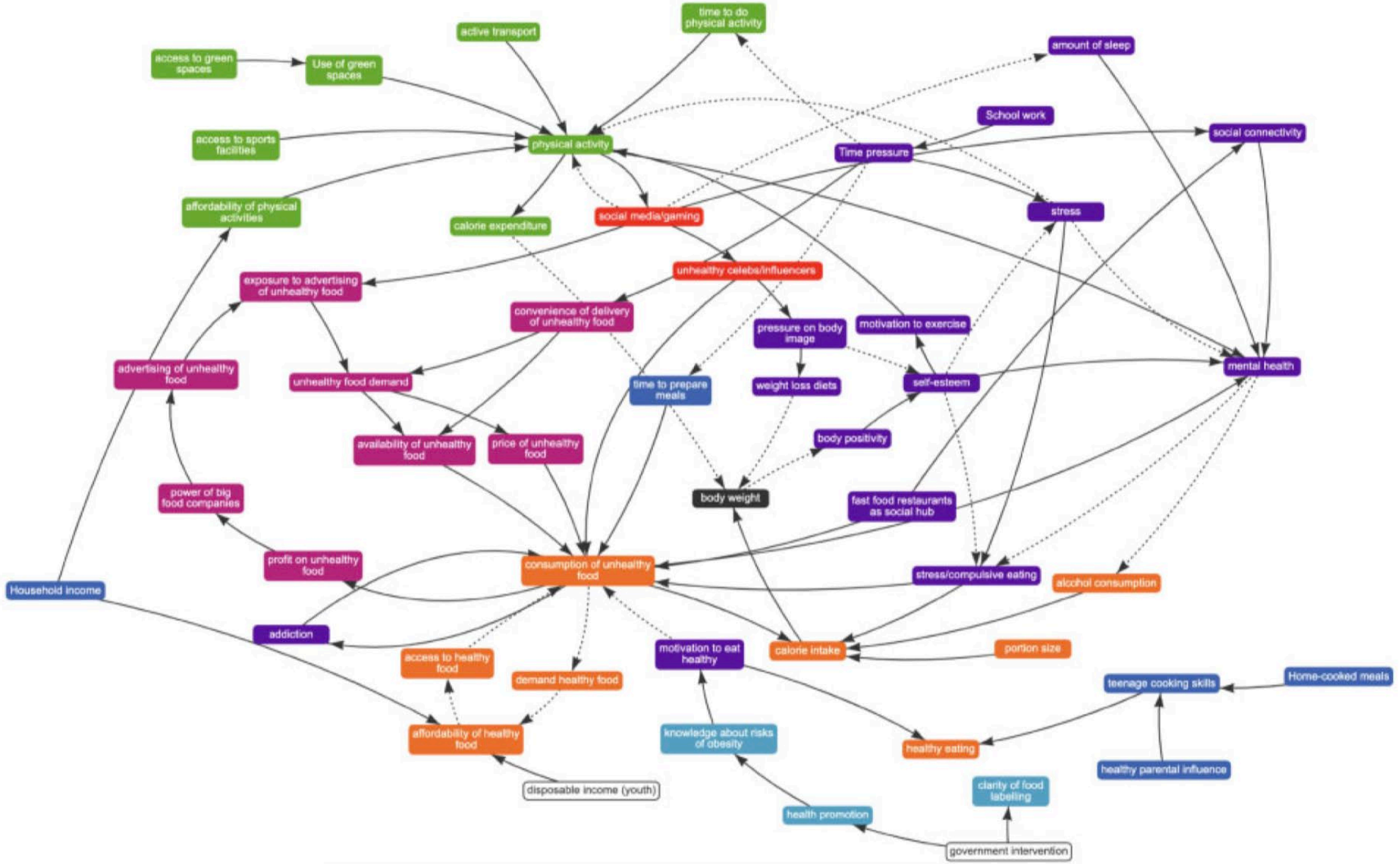


Figure 1 Integrated map representing views of young people in 20 groups in 5 European countries

Savona et al Eur J Public Health. 2021 doi: 10.1093/eurpub/ckaa251.

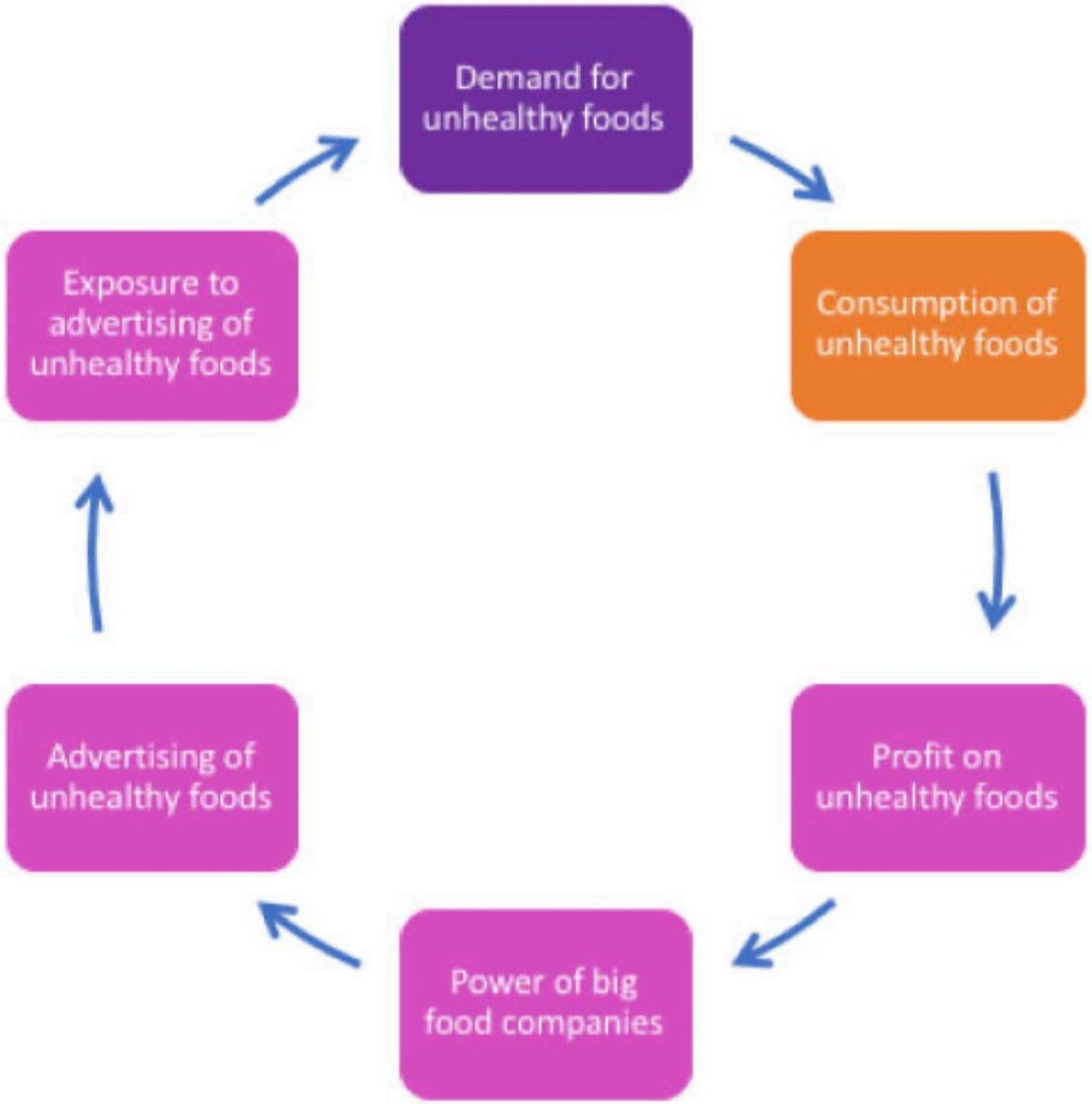


Figure 2 Commercial drivers of adolescents' unhealthy diet

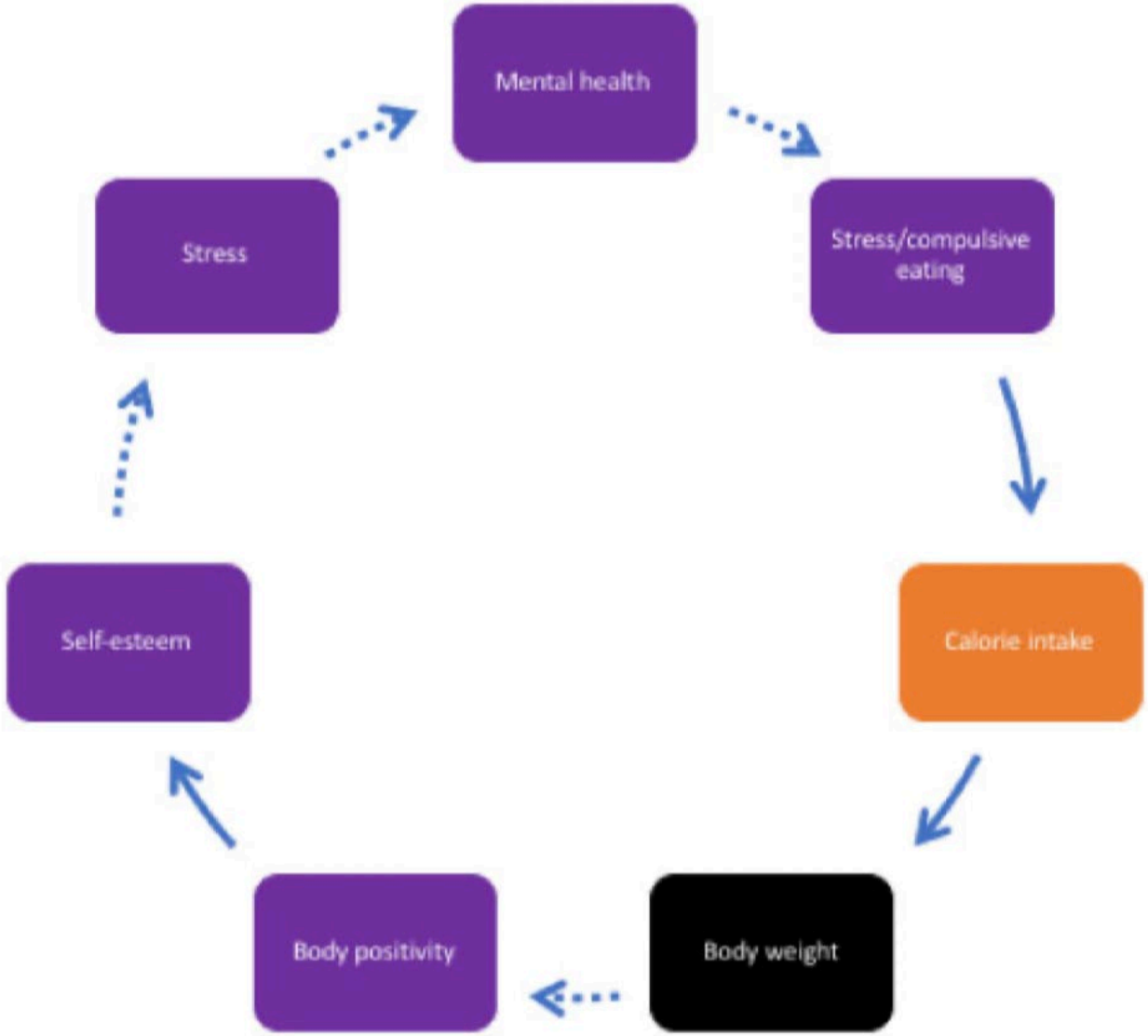
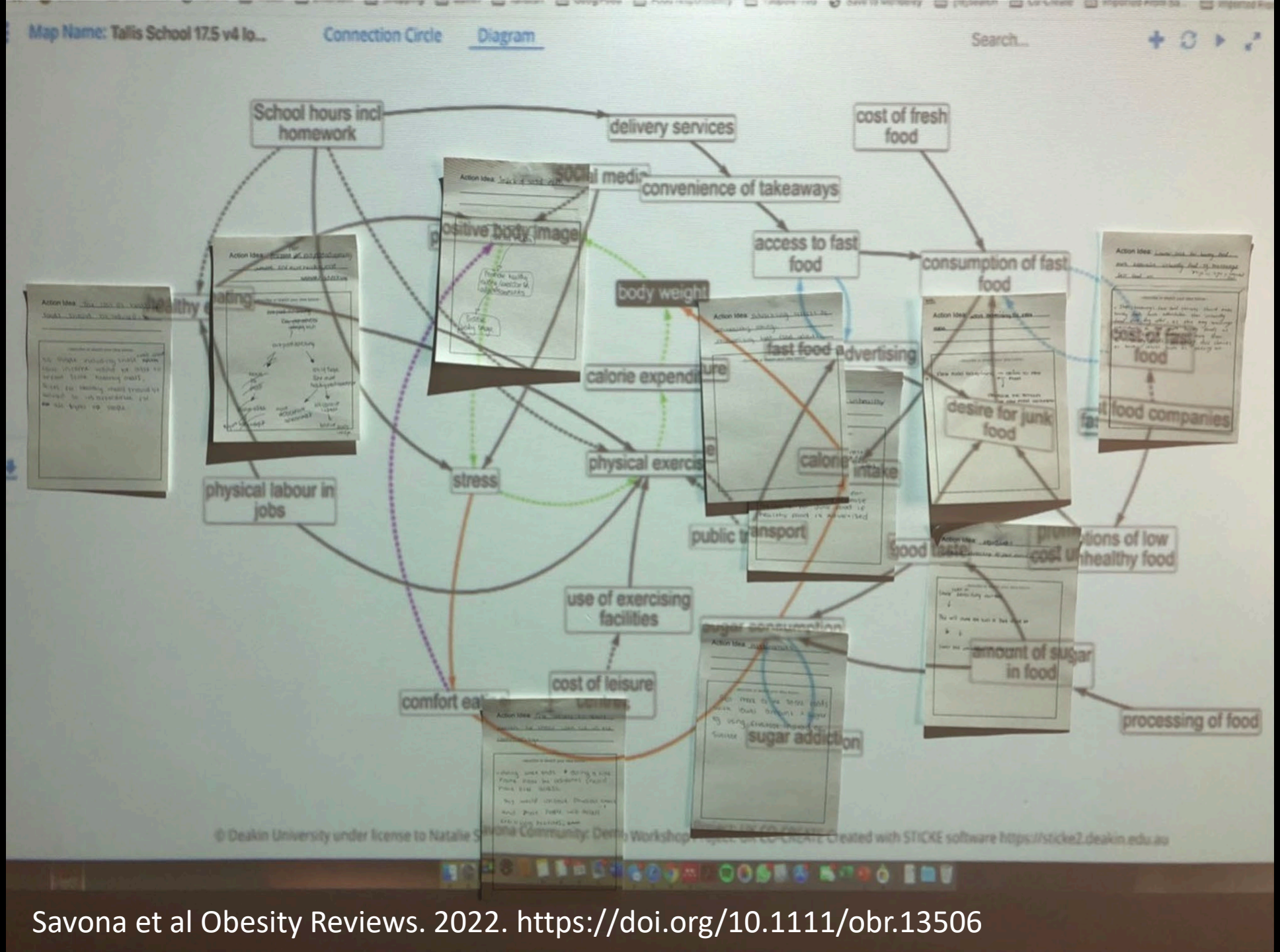


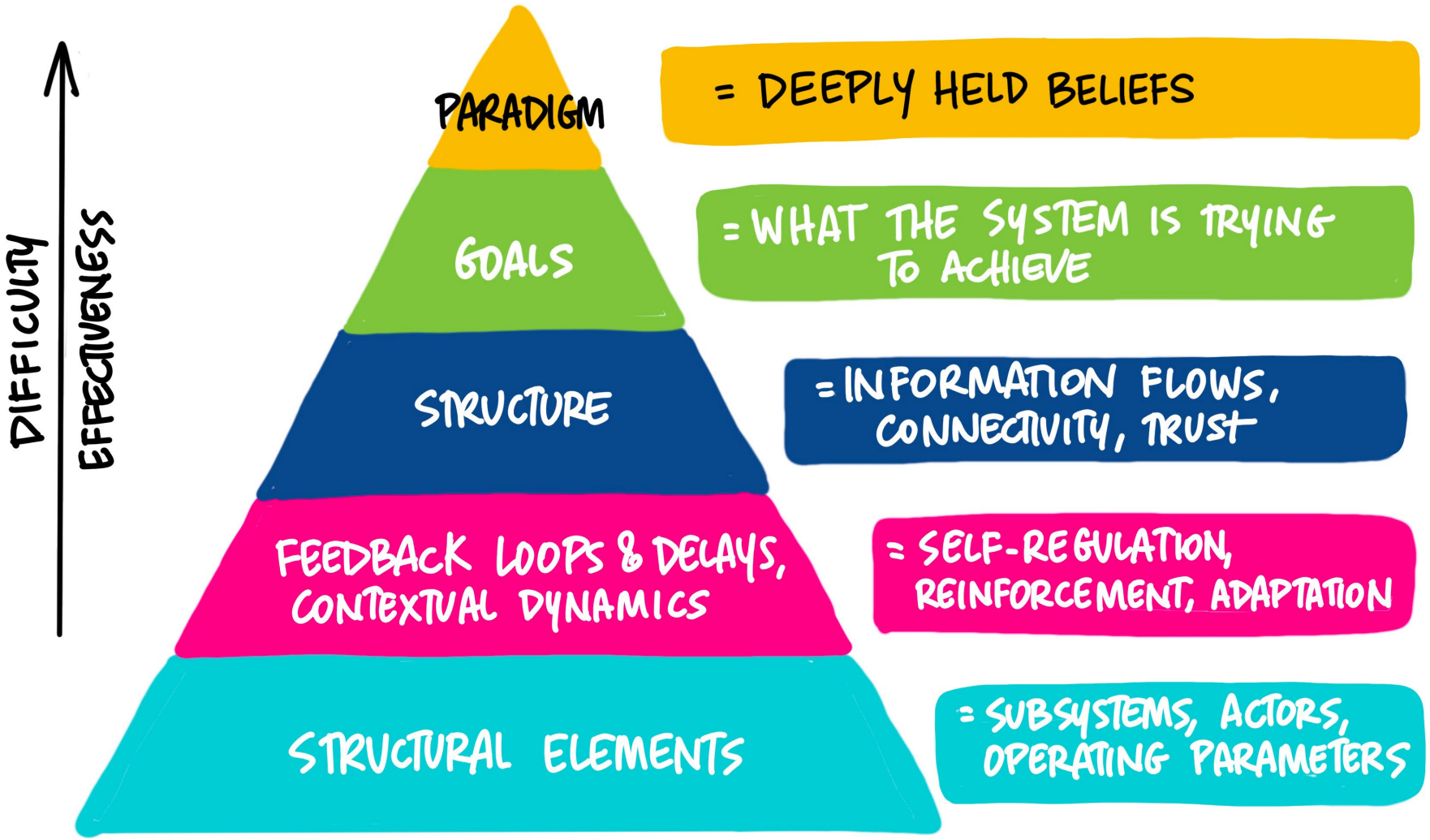
Figure 3 Mental health and unhealthy diet

Savona et al Eur J Public Health. 2021 doi: 10.1093/eurpub/ckaa251.

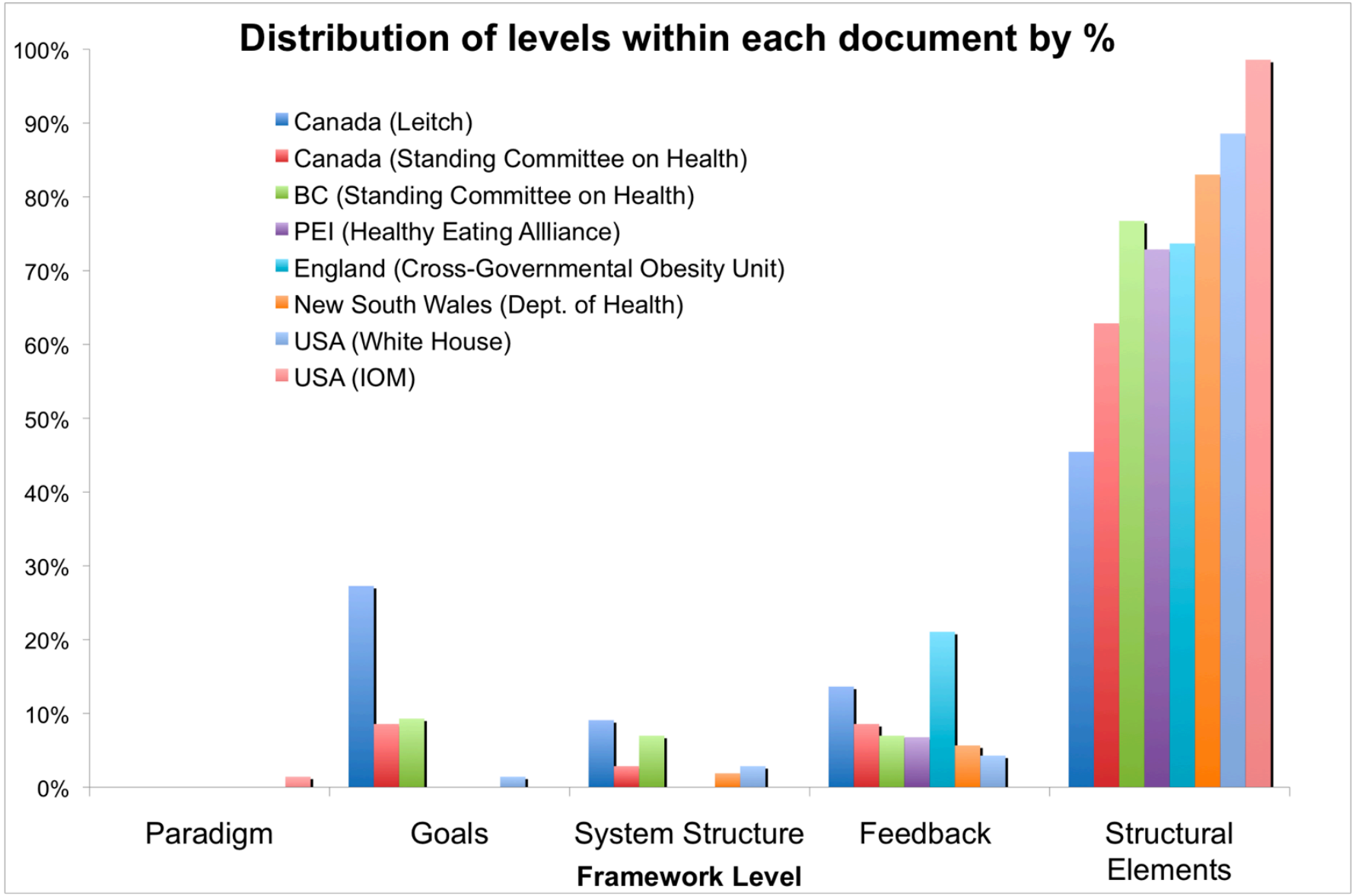


Savona et al Obesity Reviews. 2022. https://doi.org/10.1111/obr.13506

Intervention Level Framework



Frameworks Collection by finegood@sfu.ca | Illustrated by sam@drawingchange.com | © CC BY-NC-ND



Systems science and obesity policy. Johnston et al 2014

PHI UK | Local Health and Global Profits

Protecting people, place and equity

Systems approaches to action on commercial determinants of health

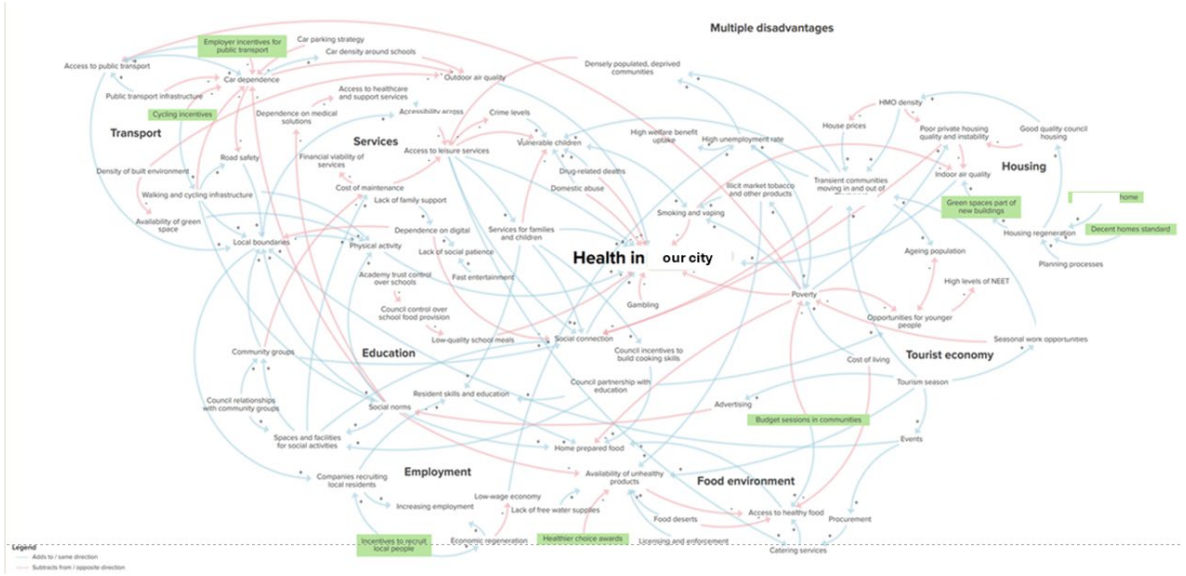
PHI UK | Population Health Improvement UK

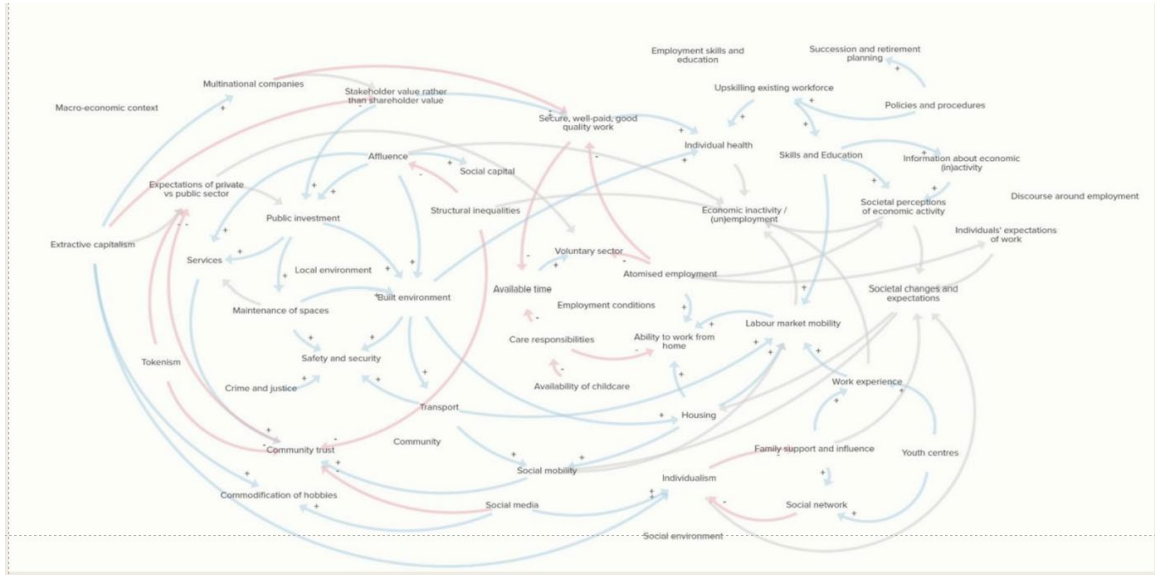
Local Health Global Profits

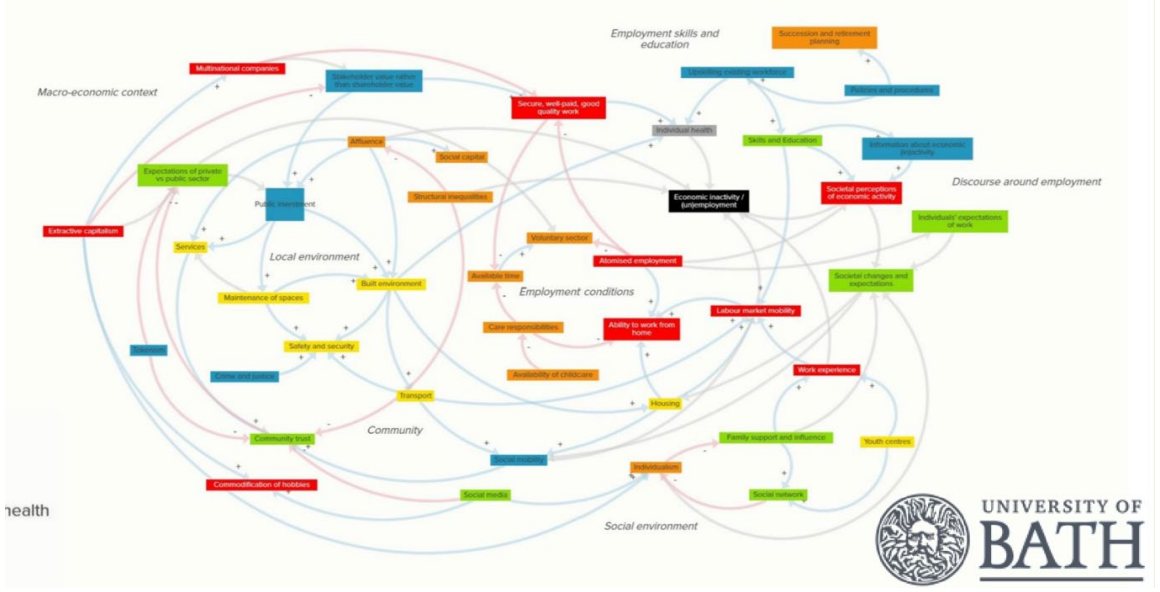
Research objectives

- Use a systems approach to construct conceptual maps on how commercial influences may impact health and interlink with other upstream economic, social and political health determinants
- Prioritise and select plausible actions and resources that can reshape systems towards positive health and equity outcomes

Mapping the system

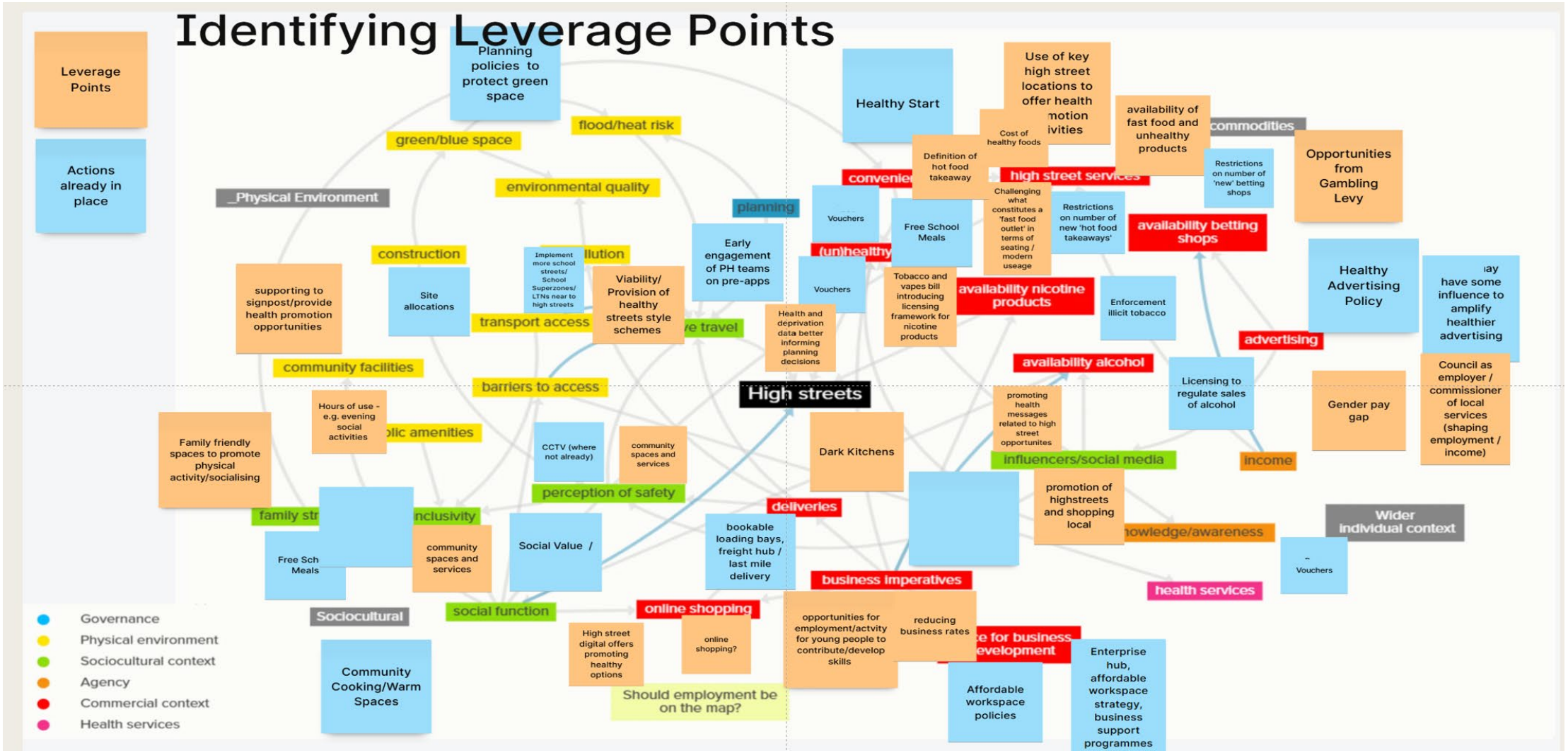






UNIVERSITY OF BATH

Action areas and leverage points



Conclusions

- System maps can be useful tools for unpicking the factors and relations shaping systems
- The process of building a map may be at least as important as the map itself
- Maps can and should be used as tools to help drive action – identifying areas of focus and leverage points, and helping to shape how to intervene in the system over time

Moving beyond mapping – practical challenges of the Essex system approach (or the life of bruised, battered but not broken local obesity practitioners)

Adrian Coggins, Essex County Council Public Health

Emergent evidence and evaluation

NB live procurement process for an evaluation partner. Specification written by **Emma Farrow**, Essex County Council.

Behaviours and bravery

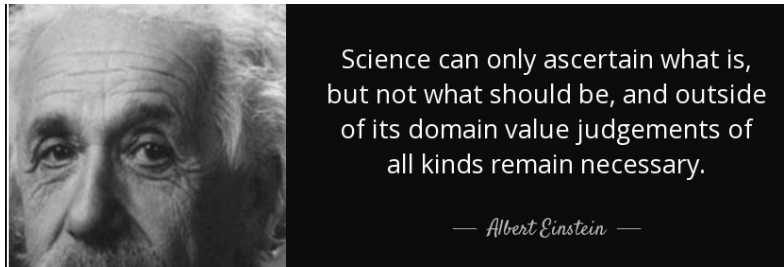
Happy to discuss with other commissioners separately, provided not a bidder!

Governance and groupwork

Emergent evidence and evaluation

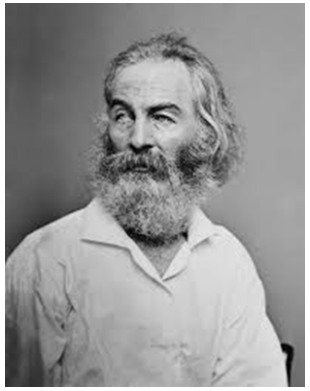
- **Methods needed still emerging in academic literature - let alone established PH practice**
  - Frontier working! **No synthesis of evidence – or methods into a meaningful whole** to inform local popn wide obesity strategy – no blueprint for the **causal lens driven strategy** we want
  - **How methods intersect not tested in real world application** - realist evaluation, systems science, and causal inference
  - Challenge because in absence of blueprint everyone has a view on how to write a strategy –e.g. **life course approach, settings etc. - these are not causal based**. NB don't want a pragmatic categorisation of existing work

- **Evaluation is a poorly understood term**
  - not just current activity – **we're reframing obesity to identify the most impactful contribution that each stakeholder can make** using the best methodology available
  - **Broader than current activity** again causal lens – e.g. ECC economic growth directorate contribution to reducing obesity
  - **Collectively define "impact"** – greatest benefit for largest number of people over the longest time period – so more effort deployed on environments than individual behaviour change!



Behaviours and bravery

"Listen! I will be honest with you; I do not offer the old smooth prizes, but offer rough new prizes"
Walt Whitman, Song of the Open Road

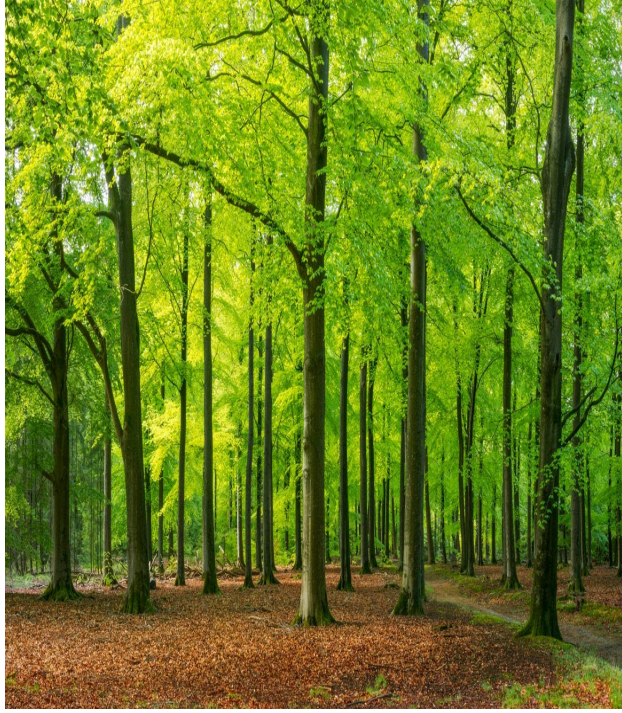


- **"Carefully managed democracy"**
  - stakeholder voices not enough to drive impactful strategy, needs **strong professional moderation** & skill to direct effort to most impactful things – v embryonic skill amongst PH practitioners
  - There are **right and wrong methods to deploy and sequence is key** to generate impactful work programme - stakeholders v attached to fixed methods/definitive answers - our reality is uncertainty, inference and incremental understanding

- **Embrace the emotional roller coaster & build LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOURS:**
  - **resilience** - default feeling in transformation is discomfort, for a LONG time, many are VERY attached to the status quo and just want to get on with it rather than reflect or reframe
  - **bravery** – to pause and think, to explore appetite to do something or not, for relentless robust methodology, to challenge those who "just want to do things"/quick wins
  - **empathy, and role generosity** – develop transdisciplinary teams where people cross professional boundaries/value sets & meet halfway on the bridge of understanding e.g. academics challenge practitioners to use good methods, practitioners challenge academics for real world application research

Don't mistake activity for progress

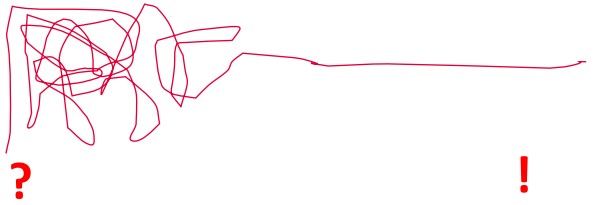
Governance and groupwork



Governance

- **Leave egos and logos at the door – develop better COLLECTIVE place based accountability**
  - essential for complex problems, where **determinants are spread across lots of orgs** & no simple cause & effect relationships
  - **align collective effort around as many determinants as possible** of the thing we're trying to change . Eg. measures of INCLUSIVE economic growth activity in deprived places, not just higher targets for weight management services in deprived areas (again focus on best IMPACT)

- **Complexity switches many people off – not everyone needs or wants to understand it**
  - **Success depends as much on strong stewardship of resources & methodology as on technical methods**, evaluation must become trusted and systemic whilst it evolves and people learn it
  - **Many want simplicity** and to know what their specific role is when they come to work, this must be an output of our collective discussion/methods/evaluation - I've promised stakeholders!



(edited) Exam Question(s)

What insights do policy makers need to inform decisions?

To what extent are current approaches sufficient for informing action?

Why do we need to move beyond (qualitative) maps?

What additional forms of evidence would strengthen decision-making? What does a QSM not capture?

What challenges do stakeholders face to moving beyond (qualitative) maps?

What is needed to move beyond describing the system?


Thank you!

WSA
Roadmap event

Break and back to Mercian 1

Parallel Session 2

13.35-14.40

WSA
Roadmap event

WSA
Roadmap event

Co-production and involving the public

Facilitated by: Prof Katie Newby (PHIRST/UH) and Ishani Kar-Purkayastha (OHID South West)

Co-production and involving the public

Members of the public
People not working professionally in the field, who may be affected by or interested in overweight/obesity.

People with lived experience
People with direct personal experience of overweight/obesity, through their own lives or close relationships.

Communities
Groups of people linked by shared place, identity, and/or experience of overweight/obesity.

Co-production and involving the public

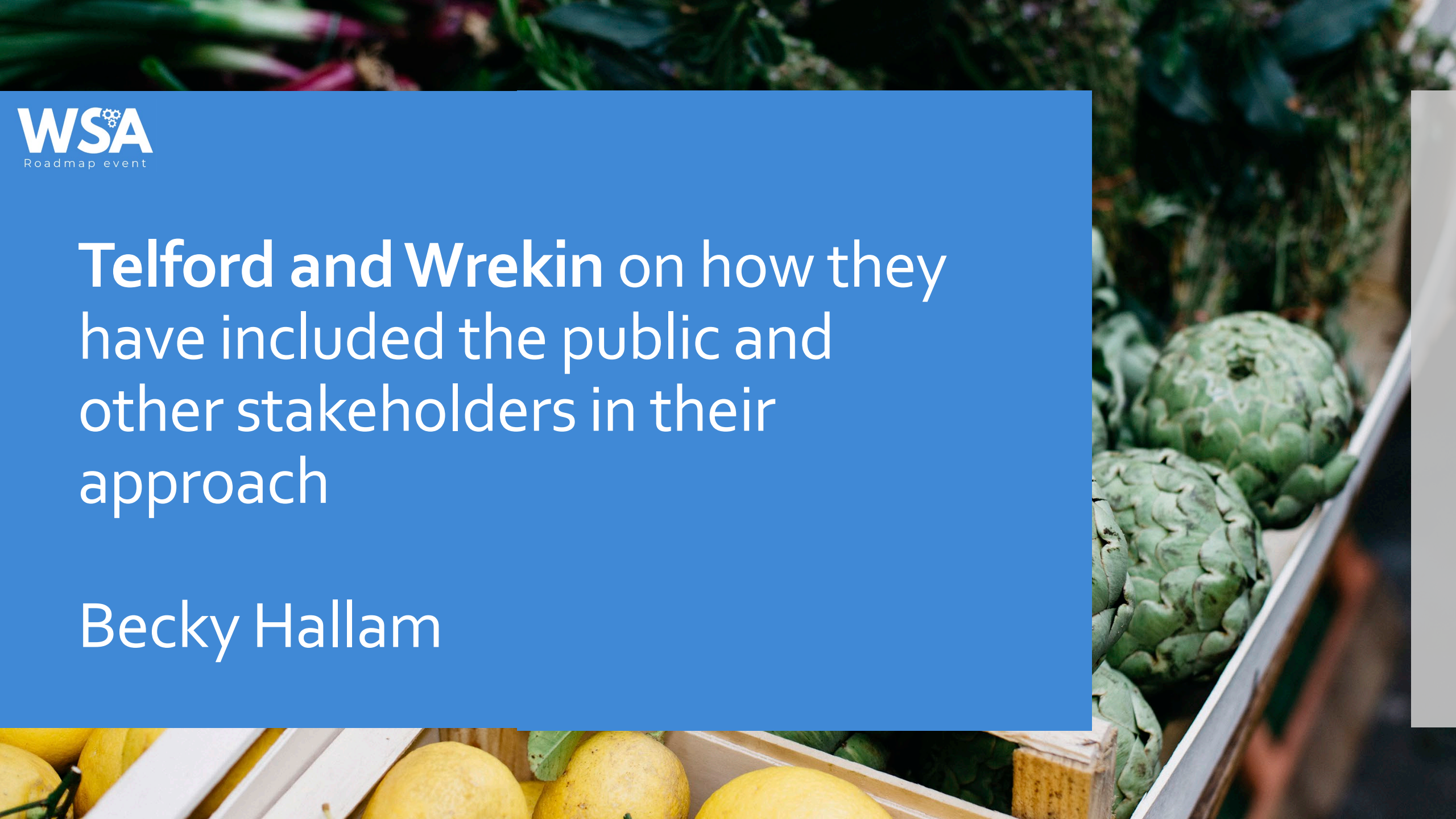
How have local authorities attempted to engage the public, people with lived experience, or communities in their WSAs?

- What are some of the main challenges faced?
- What lessons have been learned; what has contributed to success?
- What opportunities are there to reach and engage with these individuals/groups?
- What positive ways forward or actions should we take?

WSA
Roadmap event

Telford and Wrekin on how they have included the public and other stakeholders in their approach

Becky Hallam



Telford & Wrekin
Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest
to create a better borough

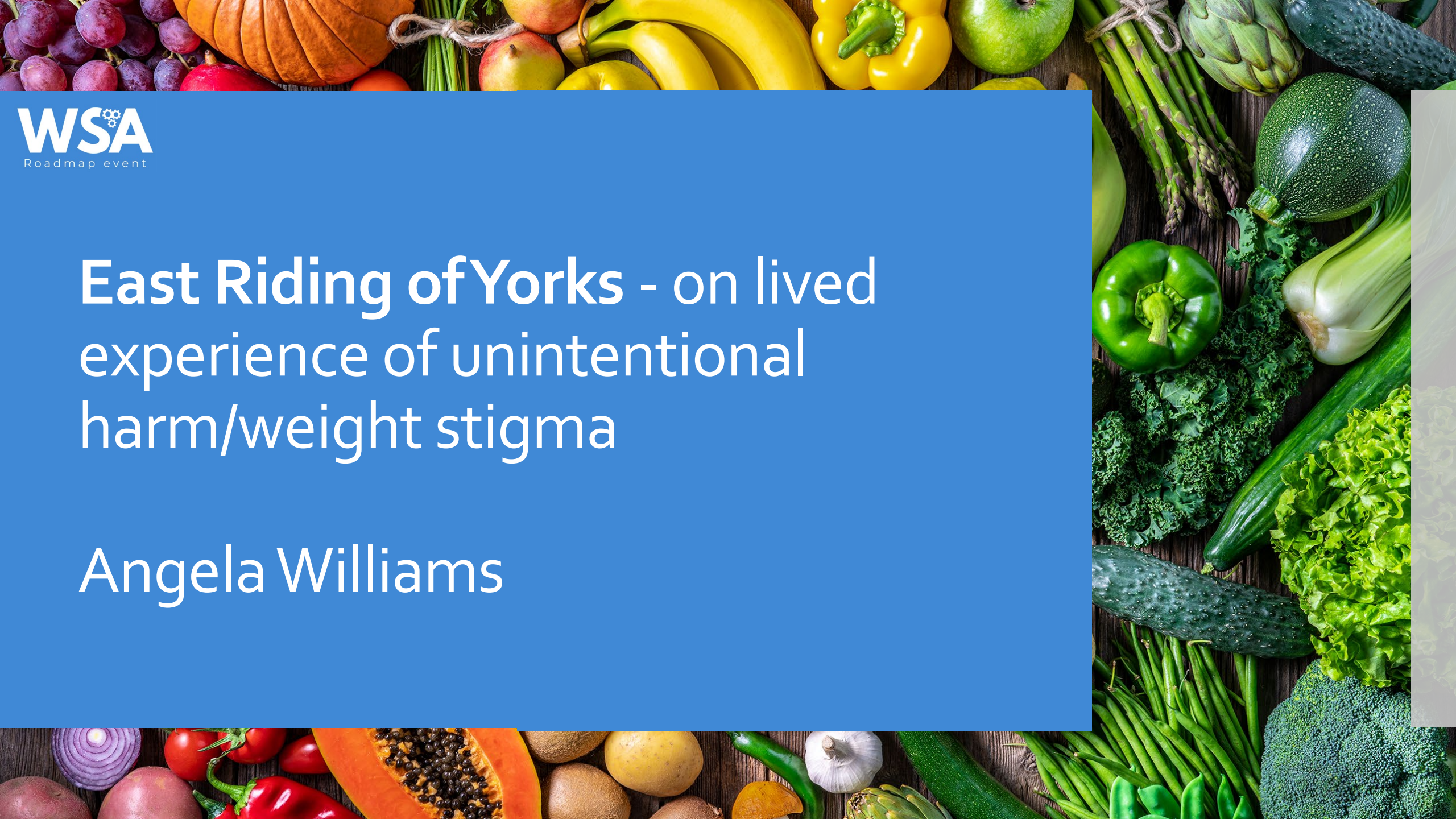
Whole systems approach

Supporting our children to grow into a healthy weight

Promoting a healthier food environment including healthy settings

Creating opportunities for all

Empowering system partners



WSA
Roadmap event

East Riding of Yorks - on lived experience of unintentional harm/weight stigma

Angela Williams

WSA
Roadmap event

Plymouth's Compassionate Approach to CYP Health and Weight 2023 -2033: Engagement

Dave Schwartz

Thrive
Learn
Care

"We are always learning"

PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

Appreciative Enquiry with families

Transformational

from primarily service thinking
to primarily system thinking

Compassionate

Whole System

Complex

Movement across /connecting sectors (for example, from health into food systems or the built environment) is driven by relationships, need and learning, not by predetermined sequencing. Engagement extends into these domains as opportunities emerge i.e. alongside activity developing.

E.G.

Peer Youth Allocation Budget

CYP in the NHS Complications of Excessive Weight Service design a model where CYP allocate up to £80 to peers to support outcomes that matter to them.

Blue / Green Trips

Charitable funding enables all CYP @ one primary school (IMD1) to go to blue/green spaces annually for 3 years, with rangers, transport, and staff support. Feedback and stories from children, families, and staff(daily logs) informs year 2 design

Listening Week

Secondary school attending routine place-based learning event agreed to lead a Ward wide listening week. ~650 conversations in week with CYP and community members -20 partners supporting. Being repeated this June. Findings informing thinking and planning.

Ripple Mapping

Undertaken together with a child/family/ group this captures connections made and the journey made, linked to an intervention / project etc.

This is powerful process. Presented as a graphic map. Impactive with all including senior decision makers.

A Focus on Learning

Networks & Learning Events

TLC
A Compassionate Approach to CYP Health and Weight.

One Devon

Thank you!

WSA
Roadmap event