

Annual Report

Leading into the Future Together



May 2025

The leaders in health creation

FOREWORDS

Despite the considerable challenges and changes in the health and care context, The Health Creation Alliance (THCA), has remained steadfast in our purpose to drive a better future with and for people and communities. Working together, we have been able to raise awareness of health creation, challenge traditional models of care and shift mindsets. In particular the need to shift focus from service delivery to enabling people and communities to gain a sense of purpose, hope, mastery and control in their own lives and environments.

We are also proud of our growth as an organisation, changing how we operate from the very core. Last year we introduced a tier of Ambassadors who, along with our diverse body of nearly 2000 members committed to looking through the community lens, make sure the community voice and perspective remains the leading force behind all our efforts.

As an Alliance, we could not have achieved this without your invaluable input and support. My thanks to our board, our members, our partners, clients and to everyone who has contributed. It feels like an important moment to recognise the progress that has been made, and to work together to keep taking this work forwards through all our collective efforts. It has potential to make a positive impact for generations to come."



Professor Durka Dougall
Chair

Every year, THCA sees a shift towards a health creating model. This last year, the shift has been bigger and my sense is that this will only grow in the years ahead.

Through operational pressures, political changes, organisational turmoil and ongoing cost of living crisis, more and more system allies are attending our events, participating in our projects and joining this vibrant social movement. People are looking for new ways to make change happen. They are increasingly looking through the community lens and trying new ways of relating across perceived boundaries – communities and professional sectors. While there is a long way still to go, there is increasing optimism and confidence that there is a way through.

I am impressed by the pioneering work of our cross-sector members and many others and am energised by the buoyancy of our movement. I am proud of the multiple roles our organisation has forged, of how we have grown our core despite difficult circumstances and of the impact we have made – uncovering and charting the change process for others to see and learn from.

Special thanks to our core team, associates, ambassadors, board, patrons and chair for their generous leadership.



Merron Simpson
CEO

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If you would like to become a member of The Health Creation Alliance and receive our regular bulletins and newsletters please join here:
<https://thehealthcreationalliance.org/members/>

If you would like to know more about our work, please contact:
stephanie@thehealthcreationalliance.org

Health Creation is the process through which individuals and communities gain a sense of purpose, hope, mastery and control over their own lives and environment

When this happens their health and wellbeing is enhanced

1.0 LEADING INTO THE FUTURE TOGETHER

Transformation through the community lens

While 2024-25 has been a year for ‘shifts’ – the three shifts, the left shift, the shift to a health creation model put forward by the [IPPR Commission for Health and Economic Prosperity](#) – the focus this last year for THCA has been whole system change by looking through the community lens.

- **We made the case for system transformation to be driven from the ground-up** in our 2024 [Manifesto](#) and have deepened and expanded our commissioned work in systems to embrace ‘leadership for whole system change’. Our latest report, ‘[Sustainability for Systems Change](#)’, for the national Core20PLUS Connectors Programme has illustrated how system change is being driven from the community level, and how challenges to this ground-up change are being overcome in some systems.
- **We developed our movement-work** increasingly drawing on the experience, insights and expertise of our diverse member base to inform our commissioned projects and working through our trusted members and partners to reach seldom-heard groups. Many thanks to all who have participated in this way.
- **We took steps to connect lived experience to decision-makers** publishing ‘[Tenants at the Table](#)’, the findings and recommendations from research to develop an unmediated National Tenant Voice that has credibility with tenants of social housing and policy makers. We also held a powerful webinar called ‘[How Change Happens](#)’ bringing together Lord Gus O’Donnell for a conversation about communities’ experience of change, with community coordinator Dawn Shepherd, Prof Donna Hall and Dr Priya Kumar.
- **We enhanced our commissioned learning offer** into sophisticated health creation change programmes: equipping community organisations, frontline staff and managers with health creation change leadership skills to hold impactful conversations with communities and refashion services and system approaches.
- **We grew our organisation’s core capacity and capability** appointing [five Ambassadors](#) who are working closely with our Directors to enhance many aspects of our work. We are now recruiting new Non-Executive Directors and Sector Leads – people who will help to ‘lead together into the future’.
- **We influenced the national direction for health and social care:** informing NHS England’s 10 Year Health Plan working groups through our [ChangeNHS submission](#); our Submission to the [Select Ctte on Inaction in Social Care](#) and our Tenants at the Table report that is being considered by The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- **We strengthened our role as a Radical Space Holder** welcoming Lord Gus O’Donnell to our flagship webinar: [How change happens: A focus on Health Creation and Economic Prosperity](#), in December 2024 to speak and explore what the ‘Change Space’ looks like, with Prof Donna Hall, Dr Priya Kumar and Dawn Shepherd from Dartmouth Community Chest.

THCA are the national leaders making Health Creation to address health inequity a reality



Merron Simpson, CEO, Lord Guss O’Donnell, Prof. Donna Hall and Dr Priya Kumar leading one of our high-profile workshops

2.0 OUR MANIFESTO FOR WHOLE SYSTEM CHANGE

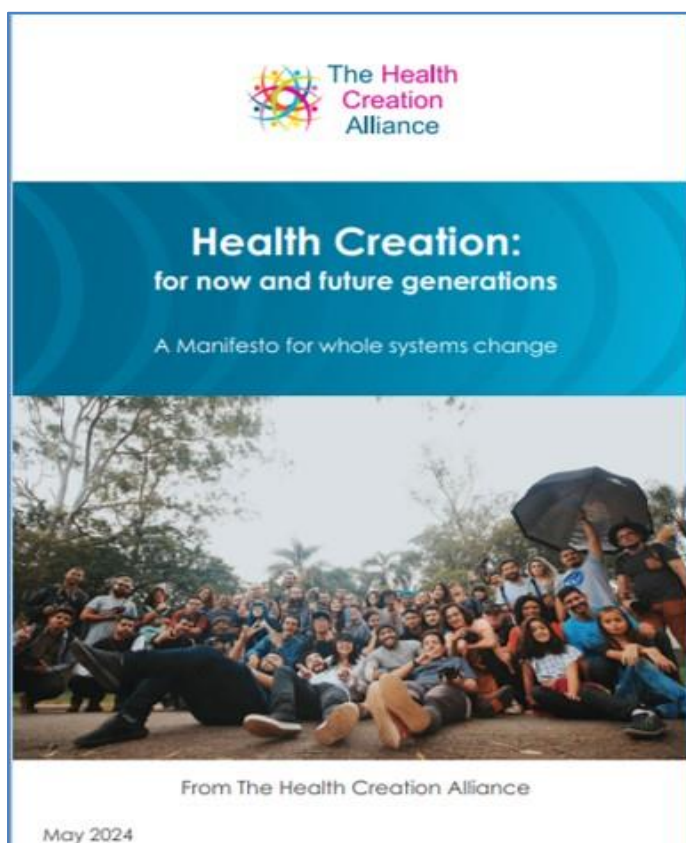
Health Creation; for now and future generations

2.1 The 2024 Manifesto

Published and launched at our 2024 Spring Event on 17 May, one week ahead of the announcement of the General Election, THCA's 2024 Manifesto set out the following:

1. The case for change
2. The causes of preventable illness and health inequity – imbalances of power and social injustices
3. The process of creating health (and the Framework)
4. Whole system change to address health inequity
5. Leadership for Health Creation
6. Removing and overcoming barriers
7. Reimagining a sustainable future for everyone

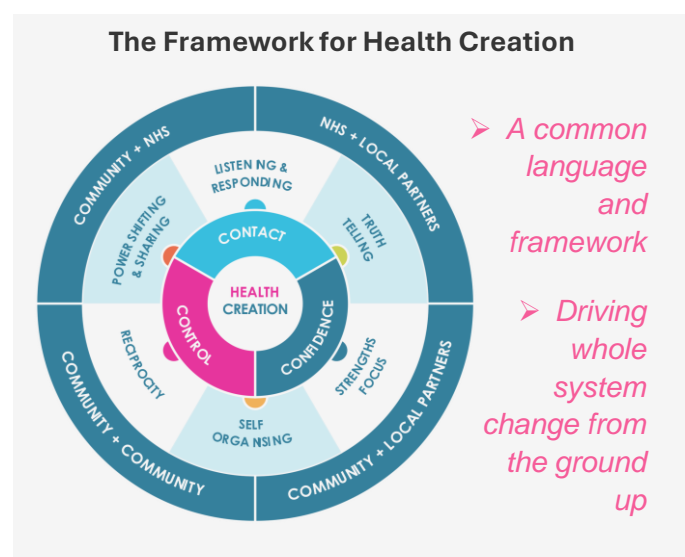
True to our values that keep us looking through the community lens, THCA framed the whole narrative from the perspective of the experience of communities that have the poorest health outcomes. Health is created within communities and at the frontline between communities and services; the role of everyone at all levels of seniority is to create the conditions for health creation and remove the barriers. This is how we can drive whole system change to a health creating system.



The Manifesto also included:

- 8 Personal Actions, things we can all do
- 13 Calls to Action for ICSs
- 7 Asks of a new Government

Many thanks to Prof Bola Owolabi and others who joined us at our Spring Event where we set out the route to sustainable transformation of Integrated Care Systems into health creating systems for health and social care.



In the months following the manifesto, we published three member papers and held online events:

- **A rights-based approach to health** by David Aynsley considers poor health as a social injustice and how access to human social rights creates health and how the process of Health Creation gives us access to our human social rights
- **Reinvesting profit: Securing better quality, health creating accommodation-based social care** by Peter Hay MBE, responds to the serious matter of extraction of profit by some companies and considering what sort of 'provider offer' might provide a much-needed reset to accommodation-based social care
- **A health creating economy of wellbeing – the role of relational and participatory politics and systems** by Prof Andy Knox MBE explores why, more than ever, we need to reimagine economics for a healthier society to develop an economy of wellbeing and the kind of relational and participatory politics and systems needed to deliver real change.

3.0 INFORMING AND INFLUENCING POLICY AND SYSTEM CHANGE

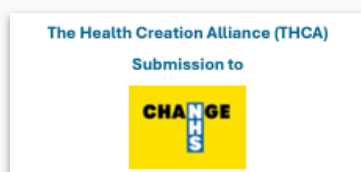
3.1 ChangeNHS Submission

The Health Creation Alliance made a submission to ChangeNHS and contributed additional insight – on how to direct investment into communities – to the NHS England 10 Year Plan Mobilising Change Working Group.

We asked for the third shift, from sickness to prevention. to include, in addition, the shift to a health creation model of health and care within the 10-Year Health Plan.

And for 10 things to support the shift:

1. A new purpose to ‘maximise health’
2. An explanation of the process of health creation
3. Clarity around roles in health creation and the change process
4. Equity across social groups; parity between social care and NHS
5. Communities recognised as (part of) the system
6. Community insight fully embedded in datasets and driving action plans
7. Measures of relationship quality and measures that drive positive behaviours
8. Redirection of resources; invest in connection, communities and social value
9. Protection of existing health creating change-work
10. Health creating policies



3.2 Inquiry into inaction on Social Care

We also made a submission to the Health and Social Care Select Committee Inquiry Adult Social Care Reform; the cost of inaction.

At least four things required for social care reform:

1. A recognition of the broad purposes of the social care system
2. A shift from gate-keeping to timely support
3. A radical solution to funding and paying for care
4. Action to stop extraction of profit

3.3 A National Voice for Tenants

This THCA report responds to long-established calls for an unmediated national voice for tenants of social housing. Based in input from over 100 tenants from many backgrounds and communities and national policy leaders and influencers, it sets out a credible path to delivering a strong, sustainable tenant voice – an existing gap in the influencing architecture.



3.4 Core20PLUS Connectors: sustainability leading to system change

Containing eight insights into the challenges to funding and sustaining the excellent Core20PLUS Connectors work, and how they are being overcome, this report demonstrates that system change from the ground up is possible, even in difficult circumstances, and challenges systems to take bolder steps

Social Care Reform

When THCA talks about ‘reform’ we mean reform in its widest sense. Not just relating to funding and paying for social care but reform to a ‘health-creating’ model of care that would enable people to live well in the place they call home, with the people they love, and supported by networks and communities, in some instances alongside daily, paid-for care.

4.0 OUR LEARNING PROGRAMMES

Partner, Learn, Discover



Underpinned by our relationships-based Framework for Health Creation, our [learning offers](#) are tried and tested.

No matter what structural changes are going on, we have helped to maintain momentum by equipping workforces and communities with new knowledge, insight, experiences and skills that enables them to work confidently, constructively and collaboratively with communities and local partners. They also learnt to lead health creating change themselves, helping to guide and train others in the approach.

“I have learnt so much about how supporting community wellness can contribute to reducing health inequalities. The programme has introduced me to colleagues who share the same passion, and this has enabled us to build positive working relationships and collaborate to improve health for our residents”.

Programme participant

1.1 Adopting health creation

Over the last 12-months, our experience has further demonstrated that embedding health creation into current and future projects and programmes:

- Reduces health inequalities/health inequity
- Enhances co-production and builds better community and citizen trust with the system
- Enhances prevention through better engagement with underserved communities
- Supports trauma informed approaches
- Helps to embed anti-discriminatory practices

A selection of our clients and partners:



Trust and health creation partnership programme across NHS, local partners and communities



Health Creation skills enhancement & leadership development programme for Health Inequalities Leads



Four years as delivery partner, helping design and deliver the Core20PLUS Connectors Programme



Pathway redesign to improve breast cancer outcomes among ethnic minority communities in East London and Leicester



Training and coaching, supporting roll-out of a community-led Health Creation programme in long-term conditions



Convening and generating insight contributing to research into health creation by community-led organisations: Common Health Assets

5.0 OUR PEOPLE

5.1 Growing our capacity and capability

Over the last 12 months, THCA has grown its leadership team.

- We have recruited five new Ambassadors who actively support and promote our work in various ways.
- We have secured the support of a business administrator and committed Associate.
- We have embarked on recruitment of new Non-Executive Directors, Sector Leads and Associates to further grow our capability and capacity to influence and drive change.

We have also said goodbye to our long-standing, valued colleague and former chair, Dr Brian Fisher MBE.

As a movement, our members are our life-blood. We are grateful to all who have supported us – reaching seldom heard groups, contributing to national thought leadership and influencing, offering ideas for how we might change and develop. We are continually looking for ways to take further steps to evolve our democracy to allow active members to greater influence over THCA's activity.

5.2 Advisory roles

The Health Creation Alliance has contributed to several programmes, boards and coalitions over the years. These include:

- Core20PLUS Connectors Programme: Advising on design and delivery since 2021.
- The Kings Fund 'The Way Forward: Making Care Closer to Home a Reality
- Cavendish Coalition: offering expert advice on issues affecting the social care and health workforce.
- UKRI (with AHRC): Mobilising community assets to tackle health inequalities programme
- NHS Confederation: Neighbourhood health programme.

"THCA does exactly what I need and expect from it"

Member, April 2025



THCA's Leadership Team: Executives, Non-Executives, Ambassadors, Committed Associate

6.0 OUR BUSINESS AND FINANCE

6.1 Our business model

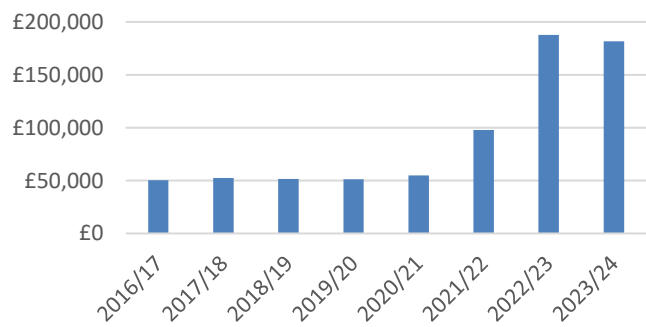
The Health Creation Alliance is a Community Interest Company; we trade and reinvest surpluses in ‘community benefit’. This includes payments to community groups and individuals who support our work, free events, publications and engagement with our movement offering high value influential and impactful insights that flavour all our work.

6.2 Our finances

For 2023-24, our turnover was £181,668. This is similar to the previous year and represents a rise since 2022. Learning programmes and projects commissioned by the NHS, local authorities and VCFSE make up most of our income with national research and thought leadership also an important source of revenue.

THCA is resourceful and its members and supporters offer up a huge amount of highly valued pro bono support. We have always achieved a great deal with very modest resources and it often surprises people when they learn of the small sums we operate on.

THCA Turnover



7.0 OUR COMMUNITY BENEFIT

7.1 Listening to members and stakeholders

We have listened to our stakeholders through:

- Conversations and online meetings to discuss the content, structure and style of the 2024 Manifesto and related papers
- Participation in two national Core20PLUS5 Connectors events, inviting feedback
- Lunchtime online sessions to explore particular themes
- Engagement with specific communities to gain important insights through trusted members
- Many meetings with national stakeholders from a range of organisations
- Presentation at events and listening to delegates
- Encouraging people who have engaged with us to join our movement
- Routinely feeding back to contributors, so that they can see how they have contributed.

7.2 Making it count

We fold discussions we have with our members and partners into our work and use it to inform our direction for travel.

Our five new ambassadors have brought new energy to our board deliberations and they are informing our decision-making.

Each year, THCA reports its community benefit to the CIC Regulator at Companies House.



8.0 OUR FUTURE

8.1 Partnership Summit – October 2025

Called **Health Creation, Wealth Creation; investing in community agency**, THCA will be hosting another flagship event in October 2025.

A truly cross-sector event, it will explore how health creation might be embedded across health, social care, housing and places alongside a shift in thinking about how to achieve economic prosperity. Crucially, it will challenge everyone to go further to invest in giving communities – of identity and geography – greater agency over the lives and environments.

Event sessions will include:

Health creating communities and spaces

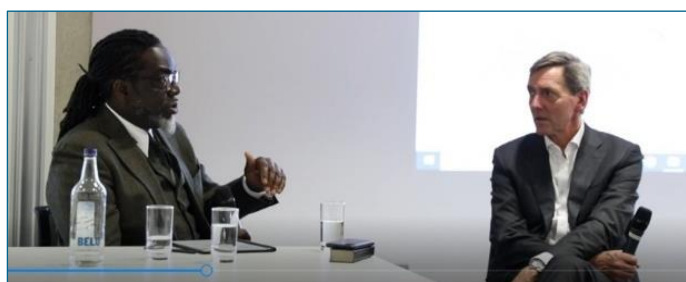
Health creating social care

Health creating homes, spaces and places

Health creating neighbourhood health services

Health creating routes into employment and meaningful occupation

Health creating research



Lord Victor Adebowale interviews Prof Martin Marshall at one of THCA's Coming of Age events in 2022

8.2 Holding the health creating change space

THCA is a Radical Space Holder. We don't tell people what to do. We hold and 'steward' space to enable people who have different perspectives to come together, share what they bring, relate differently and work constructively together to improve lives.

- People from different professions and sectors exploring Integrated Neighbourhood Working
- People with different lived experience of poverty, trauma, discrimination and those who have had much less exposure to adversity
- Different communities living and working together in a place

Reworked relationships allow new ways of working that will drive effective transformation.

8.3 Evolving our roles in the new ecosystem

THCA has helped bring the reality of health creation to the mainstream and to spearhead new possibilities for doing things differently.

We have showcased early adopters, influenced the influencers, built a powerful framework and generated new language that partners can coalesce around. And we have articulated how Health Creation can be the driver of system change.

We have generated Learning Programmes that build on the great health creating work that is already happening in many places and that enable participants to take it much further, and to influence those around them to do the same.

Our powerful movement of pioneers and early adopters has provided the insight, experience, passion and energy to maintain momentum and keep THCA on the cutting edge.

As health creation catches on across systems, places, neighbourhoods and organisations, our role will evolve. This is work we are currently engaged in to explore 'what next' for this incredible movement with the ambition to make health creation business as usual.

"I would like THCA's Health Creation approach to be the foremost approach used by public bodies to improve the health of communities". THCA Associate

Our Movement Journey

2016 *Towards a movement for Health Creation*

2017 *An unstoppable infection of wellness*

2018 *Getting our house in order*

2019 *Penetrating the mainstream*

2020 *Coping through COVID*

2021 *Building Back Together*

2022 *Health Creation: Coming of Age*

2023 *THCA is Coming of Age*

2024 *For now and future generations*

2025 *Changing how change happens*

9. OUR THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our thanks go out to the many members and supporters who have attended our events, connected and supported us and who have pioneered health creation within their own communities and places of work.

Thanks also, to those who have commissioned us and funded us to take forward hugely important and highly relevant work. And to our associates who have helped us to deliver.

Particular thanks to Lord Victor Adebawale, Lord Nigel Crisp, Lord Gus O'Donnell, Prof Donna Hall, Prof Bola Owolabi, Andrew Fenton and colleagues at SCW, Joseph DeVille and members of the Voices for Tenants Steering Group.

10.0 USEFUL RESOURCES

10.1 Learning

Health Creation to reduce health inequity [Discovery Learning Programmes](#).

An [introduction to Health Creation](#) presentation.

Selection of [health creating case studies](#).

10.2 Publications

2024 [Manifesto](#) for whole system change supported by a selection of health creating case studies.

[Sustainability Leading to System Change](#) report considers how system change is being driven from the community level, and how challenges to this ground-up change are being overcome in some systems.

[Tenants at the Table](#). Report providing recommendations for establishing a National Tenant Advocacy Structure to influence and provide accountability in social housing decision-making:

[Connecting for funding and sustainability resource kit](#) that focusses on the importance of emotion-based content and messages that should complement logic-based communication when building a compelling case for funding and sustainability.

[Re-imagining Economics for a Healthier Society](#). Authored by Professor Andy Knox MBE, Associate Medical Director of Population Health for NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB

[Ownership of social care provision matters](#). Authored by Peter Hay, Non-Executive Director of THCA, Chair of Turning Point, and Director of Peter Hay Consulting

[A rights-based approach to health](#). Authored by David Aynsley, Founder and Trustee of Tr14ers Community Dance Charity and a THCA Associate,

10.3 Videos

[HOW CHANGE HAPPENS: A focus on Health Creation and Economic Prosperity](#). With contributions from Lord Gus O'Donnell, this event considers the interplay between Health Creation and economic prosperity.

[HEALTH CREATING ECONOMY OF WELLBEING: The role of relational and participatory politics and systems](#). Delivered by Professor Andy Knox MBE, this event explored why more than ever we need an economy of wellbeing and the role of Health Creation in supporting this.

[A rights-based approach to health](#). Delivered by David Aynsley, Founder and Trustee of Tr14ers Community Dance Charity this event explored how access to human social rights creates health and how the process of Health Creation gives us access to our human social rights.

[Health Creation: for now and future generations](#). This event set out the route to sustainable transformation of Integrated Care Systems into health creating systems for health and social care.