



DEVELOPING TOGETHER
SOCIAL WORK
TEACHING PARTNERSHIP

2021-22 Progress Report: Evaluating Our Success

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Welcome

Since October 2018, the South West London and Surrey Teaching Partnership has successfully worked on a broad range of activities to champion the training, learning and development of social workers. It is one of a growing network of 27 such partnerships in England, which bring together local authorities, universities and voluntary sector organisations providing social work services.

Our initial grant funding from the Department for Education was for two years; however, the success of the partnership's work has seen us receive sustainability funding every year since then. We also received additional funding in 2020 to address the complex challenges arising from the Covid-19 pandemic and for four targeted continuous improvement initiatives in 2021. This is testament to the fast and effective progress our social work teaching partnership has made in training and developing social workers at a significantly challenging time for the profession. These successes are reflected in the national evaluation and I echo the comments made by Isabelle Trowler, the Chief Social Worker for Children in Families, in 2021:

"It is with pride and satisfaction that the evaluation of Teaching Partnerships concludes that their most important benefit has been the development of a culture of collaborative working between higher education institutions, local authorities and other partners in the way social work education is designed, planned and delivered"

The ongoing success of our Social Work Teaching Partnership requires the continued active engagement of all our partners at a time when there are competing priorities and financial pressures for our member local authorities, Kingston University and our voluntary sector partners at the NSPCC and Welcare. It is heartening to see that engagement has not waned across south west London and Surrey and we remain committed to working together so that our children, young people and vulnerable adults benefit from excellent social work practice.

As we begin the fifth year of our programme, I encourage all partners to continue investing their time and expertise in the Social Work Teaching Partnership. It is important that we build on the clear successes we have achieved over the last four years so that we can all benefit from the economies and shared creativity that our collaboration brings. The foundations we have laid and the networks we have established give us the opportunities we need to secure continued excellence and innovation in the training, professional development, career development and wellbeing of our social workers.

Ian Dodds

Ian Dodds
Director of Children's Services,
Kingston and Richmond
(Achieving for Children)





Executive Summary

This report provides an evaluation of the work carried out by the Teaching Partnership (TP) between April 2021 and March 2022 (the team structure can be found in [Appendix 1: Organisational Structure](#)). The methods of evaluation included a review and analysis of quantitative and qualitative performance data and feedback from key stakeholders, obtained via a Stakeholder Survey sent to those who sit on the Strategic Board, Steering Committee and Pre-Qualifying Alliance. Findings show that performance is strong in the following key areas:

- The improved academic attainment and progression through the social work programmes of Kingston University students;
- A significant increase in the provision of statutory placements from within the TP;
- A significant improvement in the employability of Kingston University students when applying for their first social work role;
- The development of Practice Educator, Onsite Supervisor and ASYE Assessor skills, and the establishment of a Practice Education Community of Practice;
- The learning and development opportunities provided to early career social work managers;
- The development of key frameworks and infrastructure to support the ongoing development of staff, including a Career Pathways & CPD Framework and an Early Professional Development Framework;
- The provision of a comprehensive continuing professional development offer, made up of opportunities from the TP Team, external facilitators, employers and the HEI;
- The upskill of senior leaders, practitioners and social work academics in Trauma Informed Practice using additional government funding, through a Train the Trainer model;
- The beginnings of an improved culture of embedding research in practice through monthly Research Hubs;
- The strength, value and appreciation of the Teaching Consultant role, including the continuing professional development opportunity and 'job' satisfaction it provides to those carrying out this role;
- The provision of wellbeing, social work celebration, 'Think Family' and 'BLM' events;
- The reputation, brand and identity of the TP, both internally and externally, resulting in significant income generation in the last twelve months.

The report finds that the vast majority of deliverables for 2021-23 that were identified at the Visioning Day in April 2021 have progressed exceptionally well, in spite of the pandemic, and are either embedded, or making good progress towards being embedded. Some previously identified priorities, like those that relate to recruitment strategies, have not yet fully developed, and some previously improved outcomes, such as statutory placement provision, have faced some setbacks this year.



Additional areas of work have also developed, in most cases due to additional government funding, which allowed us to implement targeted short term improvement projects. These included upskill of the entire social worker workforce in Trauma Informed Practice, development of a Wellbeing in Social Work elearning course, recruitment of an 'Anti Racist Practice Lead'. and research into the impact of coaching on social worker morale, job satisfaction, practice and retention.

The value of the TP programme has become easier to evidence as the medium to longer term project outcomes are now being realised, as evidenced throughout this report. This has contributed to a much more consistent level of engagement amongst partners, enabling the programme of work to gain momentum, despite all partner agencies working under extremely difficult circumstances over the last two years.

This report has generated the following recommendations:

- The two-tier membership structure should continue. There are many moving parts to the programme and numerous activities in flight at any one time and the current arrangements are proving to work well in terms of communication, understanding, engagement and decision making;
- In light of the recent confirmation that the DfE will provide further funding for the National SWTP Programme, those agencies who pay an annual membership fee should use this report as a basis for reviewing their return on investment and identifying their own savings that have resulted from the TP. Even with the DfE funding and the independent income that the TP generates, it would not be possible to sustain the TP beyond March 2023 in its current form without this contribution;
- All primary partner agencies (Achieving for Children, Croydon Adults, Kingston Adults, Merton Children, Merton Adults, Sutton Children, Sutton Adults, Wandsworth Children, NSPCC, Welcare and Kingston University) should attend the annual Visioning Day, where future priorities are agreed. It is also essential for a consistent senior leader from within each agency to attend the quarterly Strategic Board;
- The TP should continue to take advantage of how accustomed those across the TP have become to working virtually, moving the majority of governance meetings online to enable maximum attendance and reduce the administrative burden on partners. This should also be extended to the CPD offer, taking a blended approach to learning, with a mixture of online and face to face provision;
- The TP should further build on engaging with and sharing information with key professional and regulatory bodies and networks to promote its achievements and communicate future priorities within the sector;
- The TP should continue to actively seek out opportunities that will provide additional income, to ensure the sustainability of the partnership and less reliance on the DfE funding should this cease to be available in the future.

1. Introduction

Developing Together (TP) is a Social Work Teaching Partnership (SWTP) covering South West London and Surrey aiming to offer an ambitious and comprehensive programme of education, training, support and professional development for Social Workers across the region. Developing Together builds on an existing successful partnership, the South West London and Surrey Social Work Alliance, collaborating since 2008.

In April 2018, the Partnership was awarded government funding over two years to create a world class Social Work education community. Social Work employers within South West London and Surrey formalised and significantly enhanced the work of the existing partnership to create, 'Developing Together: Social Work Teaching Partnership'.

In 2020, 2021 and 2022, the Partnership was successful in its application for sustainability funding, and now has sufficient resource to continue until March 2024 providing primary partner membership remains stable. The Partnership also received funding to address challenges from the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and further funding in 2021 to target 4 specific Continuous Improvement Projects.

The TP comprises 14 partners and operates a two-tier membership structure to reflect the extent to which partners are involved in the programme of work. 11 partners are 'primary partners' and 3 are 'secondary partners'. More details about the TP and its members can be found on our [website](#).

This report seeks to identify and explore the achievements of the partnership to date, understand the challenges and enablers of effectiveness and explore added value. The report has included available data evidencing, where possible, the impact of the TP activities, as well as stakeholders' views on both the successes and challenges of the TP.

The South West London and Surrey Teaching Partnership's defined aims are:

- Ensure the highest calibre of Social Work students with the attributes, competencies and passion needed to thrive in the profession are recruited to our academic programmes;
- Develop a curriculum that aligns with local need and is grounded not only in research and the Chief Social Workers' Knowledge and Skills Statements/Post Qualifying Standards but also in practice;
- Give students the experience & support they need to ensure they are ready to practice within our region as Newly Qualified Social Workers;
- Ensure practice across our region is consistently informed by theory & research and that academics' teaching is equally informed by practice;
- Create regional progression pathways and Continuing Professional Development opportunities capable of attracting and retaining the best and brightest Social Workers in the UK;
- Better understand our regional labour market to enable us to develop a robust plan to meet our partnership's current and future workforce demands.



2. Key Activities and Impact

The partnership continues to deliver outcomes across a broad range of activities and has diversified its areas of work considerably over the last 2 years, significantly expanding the scope of the original 2 year implementation plan developed in 2018. For an overview of the priority areas for 2021-23 see [Appendix 2: Logic Model 2021-23](#). You can also view a high resolution version on our website [here](#). This is due to be updated in June 2022 following the annual Visioning Day in May.

This section of the report outlines the areas that the partnership has identified as core priorities. The information provided on the following pages provides both a qualitative and quantitative narrative of our activities to date and describes any early, indicative and certain impacts.

Please note that sections [2.1 Admissions & Curriculum](#), [2.2 Placements and Practice Education](#) and [2.6 Identity, Brand and Reputation](#) are relevant for all partner agencies. Sections [2.3 Recruitment](#), [2.4 Retention & Workforce Development](#) and [2.5 Income Generation](#) and are more relevant for primary partner agencies who are involved in these areas of work.¹

2.1 Admissions & Curriculum

Objectives for 2021-23:

- Reliable supply of good quality, well trained social workers in the area who are ready for practice
- Increase the pipeline of social workers into our local organisations
- Continue to improve the quality of social work education & teaching
- Better prepare students for interviews to enter employment

Activities to date:

- 16 Teaching Consultants (TCs) have remained in post from the initial recruitment to 34 positions in 2018-19. The vast majority of those who have left the role have done so due to leaving their organisation, although two TCs who left the region have continued in their TC role;
- In 2021, 5 further TCs were appointed, resulting in a well-established group of 21 Teaching Consultants in total. All new (and existing) TCs report to be thoroughly enjoying the role and valuing the chance to do something different alongside their main role, however the

¹ Primary partners are: Achieving for Children, Croydon Adults, Kingston Adults, Merton Adults, Merton Children, Sutton Adults, Sutton Children, Wandsworth Children, NSPCC, Welcare and Kingston University.

Secondary partners are: Croydon Children, Surrey Children and Richmond & Wandsworth Adults.



impact of the pandemic on Kingston University's (KU) lesson planning and the TCs' current workloads meant that they have not taken part in as many direct teaching sessions as they would have liked. This has been discussed at the quarterly TC Forum and a return to some normality this year will result in a more timely approach to lesson planning which should address this, giving the TCs more advance notice and allowing them to protect the time in their diaries. Aga Buckley, Senior Lecturer and Teaching Consultant Coordinator, said;

"Sadly this year has been very patchy when it comes to people's involvement/ ability to contribute. I think we ought to acknowledge the pandemic and 'post-Covid' era that is associated with heightened workloads and staff shortages. From the university's point of view as well, the impact of the pandemic was most visible in the areas of planning and preparation, which affected timetabling, which is usually set up several months in advance of the start of the academic year (allowing academic staff enough time to approach TC's), this was not possible during and "post-pandemic times", we are however getting there with planning for the new academic year 2022-23 being underway already"

- Most partners, with the exception of Achieving for Children, Merton Adults, Sutton Adults and Welcare, have Teaching Consultants;
- At the time of the last Annual Progress Report, employers reported that they would like to see opportunities for more practitioners to apply for a TC role and academic staff agreed that there was a need for more TCs, particularly in certain areas of the curriculum. Since then, two further rounds of recruitment have taken place, with 5 new TCs recruited and more appointments expected in June 2022, pending successful interviews. This will be followed by Training and Induction over the Summer before the new academic year begins in September 2022;
- Since 2020, KU has been responsible for coordinating TCs to ensure sustainability of the model and the role developed by the TP, solidifying relationships between TCs representing partner agencies and the university;
- Aga Buckley, Senior Lecturer and Teaching Consultant Coordinator, said:

"Despite the disruption brought by the pandemic, the TC role continues positively impacting our teaching and learning practices across the KU social work and social care courses. Furthermore, TCs are an integral part of our redesigned admission and recruitment processes, as well as essential contributors to student practice assessments. As we expand our course portfolio at the KU, we now run an annual TC recruitment and induction programme, inviting more front line practitioners to collaborate and model best practices with us, offering students a unique insight into the real, contemporary social work."

- Current TC involvement includes:
 - co-design and co-delivery of teaching in TCs specialist areas of practice, working alongside Module Leaders, including



- recording new content to accommodate blended delivery teaching during the pandemic
- consultation on assessment strategies for modules
- co-interviewing applicants for the qualifying programmes online alongside academic staff, other practitioners and PLEs
- experienced TCs mentoring new TCs
- existing TCs interviewing prospective TCs
- Current TC support arrangements and opportunities:
 - All TCs were given the opportunity to complete a post qualifying module, SW7025 Individual Work-Based Learning Project, focusing on reflection on their teaching practice and worth 30 academic credits in 2020-21. 7 completed this module and the results were very good, with most marks being in the A range. A number of TCs who didn't take up this opportunity previously, along with some of the new TCs recruited in Spring 2021, have expressed interest in completing the module this year. Once interest amongst any new TCs recruited this year is established, KU expects to be able to support the completion of this module for more TCs;
 - All those who previously completed the module have now also been granted AFHEA status which consolidates their personal development and emphasises their professional practice in Higher Education. Again, any new TCs undertaking the module would also be supported to make a similar application;
 - TC Forum meetings that were established in 2021 continue and have very good attendance. These are intended to facilitate regular contact between KU, the TP and TCs. These are held online via Microsoft Teams platform and it is hoped that through regular meetings TC support needs and new opportunities for collaborative working, will be identified and shared.
- In early December, a TP Social Work Awards Ceremony was held, and a number of TCs were recognised for exceptional commitment to the role, receiving a certificate and a voucher;
- The People with Lived Experience (PLE) Group at the HEI remains relatively stable, with 10 PLEs actively involved with HEI activities such as admissions. There are more members of the group, but they have paused their involvement due to personal circumstances;
- TCs and PLEs have continued to be involved in admissions throughout the pandemic, conducting interviews online with prospective students. After discussion with partners, to lighten the load on the TCs, we widened participation in admissions in 2020, inviting other practitioners to get involved. This also allowed more practitioners to gain experience in a HEI setting and offered them a valuable CPD opportunity. Of the 3 new practitioners that were welcomed on board in 2020, 1 went on to be appointed as a TC in 2021. In 2021 we welcomed 9 more practitioners on board to support with interviews. These practitioners report that the academic staff have been 'extremely friendly and supportive', enabling them to feel prepared in advance of each interview, and that they are 'enjoying the process of interviewing' and 'listening to the excitement and passion of future social workers';
- Entry requirements for the BA in social work course remain at 120



UCAS points (increased from 112 in 2018-19). Evidence can be found on Kingston University's [website](#);

- The new roleplay and group exercises that were introduced in 2018-19 to better identify those with the skills, passion and competencies to thrive in the profession are not currently being used due to the nature of conducting interviews and assessments virtually during the pandemic. At the time of writing, this was due to be reviewed at a Faculty meeting on 16 May 2022;
- Practitioners and PLEs continue to play a much more determining role in the assessment of prospective BA and MSW students than they did prior to the TP;
- The annual 'Admissions Processes Review' was not held in its usual format in 2021. KU opted for a light-touch exercise as 'minor-modifications' under pandemic conditions and plans to set up a larger review/consultation in Summer 2022 to agree admissions processes for the coming year;
- Managing the involvement of practitioners in the admissions processes was successfully handed back to the HEI in 2020 and Josie Newton, Senior Lecturer in Social Work, takes responsibility for coordinating the PLEs and practitioners involved in each selection event;
- Partner involvement in student suitability issues was agreed through the development of a new, more transparent [Student Suitability Process](#), after a consultation with placement providers. All partners now feel able to offer an opinion about applicants with prior convictions in response to a single question from the HEI about the likelihood of the student being accepted for a placement within their organisation. The responses are coordinated anonymously by a single nominated individual, currently Sharon Evans, Partnership Practice Consultant, and a collective view is then shared with the HEI. A clear timeframe for providing a response and/or requesting further information was agreed and individual responses are not tracked and are not used to obligate partners to later offer the student a placement. Factors such as these, although unfounded, had made some partners apprehensive about providing their opinion previously, and so these clarifications and a clear process document resolved any previous misunderstandings;
- Employability Skills Workshops for MSW and BA students were facilitated by a mixture of TCs and other employer representatives in February and March 2022. The session for MSW students was attended by 20 students, a similar number to last year. However, the session received mixed feedback, with only 60% of respondents reporting that the session met or exceeded expectations. This was unusual since 100% of respondents last year reported that the session exceeded their expectations and the core material and session plan were very similar, however more detailed feedback has been shared with facilitators who will incorporate this into future sessions. The BA session had very low numbers in 2021 and so was timetabled this year to ensure attendance. This approach was effective, as this time there were 25 in attendance. Interestingly 100% of respondents from the BA session reported that the session met or exceeded their expectations;
- The University's Fast Track Post Graduate Diploma (PgDip) remains popular amongst partners when sponsorship is available; a number of spaces on the programme were funded by the TP for unqualified



children's workers in both 2019 and 2020 so in 2021 3 sponsored spaces were ringfenced for unqualified adults workers;

- The HEI's PLE Group took part in the 'People with Lived Experience Film Project', deciding on topics for discussion and planning how these were to be made into short films and audio podcasts. This means their experiences of social work and social care and their expertise as PLEs can be shared and contribute to the learning of social work students and practitioners across the Partnership. After production was delayed by CV19, all five films have now been completed and are available to view/download. Examples of the films:
 - [The Role and Contribution of Kingston University's PLE Group](#)
 - [Adoption Case Study](#)
 - [The Impact of CV-19 on People with Lived Experience](#)
- The 'Academics in Practice' initiative, where academic staff are supported by the HEI to spend time in practice, was impacted negatively by the pandemic. However it has also been recognised that a better method for organising and evidencing these contributions to practice is required, since many good examples were going unreported and some academics would benefit from more support in making the necessary links with partner agencies. The DfE has also made their programme criteria more stringent for 2022, requiring SWTPs to support every social work academic to spend 5 days in practice each year. In order to meet this criteria, the HEI plans to introduce this as a requirement for appraisals which will also provide us with a more solid evidence base of excellent examples of time spent in practice. In addition, the Teaching Consultants have expressed their commitment to supporting the module leaders with which they work to conduct visits in their respective organisations. Some excellent examples of one academic's experiences of spending time in practice available on our website:
 - [Blog Post: Some Excellent Men](#)
 - [Blog Post: The HALT Programme in Wandsworth](#)
 - [Blog Post: Shadowing of mini-MARAC in Sutton](#)
- In addition, there are multiple 'goodwill' examples of social work academics contributing to the learning and development of practitioners across the TP, for example one lecturer delivers a day on the TP's Early Career Social Work Manager programme and another two lecturers deliver a Leadership Skills in Social Work Practice day and a Project Skills & Development day for social workers on the Early Professional Development Framework. Other examples include seminars on findings from research, e.g. Self Neglect & Hoarding, and regular briefings on the latest updates to the Liberty Protection Safeguards.

Impact includes:

- The admissions process at the HEI has successfully focused on recruiting high quality graduates with 89% of those with tariff-able qualifications now having at least 120 UCAS points. This demonstrates a steady improvement over 3 years; in 2017-18, only 52% of those with tariff-able qualifications had at least 120 UCAS points;



- The average entry tariff has also improved steadily, from 123.1 UCAS points in 2017-18, to 131.8 in 2018-19, 139.62 in 2019-20 and 139.95 in 2020-21;
- The scheduled hours of practitioner teaching prior to the TP (academic year 2017-18) is not known as arrangements were ad-hoc and the Teaching Consultant role didn't exist, but between 2018-19 and 2019-20 there was a 48% increase in the scheduled hours of TC teaching, which supports students' transition from theory into practice and aligns the curriculum with local employer needs;
- During the 2020-21 and 2021-22 academic years, maintaining a similar level of TC involvement was challenging given the circumstances. Many TCs were and still are facing increased work pressures and the HEI's main priority has been to transition core teaching to online delivery. Nevertheless, TCs still contributed 110 hours of teaching in the 2020-21 academic year and whilst this information is not available for 2021-22 academic year (to date) due to challenges caused by the pandemic in monitoring and capturing committed hours, all TCs who responded to KU's annual survey reported that they had contributed to teaching and learning activities at KU during current academic year. When asked what their highlight has been, TCs commented:

"I always enjoy working directly with students and lecture staff as this serves to inform my own practice and reminds me why I became a social worker"

"The assessed interviews - loved it!"

"I've really enjoyed the opportunity for more experiential sessions especially around communication and direct work with children and strengths based approaches"

- The majority of TP partner employers have TCs and these partners now have more control over which practitioners are representing their organisation. This means that these agencies can be reassured that local need is being reflected in the curriculum;
- This also increases the exposure that students have to these agencies and this familiarity is likely to have a positive effect when these same students are looking for their first social work role at the end of their programme;
- The TP's Strategic Board regularly reaffirm their commitment to sustaining the TC model and those across the Partnership continue to give positive feedback about the role:

"The teaching consultant role has provided learning opportunities for experienced social workers that enable them to share their skills and knowledge. This has not only benefited the university and social work students but extends to employer agency social workers."

"As a module leader working with teaching consultants I very much welcome their involvement in keeping the module content relevant and practice focused. They also work with us to review content and delivery each year. Feedback from students is very positive about their involvement in the module."



- First time pass rate on the Readiness for Direct Practice module had improved year on year from 2017-18 to 2019-20; from 71% in 2017-18, to 90% in 2018-19, to 94% (BA) and 100% (MSW) in 2019-20, exceeding our original target of 78%. Unfortunately, the first time pass rate reverted to 71% on the BA in 2020-21, potentially as a result of the pandemic, however the MSW course still saw a first time pass rate of 89%, a reduction on the previous year but still above target;
- Comprehensive data provided by Achieving for Children (AfC) and LB Sutton has allowed us to monitor the success of Kingston University (KU) graduates at NQSW interviews year on year. In 2017-18, an average of only 12% of NQSW positions across AfC and Sutton went to KU graduates - by 2018-19 this had improved to 29% and in 2019-20 this improved again to 47%. In 2020-21, this reduced slightly to 45% and further analysis showed that this was due to a high proportion of KU graduates failing an assessment that must be passed in order to progress to interview stage (Sutton). Conversely, AfC actually saw a 37% increase in the proportion of KU graduates that they appointed as NQSW;
- The proportion of students graduating with a 'good' degree has increased considerably on both the BA and MSW programmes and the progression rate of BA students from Level 4 to 5 (from their first to second year) is at its highest ever rate.

Measure	2017-18 (Baseline)	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
% of students with 120+ UCAS points	52%	76%	85%	89%
Average (mean) UCAS points	123.1	131.8	139.62	139.95
First time pass % Readiness for Direct Practice module	71%	90%	94% (BA) 100% (MSW)	71% (BA) 89% (MSW)
% NQSW posts offered to Kingston University graduates (AfC and Sutton average)	12%	29%	47%	45%
% students graduating with 2:1 or a 1st (BA)	44%	78%	59%	62%
% of students graduating with distinction or commendation (MSW)	76%	81%	87%	91%
% of BA students progressing from Level 4 to Level 5	77%	85%	87%	88%



2.2 Placements & Practice Education

Objectives for 2021-23:

- Reliable supply of good quality, well trained social workers in the area who are ready for practice
- Continue to improve the quality of social work education & teaching
- Increase the pipeline of social workers into our local organisations
- Students have high quality placements with skilled Practice Educators (PEs) and Onsite Supervisors (OSSs)
- 75% of placements are provided by TP agencies
- All students have at least 1 statutory placement, preferably 2

Activities to date:

- The Teaching Partnership Practice Education Team downsized from 3.4FTE in 2019 to 1.8FTE in 2020 and 1.5FTE in 2021. In 2020, the roles were renamed Practice Consultants (formerly Practice Educator Development Workers) to reflect the diversification of their work and evolving nature of the role;
- During 2021-22, the TP Practice Consultants were off-site PEs for 2 x students on the BA programme, as well as 6 x students on the MSW programme;
- An adapted programme of 11 PE workshops were delivered across the year (up from 9 in 2020-21) to develop PE skills and knowledge. 158 experienced/trainee/aspiring PEs, OSSs and PAs have attended workshops to date;
- The Onsite Supervisor (OSS) Programme, originally developed and delivered by Dale van Graan, Senior Lecturer, in 2019, was revised and reduced in length in 2020 to incorporate feedback from the Strategic Board, who supported making this mandatory for new Onsite Supervisors but wanted to be realistic about the time commitment of the training. Dale van Graan co facilitates the adapted Programme with Natesha Yanguba, Advanced Social Worker and PE at Croydon ASC. The OSS programme has since run three times in its new format across 3 half days, in January 2021, October 2021 and February 2022, with 30 OSSs in attendance from across the TP. A further occurrence is planned for Summer 2022 due to demand from aspiring OSSs, however awareness of the course could still be improved amongst placement providers. The TP team have encountered OSSs who are taking students for the first time or are aspiring to be an OSS and have not been made aware of the training available. On these occasions, once information was provided they attended the course;
- Dale van Graan also recognises the importance and benefit of the OSS programme being available to non-qualified social work staff;

“ It is really positive that we have supervisors who are not Social



Workers as well, as it is in that scenario that we are likely to find the most need. Everyone who has attended has been very enthusiastic and participatory, which makes it so much more enjoyable and, hopefully beneficial, to everyone, including us as facilitators".

- For further information on the OSS Programme, please see the [2022 Evaluation Report](#);
- A 'PE Refresher' course and 'Becoming a Practice Assessor' training session were also held during 2021 and again in February 2022, also led by Dale van Graan;
- A 'deconstructed' virtual PE Conference was held in May 2021, over three separate sessions with online workshops covering 'Interrogating Oppression in Practice Education', 'Together Apart' - Navigating Emotion and Containment within Remote Spaces' and 'Reflections on Learning from Cross-border Practice Education'. The conference had 76 PEs in attendance from across the partnership;
- There was a further virtual PE conference held in May 2022, with a [full programme of events](#) running across the week;
- Further resources for PEs are available on the website, including the [PCF Toolkit](#) (this page alone averages 153 visits per month) and [workshops that have been adapted to webinars](#);
- The TP adheres to the definition of a statutory placement within Social Work England's '[Guidance on practice placements for social work students](#)' (last updated August 2020) and despite this definition being quite prescriptive, we have seen huge increases in the proportion of students receiving statutory placements;
- The strategic approach to placement allocation, agreed in 2019 by members of the TP, continues to be reviewed annually. The Placement Allocation Strategy includes regular placement allocation meetings in advance of each placement tranche, principles for communicating key information between all involved parties and a timeline to ensure all stakeholders are aware of key milestones within the placement allocation process, including key dates for PEPS applications;
- The [Placement Allocation Strategy](#) was last reviewed in Spring'21 and an updated [Placement Allocation and PEPS Timeline for 2022-23](#) academic year was agreed at the last Pre-Qualifying Alliance and shared with all partners;
- The [Pre-Placement Meeting Guidance](#) was also updated in June'21, to account for Covid-19 considerations. This guidance was originally developed in response to feedback from Kingston University, that students had on occasion, reported that they felt as though the format of the pre-placement meeting could at times feel very formal and slightly intimidating;
- On the whole, all partners are actively engaging in supporting placement allocation and the vast majority are attending the allocation meetings. This promotes a joined up approach to coordinating placements for students and feedback from the stakeholder survey suggests that this process continues to work well. Partners are reminded that non-attendance at these meetings, even if just one agency, does make them considerably less effective;
- There were some challenges this year with finding final placements in



January for MSW students however, and this was due to a combination of factors. Partners had competing priorities for providing placements on other programmes, such as Step Up and Think Ahead and in addition, many partners had ASYE cohorts starting in January, as well as apprentices on the apprenticeship programme, meaning they did not have the capacity available. There was also a much smaller number of PEPS1 trainees progressing on to PEPS2 in the last year from across partner agencies, due to work pressures and other training commitments;

- In Autumn 2020, a new student internship scheme was introduced, where students apply to have both placements with the same local authority at the start of their course and are guaranteed an NQSW interview once they have completed their studies. More details about this initiative can be found in [2.3 Recruitment](#).
- Following the Placement Quality Assurance Project in the 2018-19 academic year, our findings were published in 2020 and within this a number of areas for improvement were identified. After some initial discussions between the HEI and employer partners, an opportunity was identified to take a partnership approach to raising the standards of social work practice placements in the region, through a new peer review quality assurance (QA) process. Whilst most employer partners conduct an internal QA process, the need to introduce an external (cross-partnership) element to this process, similar to that of the ASYE portfolio moderation process, was agreed. To date, three pilot panels have been held (June'21, November'21 and Feb'22) with representatives from a number of partner agencies taking part in these panels. Following the pilot process, all partnership members have now been invited to take part in forthcoming panels from June'22;
- The panel members discuss and review an anonymised sample of 10% of placement reports, as well as all fails and borderlines. The panels sample both Midway and End of Placement Reports (EPR). The peer reviews provide balanced, considered, constructive and timely feedback to workforce development (WFD) leads about the quality of reports completed, with the aim to improve a benchmark quality standard for reports across the board. Feedback is also shared by WFD Leads with individual PEs and a summary report is shared partnership wide via email and on the TP website;

Impact/likely impact includes:

Consistently positive feedback is received from those who attend PE workshops. Some feedback from recent workshops can be found below:

"As with all of Josie's training, I enjoyed the fact that she is dynamic, interactive and holds my attention. I always come away with new learning. Many thanks."

" I felt mentally refreshed and motivated to take on a student."

" I enjoyed learning about the different tools that could be used"



during supervision, the various books that are available to support both P.E's as well as on site Supervisors"

- Feedback from the stakeholder survey also suggests that through the collaborative approach of the partnership, PEs feel better supported in terms of their access to high quality support, guidance and training and value being part of a growing 'Community of Practice';

"I have found the TP very helpful in my progress to becoming a PE. Staff and consultants have been very welcoming, engaging, helpful and supportive throughout my journey and learning. I gained a lot of skills and tools to use as a PE"

- A considerable proportion of support offered to PEs is coordinated by the TP, supporting a more consistent, quality assured approach. The popularity of this provision and feedback evidence that there is a need for the additional support being rolled out;
- Where there is the opportunity for a placement provider to take on a student but they do not have an available onsite PE, the TP Practice Consultants continue to provide the offer of acting as an offsite PE, which the HEI deems invaluable;

"There is an excellent range of training & support available. The TP practice educators/ consultants offer a very high standard of service, and enable the university to place students in agencies without their own PE"

- The collaborative work around student placements has improved the way that placement allocation works. The majority of respondents to the stakeholder survey feel as though the processes ensure the best possible outcomes for students, employers and the HEI and that the quality of placements has improved since the TP was established:

"This [process] provides a clear approach to all partners and students and ensures students have access to statutory placements"

"We have usually had good social work placements from both local authority and PVI partners. There has been an increase in the number of local authority placements since 2018. Covid, over the last two years, has impacted on learning and support for students and we are grateful to placement providers, practice educators and on- site supervisors for continuing to support students by providing placements during difficult circumstances"

- However, the HEI also addressed the challenges that were faced in finding final placements for MSW students in January 2022, which highlights that there is more work to be done here in terms of stabilising the number of available placements. This is not a challenge that is unique to our TP; the majority of other TPs across the country face very similar challenges as a recent [article by Community Care](#) highlighted. To address this, we are exploring the feasibility of a 'Fair Share' placement allocation model, which is already being successfully used on other health and social care



courses, amongst other initiatives, as part of a new Practice Education Strategy:

"The strategy has not worked recently as it over relies on trainee practice educators. Partner agencies have not been able to offer us sufficient MSW placements so we had to approach other agencies.

Several partners seem to be prioritising other universities and programmes such as Frontline"

"In the past year there have, on occasion, been fewer placements available to us within the Partnership than we needed; this has an impact on the university placement team-who have had to source placements elsewhere- and on students, who have had to wait longer for placement arrangements to be made, which creates stress for them and a degree of inequity"

- The aim of the Placements Peer QA is to provide a forum through which key stakeholders can peer review placement reports, which will lead to both individual and organisational feedback for PEs, OSSs and tutors. Following the panel meetings, feedback is shared directly with PEs, OSSs and organisations, as well as an overall 'learnings summary' document produced following each panel, which is then circulated across the partnership. Example summary of learnings can be found [here](#). These learnings are also used to influence the PEPS curriculum, as well as the TP's Practice Education Workshops;
- It is hoped that a combination of these elements will raise the quality and standard of social work practice placements in the region, offering a better experience for students and more opportunity and guidance for PEs to improve their reports and contribute to their own professional development. Highlighting examples of good practice could also promote the dissemination of those standards within an organisation;
- The majority of students in 2020-21 were satisfied with the allocation process and overall most students felt their placements were good or excellent with a minority rating it as 'ok' and none 'poor' or 'very poor'. Students reported that their learning needs were mostly or fully met with no students reporting that none of their learning needs were met;
- A combination of activities relating to Placements and Practice Education, such as the OSS Programme, PE Workshops and Placement Allocation Strategy & Timeline, have increased placement opportunities for students and therefore increased the statutory placement provision within the TP. The number and quality of placements may also have contributed to the improved employability rate of Kingston University graduates;

Measure	2017-18 (Baseline)	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
% NQSW posts offered to Kingston University graduates	12%	29%	47%	45%	Data available



(AfC and Sutton average)					in 2023
% of (statutory) annual placements provided by TP agencies	Unknown	47%	68%	80%	73%*
% of students on BA programme who have 2 'statutory' placements	Unknown	22%	48%	86%	69%
% of students on MSW programme who have 2 'statutory' placements	Unknown	85%	71%	100%	92%
% of BA students who receive a final statutory placement	Unknown	83%	91%	93%	79%
% of MSW students who receive a final statutory placement	Unknown	90%	87%	100%	92%
% of independent PEs used annually**	3%	8%	5%	4%	6%
No. of PEs/OSSs attending training/event/workshop/conference	Unknown	120	96	116	158

*Providing all allocated May placements go ahead as planned

**DfE target = no more than 20% of placements should be with independent PEs. The proportion of 'independent' PEs used in our TP has increased slightly although this is still well above the target set by the DfE. This is due to the increase in statutory placements and the use of the TP's Practice Consultants as PEs, which we categorise as 'independent' due to them being 'offsite'.

2.3 Recruitment

Objectives for 2021-23:

- Sufficient local talent to fill experienced/leadership roles within the TP
- Strategies for recruiting good social workers are increasingly joined up
- A reliable pipeline of NQSWs from KU into partner agencies
- Students and practitioners have a better attachment to local employers
- The region is a desirable place to work for NQSWs/experienced social workers
- The region 'role models' equality, diversity, inclusion, trauma informed practice and wellbeing



Activities to date:

- Employment routes have diversified considerably in recent years, contributing to a more reliable pipeline of NQSWs from Kingston University into partner agencies:
 - The University's Fast Track Post Graduate Diploma in Social Work remains popular when funding is available. This allows experienced social care professionals to obtain a social work qualification in 18 months and register as a social worker and the TP has sponsored 7 places in recent years for a mixture of unqualified children's and adult workers;
 - A subgroup of the TP - AfC, Sutton Children and Kingston University - was successful in its application to the DfE to form a new Regional Step Up to Social Work Partnership (RP) and deliver Cohort 7 of the national programme. This allows graduates with a good undergraduate degree and some experience of working with children and families to obtain a social work qualification in 14 months and register as a social worker. Those already working for one of the employers in the RP in an unqualified role can apply, as well as external candidates. After initial sifting of 45 applications, in June 2021, we designed and completed a rigorous two day assessment centre for applicants, in line with the DfE requirements, to select suitable candidates for the programme. This included panel interviews and roleplay assessments online with representatives from AfC, Sutton, Kingston University and the HEI PLE group followed by group exercises in person at Kingston Hill campus. Following this, we successfully recruited 9 individuals to complete the Step Up programme, who commenced their study at Kingston University on 4th January 2022 and will be completing x2 placements at their local authority of choice; London Borough of Sutton, or Achieving for Children Richmond & Kingston, or Windsor & Maidenhead. The programme for cohort 7 will complete in March 2023, at which point we will seek to evaluate the programme and prepare for Cohort 8, should we be successful in a second bid.
 - A Student Internship Scheme was launched in Autumn 2020, where students on the MSW Programme could apply to have both their placements with a partner local authority and at the end of their course be guaranteed an interview for an NQSW position. Achieving for Children, London Borough of Sutton Children's Services and London Borough of Merton Adults Services took part in the pilot and 3 students were successful (2 in Sutton and 1 in Merton); all 3 are currently preparing for NQSW interviews with the local authority that provided their internship. In Autumn 2021 the scheme was once again offered to MSW students and 2 students were



successfully appointed as interns with London Borough of Croydon Adults Services and London Borough of Sutton Children's Services. These students will begin their first placement in May 2022. The scheme was also offered to BA students in 2021 however did not prove as popular. Feedback from these students was taken on board (timing of the scheme and additional information) for 2022 however unfortunately partners did not respond to requests for information on how many internships they could provide so we could not proceed. The one agency who did respond could not, in good faith, offer any internships due to commitments to Frontline, Apprentices and Step Up students, as all would be competing for the same NQSW posts. We aim to offer the scheme to MSW students again in Autumn 2022 and BA students in Spring 2023;

- The Social Work (Integrated Degree) Apprenticeship was launched in 2020 and Kingston University was appointed principal provider to co-produce the programme for London and surrounding regions for use by all programme members. The University recruited 60 to their programme in 2020, exceeding their target of 55, and subsequently recruited 23 in 2021 from 18 local authorities (LAs) in London. Of the LAs involved, 5 are from the TP. A combination of factors led to lower numbers in 2021, e.g. the pandemic and some LAs taking a break for a year. This year KU expects a considerable uplift in enrolment;
- A new Careers Fair, planned collaboratively with the BA and MSW course leaders to maximise student attendance, was held in April 2022. All but two of the primary partner local authorities sent representatives, who each had a stall and provided details of upcoming NQSW vacancies to students as well as information about working for their respective local authorities, including CPD offers. The TP had its own stall, promoting the benefits of working within our region for a primary partner agency and providing all final year students with a goody bag and an information pack to support their preparation for NQSW interview;
- It is likely that the Employability Skills Workshops, Teaching Consultant involvement and increased statutory placements have contributed to outcomes in this area, primarily the reliable pipeline of Kingston University students into partner agency NQSW roles through an improved attachment of students to local employers;
- The Career Pathways & CPD Framework and the Early Professional Development (EPD) Framework developed and launched in 2021 may also contribute to an improved attachment of students/practitioners to local employers (more details in [2.4 Retention and Workforce Development](#));
- Despite progress made to date, and impacts illustrated in the above narrative and summary table below, this area of work remains the most underdeveloped. To date, there has been no experimentation of joined-up strategies for recruitment, aside from the Step Up Programme, and the potential need for a local talent pool for more



experienced roles has not yet been explored. A review of partner agency recruitment adverts demonstrates an inconsistency in approach, with only one agency (Merton Adults) referencing membership of the TP and what benefits that brings for prospective social work employees;

- Future objectives were explored in more depth at the TP's annual Visioning Day on 6 May 2022 for which outputs are currently being drawn together.

Impact/likely impact includes:

- The pipeline of NQSWs entering employer agencies from Kingston University has improved considerably. Using AfC and Sutton data as a baseline, the proportion of NQSW posts that go to KU graduates has increased from 12% in 2017-18 (pre-TP), to 45% in 2020-21. There was a slight reduction in the average in the most recent reporting year (from 47% to 45%), which was caused by half of the KU graduates who made the initial shortlist failing the assessment stage in Sutton, which must be passed in order to progress to the interview stage. Conversely, AfC actually saw a 37% increase in the proportion of KU graduates that they appointed as NQSWs in the same period;
- The pilot internship scheme is due to conclude imminently, with all 3 interns currently preparing for NQSWs with the local authorities that provided their internship. Their success at interview and ongoing retention will be tracked over the coming years;
- It is anticipated that the individuals currently undertaking the Step Up to Social Work programme will complete an interview at the end of the 14 month programme and if successful, will be recruited to an ASYE programme within either AfC or LBS. This initiative seeks to improve retention within these agencies, given that the candidates on the programme already work and live in the region and will have completed both placements within their chosen local authority, and will therefore be less likely to relocate or seek alternative employment;
- It is anticipated that ongoing promotion of various workforce development initiatives, such as the EPD Framework, Early Career Managers' Programme and the Career Pathways & CPD Framework, will influence recruitment of social workers, with prospective candidates being attracted to work in the region thanks to the comprehensive learning and development offer (more details in [2.4 Retention and Workforce Development](#)). However, this is dependent on partner agencies actively promoting these initiatives as reasons to work for them in their recruitment adverts.

Measure	2017-18 (Baseline)	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
% NQSW posts offered to Kingston University	12%	29%	47%	45%	Data available



graduates (AfC and Sutton average)					in 2023
% of MSW students on student internship scheme who secure NQSW post	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Data available June 2022
% of employers who confirm improved 'readiness to practice' of NQSWs who completed student internship	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Data available in 2023

2.4 Retention and Workforce Development

Objectives for 2021-23:

- Improve the retention of social workers within partner agencies
- Social workers have a clear career pathway to progress with the appropriate CPD opportunities to support their progression and these can be articulated to practitioners by WFD and/or line managers
- Social workers receive an increased volume and improved quality of CPD opportunities, including specialist subject support and opportunities to consolidate their knowledge and skills
- The CPD offer is increasingly joined up and coordinated across partners
- Those on the ASYE are better supported
- Improved level of support & consolidation of learning in years 2-3 post qualifying
- Social workers have opportunities for project work to build on existing achievements and encourage a culture of organisational learning
- Social workers have the necessary skills to maintain / look after their wellbeing
- Social workers have access to leadership and management development opportunities
- The region is a desirable place to work for NQSWs/experienced social workers
- The region 'role models' equality, diversity, inclusion, trauma informed practice and wellbeing

Activities to date:

- For information about CPD relating to Practice Education, please see [2.2 Placements and Practice Education](#);
- You can also find information about the specific CPD opportunities offered to Teaching Consultants in [2.1 Admissions and Curriculum](#);
- A new Career Pathways & CPD Framework was launched in June



2021. The Framework was created through extensive consultation with primary partner agencies during 2020-21 and continually evolves as new opportunities are developed. The Framework is mapped against the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) and the Post-Qualifying Standards (better known as the KSS). The framework demonstrates employers' commitment to improving social work practice through continual professional development and career progression and supports social work practitioners and those involved with workforce learning and development, by outlining indicative social work job roles/responsibilities and associated CPD opportunities, offered by the TP, Kingston University and employers at each career stage. It also supports practitioners to meet Social Work England (SWE) CPD requirements and identify learning opportunities. For the full illustration of the framework, please visit our [website](#);

- In addition, The Early Professional Development (EPD) Framework was launched in June 2021², which dovetails the overarching Career Pathways and CPD framework. The framework was created in collaboration with all primary partner agencies and took into account learnings from the [DfE's pilot Early Professional Development programme \(2009-2011\)](#), as well as the [DFE longitudinal study](#), which identified a high dropout rate of social workers within 2-3 years post qualifying, a finding which was corroborated by our own workforce analysis. The EPD framework comes into effect at the end of the ASYE and aims to support practitioners in these crucial early years of their career, alleviating the metaphorical 'cliff edge' post ASYE that is often referred to within the sector. The framework provides EPD social workers with the support and opportunities they need to develop as practitioners in the coming years and covers a host of different initiatives, training and resources, relevant and appropriate to each stage of a social worker's career, identified as vital to help develop resilience, professional curiosity and leadership skills in the second and third years post-qualifying. Examples of the training and resources offered as part of the framework include; frequent Action Learning Sets (ALS), Workload Management training, Leadership Skills, Project Skills, Onsite Supervisor training, and the Practice Educator Professional Standards stage 1 award, as well as crucial information on where to access a mentor and training on how to become a mentor to your peers. For a list of the full training provision, [see Appendix 3](#). To aid implementation of the framework, an '[Early Professional Development Framework Handbook](#)' was produced and circulated to all those identified as managers of EPD social workers, as well as the EPD social workers, as they approached the end of their ASYE programme in Summer 2021;
- The framework commenced in September 2021 and is currently being piloted by primary partner agencies; Achieving for Children, Croydon Adults, Kingston Adults, Merton Adults, Sutton Adults, Sutton Children, NSPCC and Welcare. New primary partner agencies, Merton Children and Wandsworth Children, will be able to access the Framework when it restarts in September 2022;
- Associated challenges with the implementation of the framework

² Approximately 150 practitioners attended the Career Pathways & CPD Framework & EPD framework launch events in June 2021.



have largely been with poor attendance of EPD social workers on the core training provision, meaning that on occasion sessions have not been viable, with less than 50% of those who are scheduled to attend actually attending the training. Despite the issues relating to attendance, feedback from those who have attended the EPD sessions so far has been overwhelmingly positive;

"The workshop was excellent, very informative and the trainer was very good, as she used and spoke about various experiences which gave good examples and insights into how sibling relationships work both in and outside of the care setting"

"This session has initiated the planning phase of my next steps in my career. It gave an overview and clear helpful considerations for my planning and what to do to help me get to where I want to go."

"Fantastic, engaging, thought provoking, inspiring"

- Both the Career Pathways & CPD Framework and the Early Professional Development Framework have received notable recognition within the social work sector, with the TP being invited to present both Frameworks at various forums, including the Social Work Education Network, chaired by Skills for Care. Most recently we were contacted by the Scottish government who were keen to meet with us and understand more about the Frameworks as they begin to develop a framework and pathway of their own;
- A new employer led Strengths Based Practice course was developed in collaboration with Kingston University, Kingston Adults and Merton Adults and delivered to 73 individuals from across partner agencies from June - December 2021. 100% of attendees who completed the evaluation said that the training was 'Extremely' or 'Very helpful', and that their expectations had been 'Fully Met' or 'Exceeded'. Comments about key learnings that attendees have taken away from the training include: "being able to name the models such as 3 Conversation model, case mapping, solution focused approach. Only on reflection I realised what I have been using and what I haven't.", and "To really analyse how our systems and processes help or hinder the strength-based approach." As with many of the training sessions that we provide, one of the highlights for many attendees was the ability to discuss, reflect and learn with other professionals from different agencies.
- A Kingston University 'PQ Development Day' took place at the end of April, to assess partner employers' post-qualifying needs and offer them the opportunity to contribute to the restructure of KU's post qualifying offer for social work, ensuring that the revised offer will meet the needs of employers. Many interesting and thought provoking discussions took place and we are currently in the process of collating all the feedback from the day with a view to proposing a post qualifying education strategy for consideration by the Strategic Board;
- A third cohort of our popular Early Career Managers' Programme was delivered in January 2022, to a further 12 practitioners from across the partnership. To date, 72 managers with 0-18 month experience in the role have been trained since the creation of the



programme. Feedback continues to be excellent, with 100% of those attending stating that they would recommend the programme. From initial scoping, there is not currently demand for a fourth cohort in 2022-23 and there is the possibility that we have now reached all current eligible managers with 0-18 months experience with this programme across the partnership. However, as new primary partners, Merton Children and Wandsworth Children may have suitable practitioners for this programme, in which case it will be run for a fourth time;

- This programme has also been formally accredited by the CPD Standards Office, providing a recognised certification for those who completed the full course (63);
- This programme also interested another SWTP covering Cheshire & Merseyside who decided to commission our TP to deliver the programme for them in March 2021, generating an income for the TP. We are currently in discussion with some other external local authorities about running the programme for them this coming year;
- We were asked by Social Work England to write a blog about our experience of developing this programme - you can read the blog [here](#);
- A further three courses were also accredited by the CPD Standards Office - 'Enabling Reflective Practice', 'Strengths Based Approaches' and 'Knowledge and Skills for ASYE Assessors'. A further course is being identified for assessment;
- The programme of workshops developed for ASYE Assessors in 2019-20 was adapted into a 2 day training course in 2020-21 (in response to feedback from partners), and covers topics such as; supervision skills, direct observation, wellbeing and the KSS. The first delivery of the new format took place in 2021 and, although feedback from those who attended was positive, attendance was very low, with only 4 practitioners attending the 2 day course. However, a subsequent occurrence of the training specifically for Croydon Adults ASYE Assessors in March 2022 was much more popular, perhaps since it was in response to a request and was delivered 'in-house'. Whilst the programme will run again once this year as standard, it is expected that future occurrences will be available upon request only, to minimise any inefficiencies;
- Three separate report writing workshops for ASYE Assessors were planned as well as a virtual support group to enable ASYE Assessors to come together and learn from each other in a community of practice, by sharing experiences of assessing and supporting a NQSW, as well as sharing tips on developing reflective supervision and building resilience. However, these sessions were all unfortunately cancelled due to low bookings/no shows making these unviable to run. There are no plans to reschedule a similar provision unless there is demand from employers, again to minimise inefficiencies;
- We have limited information on the total number of ASYE Assessors across the TP and this scoping will be completed in 2022-23, alongside the development of a Partnership ASYE working group to better align partner ASYE programmes and develop an ASYE Assessor Community of Practice. See [4.0 Future Ambitions](#) for further information on how we plan to improve this going forward;



- Over 70 events and training sessions were delivered, commissioned or coordinated by the TP throughout 2021-22, informed by practice and workforce development needs. Topics included; Attachment Theory: Putting it into Practice, Understanding the Liberty Protection Safeguards, KSS Reflective Workshop, Social Graces Workshop and Writing Reflectively for Your CPD with Social Work England. For full details of the 2021-22 provision, please see our [Annual L&D Report](#). Feedback about the CPD offer from the Stakeholder Survey was extremely positive:

"The range of CPD opportunities has developed as the TP has progressed and there are now a wide range of training opportunities for SW's managers, EPD SW and NQSW. There is always room to provide wider training on subjects/issues and to widen the reach so more SW's are accessing the CPD opportunities"

- Some of the provision is offered through the CPD Passport Scheme, however to date, these offers have come solely from two partner agencies, AfC and Sutton. It is hoped that further sessions will be opened up across the board for the 2022-23 CPD provision;
- London Borough of Sutton opened up access to their suite of 60 elearning modules covering a broad range of topics across Adults, Mental Health, Children & Families, Wellbeing, Equality & Diversity, and Recruitment. Uptake to date has been fairly positive, with 33 practitioners having signed up to the virtual modules, although only 17 modules in total have been completed by 9 practitioners;
- The NSPCC has also delivered/co-delivered a number of sessions for TP agencies, on topics such as Virtual Working for Social Work Students. A session on Therapeutic Approaches was also delivered in person in September 2021, with trainees each provided with a kitbag of direct work tools, including a host of useful resources such as story cubes, modelling clay, a therapeutic treasure deck, and a guide to child trauma;
- Following the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis in May 2020, the TP Team established Black Lives Matter & The Voice of Social Work Discussion Groups to allow staff from different agencies to come together and discuss a specified topic related to anti-racist practice. These have continued to prove popular amongst practitioners, offering black colleagues across the TP the opportunity to lead or co-facilitate some of these sessions. We now have a dedicated group of facilitators based in various employer partner agencies and the HEI. These sessions will continue to run throughout 2022-23, at a more frequent interval of 6 weekly. Examples of topics covered to date include:
 - Am I privileged? How can I use privilege to help others?;
 - Working with Dual-heritage families: What is working? What isn't working?
 - Is it time we face up to colourism?
- The TP Team also planned and held an event in May'21 to commemorate the death of George Floyd, one year on, titled 'Celebrating Black Voices'. It felt important to do something to not only acknowledge the events of the last year, but also to have a



space for the celebration of black voices. The event was planned to be a drop-in reflective space, where colleagues could come and listen, or actively participate by sharing their thoughts and experiences. This was supported by a rolling slideshow montage of powerful quotes and videos from prominent black voices. The event was extremely powerful and moving for all in attendance and feedback was overwhelmingly positive. To read the full write up of this event and access the montage and other resources shared, please click [here](#). Many colleagues reflected that social work must respond with action and not just empty words or platitudes, and that uncomfortable conversations must occur within teams and wider networks, and the momentum must continue and keep moving;

- Taking feedback from this event and in order to continue the momentum of this important topic, the TP Team planned and hosted 2 further events in honour of Black History month in October'21. The first was a celebration of black history and recognition of the fact that Black History is often overlooked, ignored and distorted, with most schools teaching history through focusing on traditional events without considering black heritage and culture. We heard from Dr Wilson Muleya, Head of Department of Social Work and Social Care at Kingston University, who reflected on this year's selected book for the University's 'Big Read' project: *The Private Joys of Nnenna Maloney*, by Okechukwu Nzelu. Kingston University also gave away copies of the book to all who requested this. Sharon Evans, Partnership Practice Consultant, also shared many examples of 'hidden' Black history, inspired by Lavinya Stennett, founder of [The Black Curriculum](#). To read the write up of this event and presentation, please click [here](#).
- The second event hosted in honour of Black History Month, was another 'Celebrating Black Voices' event in recognition of the importance of continuing to hold an important space to celebrate Black voices. In particular, we wished to celebrate the voices of two Black colleagues from our partner organisations who had contributed pieces to the book 'Outlanders – Hidden Narratives From Social Workers Of Colour'. The afternoon featured presentations from Sherifa Adenmosun (Independent Reviewing Officer, Sutton) and Anneta Pinto-Young (Workforce Development Consultant, Croydon) that included readings from their pieces in the book as well as background on why they had written what they had. This was again followed by a montage celebrating notable Black voices and time for open discussions. The response to the montage was very positive, with many attendees commenting how powerful and inspiring the videos and quotes were. To read the full write up of this event and access the montage and other resources, please click [here](#);
- A further [event is planned in May'22](#) to celebrate black talent from across the partnership and within the local area;
- Following the release of the [Annual ASYE report](#) by Skills for Care and a report by [Community Care](#), which highlighted an alarming disparity in the proportion of 'BAME' NQSWs failing their ASYE in comparison to their white counterparts, the TP Team completed collection and analysis of data on the ASYE pass/fail attainment gap between white and 'BAME' NQSWs from our partner



organisations to examine whether it reflected the national picture. Thankfully, this data did not mirror the national picture but we recognise that whilst this data is positive, overall, more needs to be done across all stages of a social worker's career to ensure that equal opportunities are available to all. Further requests for diversity data are planned for 2022-23 including scoping the diversity of the HEI final year cohort and their progression into the workforce, as well as looking at the diversity of PEs across the partnership;

- The TP's focus on supporting practitioner wellbeing and emotional resilience has continued. In November '21, as part of our Social Worker Wellbeing Continuous Improvement Fund bid, we hosted an '[Emotional Resilience & Wellbeing in Social Work Conference](#)' which was our first in person event since before the pandemic. The conference was reasonably well attended, with 40 signups and 25 attending. However, we did have capacity for 80 the vast majority of attendees came from only two partner agencies. The event involved various workshops for practitioners to attend including; a sound bath and desk yoga, as well as sessions from Self Care Psychology and Laughology. It was especially positive to see that most practitioners who attended stayed for the whole day and that there were two Principal Social Workers in attendance, role modelling the prioritisation of their own wellbeing;
- Wellbeing is an essential element, integrated throughout the TP's CPD provision. For example, the ASYE Assessor Training has a session dedicated to supporting the wellbeing and resilience of NQSWs and the Early Career Managers' Programme includes a day focusing on managers' own wellbeing and building resilient teams;
- A recent Continuous Improvement Fund bid to the DfE was also about supporting social worker wellbeing throughout their career. For more information on this project, see [2.5 income Generation](#);
- The TP's Twitter account continues to send weekly #WellbeingWednesday tweets which are always well received by followers and have played a significant role in increasing our reach on social media. See [2.6 Identity and Brand](#) for more information;
- Five research projects were taken forward in 2019; some practitioner led and others led by academic staff at KU but involving working closely with partner agencies. The pandemic unfortunately hampered progress, but three projects are progressing/have concluded:
 - Team Culture and the Impact on Staff Retention - being written up for publication
 - Using Outcome Measures in Child Protection Work - [published in the Child & Family Social Work Journal](#)
 - Social Workers' Experiences of Working with Self-Neglect - findings due to be presented in Autumn 2022
- In September 2021 Sharon Evans, TP Practice Consultant, established the Monthly Research Hub, with the aim of helping social workers from across the partnership to become more confident in critiquing, applying and getting involved in research. These hubs have been popular to date and in the future, there's potential for practitioners to be inspired to undertake a piece of their own research, and the Research Strategy Group will consider how best the TP/Employers/KU



can support practitioners wishing to do this. Due to demand and popularity, the hubs are currently running two sessions per month with a monthly theme in response to feedback from participants who said they would value having two chances to attend throughout the month;

- KU's Department of Social Work and Social Care's Seminar Series, delivering research and best practice guidance, has continued and through TP relationships these are reaching a wider audience. The most recent event was their annual Social Work and Social Care Conference on 16.3.22 – 'Social Work in a Global Context: international research and practice during the Covid-19 pandemic'. As well as a fantastic selection of speakers from across the world offering a range of reflections and perspectives on the pandemic in the morning, they also ran a number of workshops in the afternoon which demonstrated excellent partnership working, with 3 workshops facilitated by partner agencies:
 - 'Reflections on social work practice during the pandemic: changes, challenges, and surprises' by Anna Holland, NSPCC;
 - 'Voices from people with lived experiences; reflections on virtual and hybrid working in adult social care' by Marco Orlando and Ulrike Nebel, Kingston Adults.
 - 'Using digital tools in children's social care', by Lucy Roberts and Javed Hussain, Achieving for Children.
- Also as part of Social Work Week, the TP hosted its first ['Think Family' Conference](#), which was published as part of Social Work England's programme of events. The focus was on Attachment Throughout the Life Course. The event was well attended by practitioners from across the partnership and beyond and a further follow up event has been planned for June in response to requests from attendees;
- The TP also held its second annual social work celebration event and awards ceremony, ['For the Love of Social Work: A Celebration and Awards Ceremony'](#). The event celebrated the achievements of qualified social workers and social work students from across the Partnership, and promoted the brilliant work of those in the social work profession. All nominations were sent to a shortlisting team made up of People with Lived Experience, Workforce Development Leads, Principal Social Workers and University Academics who whittled them down to 11 Winners and 7 special mentions across 10 categories. These individuals were then presented with their 'award' by members of the Strategic Board and this was then followed up with an official certificate and voucher prize. The next time nominations open, it would be positive to see more nominations for practitioners in adult social work; the overwhelming majority of nominations originate from children and family social workers and two agencies didn't make any nominations at all despite frequent reminders and heavy promotion. The event was well attended with 55 practitioners and students in attendance. We were inundated with positive feedback after the event and will again be running a similar event in December 2022.

Impact/likely impact includes:

- Practitioners continue to value the benefit of training with individuals



from other organisations, evidenced in the stakeholder survey:

"I think it is fantastic that there is so much 'joined up' thinking and work in relation to CPD-the CPD Passport, for example. Not only will this have resource implications, but opportunities to work /learn with others in other organisations has to be a bonus."

- As the above feedback indicates, it is also a much more cost effective way of offering certain learning and development opportunities at a time when local authority budgets are particularly stretched;
- Overall, it is hoped that implementation of various workforce development initiatives, such as the EPD Framework, Early Career Managers' Programme and the Career Pathways & CPD Framework, will influence retention of social workers, which is something we are looking to track locally from 2022-23;
- Whilst the individual online course evaluations of the EPD Framework demonstrate positive feedback, a full evaluation of the framework is due to take place in May 2022, with a plan to hold focus groups with both year 2 and 3 EPD social workers, to ascertain the early perceived impact on their own development. In the longer term, the full benefit and impact of the EPD framework will be made apparent through improvement in the retention of those social workers who have completed the full 2 year programme of the framework. Ultimately, we hope to improve retention rates of EPD social workers, reducing the number of leavers within two-three years post qualifying and creating a more stable workforce, however it is recognised that there are many factors and variables that influence a social worker's desire to stay in the profession;
- Effective supervision and supportive management has frequently been cited as a factor influencing a social worker's desire to stay in the profession and whilst many agencies have offered corporate management training programmes or supervision training, until recently there lacked a social work specific management programme for new social work managers. Therefore the programme developed collaboratively across the TP, which included seeking feedback from current managers, aims to give managers the skills they need to support the practitioners in their teams;
- Linked to the retention of NQSW is the development of the ASYE Assessors who are supporting and evaluating them, to ensure that they are able to fulfil the requirements of the role. Ensuring that ASYE Assessors have received appropriate training in providing ample support, effective professional supervision and holistic assessment will be paramount to the success of the programme, as well as the retention of NQSWs;
- Feedback from the stakeholder survey, demonstrated that practitioners value the breadth of CPD opportunities available and in particular feel as though the TP provides an invaluable outlet to discuss anti-racism:

"The anti racism and wellbeing activities have been fantastic. They provided a safe space for discussion and reflection that would not otherwise have been possible."



- It is anticipated that ultimately, all efforts that have been made to support social worker wellbeing and highlight the importance of self care will contribute to staff retention in the longer term. It is however recognised that there are many contributing and deeper organisational factors that contribute to social worker wellbeing and their desire to stay in the profession, which are difficult to influence. Feedback from the wellbeing conference was extremely positive, with 100% of attendees saying that it 'fully' or 'exceeded' expectations and that the conference was great at reminding them to look after and prioritise their wellbeing and the importance of doing so;
- It is hoped that the development of the research hub will be a positive outlet for social workers to network with colleagues from other organisations, whilst giving them the opportunity to challenge their professional curiosity and develop their skill sets. Feedback from the hubs so far has demonstrated that social workers value this opportunity and all who completed the evaluation stated that they felt more confident in critiquing research after attending the hub;
- Social work as a profession is scarcely praised and often overlooked for commendations in favour of other frontline service roles. This was more apparent than ever throughout the pandemic, when NHS workers and other frontline roles were gaining recognition but social work appeared to be the 'forgotten' profession. The annual Social Work awards ceremony was therefore an opportunity to celebrate the many achievements of practitioners from across the partnership and the impact of this on those who attended was apparent, as feedback demonstrated;

"I felt honoured to be part of it and to have received a special mention".

2.5 Income Generation

Objectives from [2020-24 Business Plan](#):

- Seek out further opportunities for generating an income, through;
 - Responding to invitations to tender (ITTs) released within the sector
 - External consultancy work for the DfE, other Teaching Partnerships and external organisations
 - Internal consultancy work for partner agencies
 - Selling courses and events externally

Activities to date:

Continuous Improvement Fund Projects

- In August'21 the TP received an offer from the DfE to submit bids for



their Continuous Improvement Fund. The total fund available was open to all Teaching Partnerships in the national network (at that time 24 in total) with a maximum amount available of £900k. The criteria was that any TP could submit multiple bids, with a maximum value of £50k per bid. There was a very tight turnaround on these, from the point of application criteria being released by the DfE (July) and the deadline for applications to be submitted (August) however, the TP was able to submit x5 bids; Coaching & Mentoring Research, Social Worker Wellbeing, Trauma Informed Organisations, Social Work Perception Change and Anti-Racist Practice Lead Post. The TP was successful in four out of five of these bids, with the exception being the Social Work Perception Change project, due to DfE limitations regarding funding advertising. The total grant awarded for the successful bids was £125,370, equivalent to 14% of the total fund available. Proportionately, we could have expected around 4% of the total available, so this was an achievement in itself. Further information and current progress on each project can be found below;

Research on the Impact of Coaching & Mentoring

- This project is a collaboration with Kingston University and is based on research carried out by Suzanne Triggs, using coaching as an intervention with people with lived experience. The Research entitled 'Making a Difference Again: How Using Coaching Enabled Children's Social Workers to Enhance their Practice & Fulfil their Vocational Aspiration's was published by Suzanne Triggs in the International Journal of Evidence in May 2020 and demonstrated that social workers engaging in coaching provided a means for social workers to occupy an emotional space which was positive, hopeful and motivating to them. This project sought to evidence this further, through training social workers in coaching methods and then researching the impact on their practice, job satisfaction, as well as on people of lived experience that had been coached by these social workers, in the process of interventions with their families. By evidencing the positive impact of coaching on social workers and those with whom they work, it is hoped that there will be a strong case for continuing to upskill, develop and nurture coaches and encourage coaching organisations who can demonstrate that this approach means their social workers enjoy greater job satisfaction and a higher motivation to succeed in work;
- 16 social workers across partner organisations were sponsored to complete a Level 7 post qualifying module in coaching and mentoring (a module that was co-developed by the Partnership back in 2018). The Mentoring, Coaching and Advanced Assessment of Professional Practice 30 credit module delivered by Kingston University was already a popular module, undertaken by approximately 20 practitioners across the partnership each year since 2019. The 16 social workers currently enrolled on the programme all are finding the course valuable and enjoyable. Due to delays with Ethics, we cannot report on the findings from the research at this stage, however we are fast tracking the Ethical approval process and have used this time to explore how we can expand the group of potential participants. We made the decision



to invite those who have previously undertaken the same post qualifying module at the University to participate in the research, making the research group larger and the research findings more meaningful. Focus groups with research participants will commence once Ethical approval has been granted, followed by Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis and write up of the research, after which findings will be presented to the Partnership.

Trauma Informed Organisations

- The social work workforce is affected by trauma, through their own personal experience and, in many cases, in the course of their work. We recognise the importance of enabling appropriate training and support to keep the workforce well, and respond as effectively as possible to people they are there to help. We were therefore committed to developing a trauma-informed workforce across our Teaching Partnership. We know that there are simple changes in environment, policies or personal interactions that people can make to become trauma informed and responsive, supporting people affected by trauma, giving people choice, empowerment and safety, building trust and working in collaboration. In order to achieve this, the objective of this project was to set up the infrastructure to enable us to roll out core Trauma Informed Practice training at Level 1 - Trauma Aware - to all qualified social workers within our Teaching Partnership through a train the trainer model. The training was inspired by the Framework developed by the Scottish Government, led by NHS Education for Scotland. In order to achieve our aims, we commissioned Interface to help us to deliver this Trauma Informed Practice training and took a three-phase approach to this training rollout;
- We first delivered a separate 'Trauma Informed Practice' Leadership course for senior leaders within our Partnership, as we recognised that leadership commitment, endorsement and drive would be essential to the success of this going forward in terms of them supporting/challenging the workforce to embed learning and knowledge into practice. The 'Trauma Informed Practice Senior Leadership Awareness' training was delivered to 12 senior leaders from across all partnership organisations, over 3 half day sessions. The feedback from this was extremely positive and senior leaders who attended the sessions reported how they planned to use their learning and embed Trauma Informed Practice into their organisations:

" Incorporate into written policies, meet with team to discuss key tips to use with practice - assessments."

"Plan to facilitate a presentation on the topic to managers within the department. "

"Incorporate into appraisals and develop new strategies"

- Following the completion of the Leadership training, we asked



primary partner organisations to identify 15 practitioners with appropriate confidence and skills, who would be passionate trainers, and would be happy to complete the train the trainer programme and lead on this rollout across our partnership. The 15 identified practitioners then undertook a 'Train the Trainer' programme, delivered by Interface, consisting of 6 half day sessions. This training provided them with the skills to deliver high quality training and the knowledge to be able to deliver the Trauma Informed Practice training material across the South West London & Surrey region to future cohorts of practitioners;

- The feedback from those who completed the train the trainer programme was largely positive, with delegates reporting on what they enjoyed the most about the programme:

"Definitely the opportunity to link with colleagues from other agencies across the partnership and a mix of childrens and adult's services. Really knowledgeable and engaging trainers too."

- The 15 upskilled 'trauma champions' also completed delivery of the core Trauma Informed Practice training to 3 'pilot' mixed cohorts of practitioners across the partnership, alongside Interface facilitators, before they were asked to begin delivering the training independently (in pairs);
- Unfortunately, three upskilled facilitators withdrew/opted out of future delivery for reasons out of our control, such as workload pressures and leaving their organisation. There was also dissatisfaction amongst some members of the group upon learning what the long term commitment would be for roll out, with some unsure they had the capacity to deliver this. The original estimated time commitment had increased for a number of reasons; facilitators withdrawing, uneven numbers of facilitators with children and family / adults background, requests for smaller cohort sizes, requests to increase the duration of the training etc. To address this, we made the decision to revert to the original estimated time commitment and run another Train the Trainer programme to upskill additional facilitators;
- Currently, there are 12 remaining upskilled facilitators who are committed to continue rolling out this training to future cohorts across the partnership and 8 more facilitators due to be upskilled in May as part of the second Train the Trainer programme;
- There are 13 cohorts scheduled to run in the next 8 months, being delivered by the 12 upskilled facilitators, which will enable 260 practitioners to access the training. More cohort dates from some upskilled facilitators are pending and additional cohorts will also be delivered by the 10 new facilitators once upskilled, so it is anticipated that this number will be far greater. We aim to deliver to all qualified social workers (c.1000) within the partnership by December 2023;

Social Worker Wellbeing

- The Social Worker Wellbeing project addressed the need for an improved social worker wellbeing strategy within social work employers, with the Covid-19 pandemic introducing additional challenges. In 2017/2018, UK Bath Spa University, Social Workers Union



(SWU) and the British Association of Social Workers (BASW) undertook research into social worker wellbeing across the UK and their findings (published in November 2020) showed that coordinated action is needed to improve social workers' working conditions across the UK to enable social workers to thrive, to prevent burn out and loss of staff, particularly from statutory roles;

- Recent research by the British Medical Association (May, 2020) also recommended that wellbeing support must be inclusive, accessible, and meet the needs of users. Although the research was carried out on the medical workforce, the findings are still applicable more generally. As such, this project used a varied approach, including events, training days, a library of resources and eLearning, to allow better equity of access;
- In November '21 some of the funding was used to host an in person 'Emotional Resilience & Wellbeing in Social Work Conference' at Kingston University. The conference was reasonably well attended, with 40 signups and 25 attending. However, the vast majority of attendees came from only two partner agencies. The event involved various workshops for practitioners to attend including; a sound bath and desk yoga, as well as sessions from Self Care Psychology and Laughology. It was especially positive to see that most practitioners who attended stayed for the whole day and that there were two Principal Social Workers in attendance, role modelling the prioritisation of their own wellbeing. Feedback was extremely positive, with practitioners valuing a dedicated day out of the office to address their wellbeing;
- Elearning modules developed by Self Care Psychology are currently undergoing evaluation with a test group of social workers from Merton Adults. The target audience will primarily be Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSWs) and/or final year social work students from Kingston University, incorporating feedback from the Steering Committee that reaching social workers early on in their career will support them to embed good practice around wellbeing and ensure that they continue to practice good self care throughout their career;
- A password protected section was created on the Teaching Partnership website to house a library of resources on wellbeing for practitioners to be able to access. Some resources for the library have been provided in kind by colleagues within the partnership agencies and team, which meant that some of the funding was able to be redirected to purchase additional resources for partners. However, not as many resources were able to be obtained as originally intended, so the launch of the library has had to be delayed.

Anti Racist Practice Lead

- The Anti Racist Practice Lead project addressed the need for partner organisations to embed anti-racist practice with children, families and adults through a dedicated Anti Racist Practice Lead post. The post-holder was to be employed by a local authority within the Partnership, supporting effective anti-oppressive practice within all social care teams across the region and our university partner. Ethnic minority staff are underrepresented in our workforce, especially in



senior management roles, and therefore the post holder was to work closely with colleagues in the respective 'BAME' networks that operate within each partner organisation, HR colleagues and the Partnership's Steering Committee and Strategic Board to increase opportunities for inclusive recruitment processes and progression within the Partnership;

- A similar post previously existed in Sutton so to expedite recruitment, the job description was updated to reflect Partnership work and the role was advertised internally within the borough, with Sutton identified as the employer of this postholder. Unfortunately, despite two rounds of recruitment, including inviting applications from external candidates, we were still unsuccessful. As such, an alternative model was proposed by Sutton, where an existing employee would have a proportion of their contracted hours ring-fenced to undertake the responsibilities of the role. As a result, an individual was identified from within the London Borough of Sutton to take some of the functions of the post forward on a part time basis, 2 days a week. Andrea Bryant is currently a Service Manager within Sutton Children and she will now also be their Diversity & Inclusion Lead. Whilst Andrea is employed by Sutton, she will work on initiatives and the development of resources that will benefit the whole Teaching Partnership;
- A delay in recruiting to the post, in turn delayed the project outcomes which had to be completed by the end of the funded period (March'22) in order to claim the full grant amount. Although a creative approach was used to achieve some of the objectives prior to the post holder starting, as a significant proportion of the funding was requested for salary costs until March 2022, we relinquished more than 50% of the grant we were initially awarded;
- Nonetheless, now that the post holder has started, in a very short time they have established a Steering Group of 20 individuals committed to taking the lead on a variety of different initiatives and between them they have agreed a significant number of additional aims and objectives, which will be the basis of an implementation plan for the next 12 months. Resources that have already been developed by Sutton will be shared across the TP soon, including:
 - Response to Racism Guidance
 - Anti-Racist Language & Terminology Guidance
 - Anti-Racism Training (training spec has been shared with partners who can contact the TP Team to request this training)

Selling CPD Provision Externally

- In September'21 the Strategic Board agreed that places on the TP CPD provision could be sold to external organisations, as a means of income generation. It was agreed that on average, this would be capped at around 20% of the total available provision on each course, to ensure that primary partners were not disadvantaged. However, on occasions where there was low uptake from partner agencies, this could be increased. It was therefore agreed that there would be an element of flexibility on the percentage of places sold;
- A selection of courses were identified and a separate flyer for external agencies was produced and uploaded to the National TP



Network Sharepoint Site. This peaked the interest of a newly formed Teaching Partnership, Central Bedfordshire who had yet to establish their own CPD provision and were impressed by the breadth of available opportunities in our offer;

- To date, the Central Bedfordshire TP has bulk purchased almost £10,000 worth of CPD training opportunities for their social work staff and it is hoped that they will continue to invest across 2022-23.

Step Up To Social Work

- Alongside Kingston University, London Borough of Sutton and Achieving For Children, the TP Team successfully bid for cohort 7 of the Step Up to Social Work Programme, securing funding of £48,000 for the administration and coordination of the programme which was provided by the TP Team in order to retain this funding and reinvest into the TP. We will again look to submit applications for cohort 8 in 2023;

Impact/likely impact includes:

- The Coaching & Mentoring project will explore the impact on social workers who completed the Coaching & Mentoring PQ course in relation to their current role. We will be exploring wellbeing and job satisfaction and any impact the course has made on their decision to stay within the profession. We will also draw out any evidence that indicates how coaching has had a positive impact on people with lived experience through the social worker's intervention with their clients. Findings from the research will confirm whether investment in coaching is worthwhile for employers in addressing their retention challenges. It will also highlight the impact of investing in PQ more generally, which will support our strategy for ongoing continuing professional development, in particular investment in credit bearing academic courses. The research findings will be shared across the partnership and utilised to take the coaching project forward and support partner agencies to become coaching organisations;
- Following the completion of the Train the Trainer programme, we now have the capacity and the infrastructure to deliver this Level 1 Trauma Informed Practice training to all practitioners across our partnership by December 2023;
- To date, 41 individuals have completed the core Trauma Informed Practice training and 15 have completed the Train the Trainer programme. We currently have training dates in place from our facilitators, to deliver a further 13 cohorts across the next 8 months, which will enable 260 practitioners to access the training by December 2022. Facilitators are committed to delivering this training to all qualified social workers within the partnership by December 2023;
- It is hoped that the the train the trainer approach we have taken will ensure that this expertise is both embedded directly into organisations and retained in-house so that students and practitioners continue to benefit from the training and will be better supported by the organisations within which they are on placement / employed in to respond to trauma and the impact of trauma;



- It is expected that social workers and students who have/will have accessed the wellbeing provision and have been able to improve their knowledge, understanding and prioritisation of wellbeing, will be more effective in their roles. This is corroborated by feedback from the wellbeing conference:

"I am no use to others if I don't take care of me".

"[it is important] to take care of myself so I can be an effective practitioner".

- It is hoped that the Diversity & Inclusion Lead will address and improve inequalities in employment and skills that act as a barrier to progression through the workforce for student social workers, and the wider social work workforce, with a disability and / or from a Black, Asian, or minority ethnic group and /or from an under-represented group. The post holder has already established a Steering Group of 20 individuals, who are committed to taking the lead on a variety of different initiatives, which will be the basis of an implementation plan for the next 12 months. Each targeted project will have its own set of KPIs and progress will be shared quarterly with senior management in London Borough of Sutton and with our Strategic Board before feeding into our next annual report in April 2023;
- To date, we have generated approximately £30,000 in income since March 2021 by selling our CPD provision externally and aim to improve this throughout 2022-23 by continuing to promote our offer to external agencies. The most lucrative course is the popular Early Career Manager's programme which generates a significant income for the TP and there is currently interest from a couple of external local authorities in commissioning this in 2022;
- The Step Up to Social Work programme also generated significant income for the TP, as well as for the HEI and local authority partners;
- It is important that we continue to seek avenues for additional income, as part of our long term strategy, linked to our Business / Sustainability Plan to become more self-sufficient should DfE funding become unavailable in the future. The primary partner agencies are committed to investing an annual membership fee to sustain the TP, and we do rely on this funding to deliver the current level of output, however this alone is not sufficient to resource the TP and so we proactively seek to identify other means of income generation and / or cost savings.

2.6 Identity, Brand and Reputation

Objectives for 2021-23:

- Share progression, development and network opportunities, and resources
- Develop/promote a regional identity via social media and other platforms
- Promote achievements both internally and to key regulatory and



- professional bodies e.g. SWE, BASW
- Be innovative, creative and ambitious, positioning the TP as a 'trailblazer'

Activities to date:

- Maintained the 'Developing Together' brand, utilising logos and sharing of key documentation both internally and externally;
- Continued to develop the TP website which is host to resources, guidance, advice, adverts and events
- Released regular newsletters ensuring those within the region stay up to date on the key activities and ways to get involved with the TP and other organisations. You can find all our newsletters to date on the website here;
- Maintained a strong and active social media presence on Twitter connecting the TP and promoting social work practice, research and development at a local and national level;
- Maintained a strong presence at external events and with national networks, attending the DfE's National Teaching Partnership Network meetings without fail and have also recently established a Pan-London Network for London TP's to collaborate and share on specific initiatives relevant to the region, with three meetings held to date;
- We have been invited to attend the Social Work Teaching Partnership Advisory Group (SWTPAG) led by the DfE, with 6 other Teaching Partnerships. One key output to date from this panel, being the decision to lobby the government with a proposal to implement national Social Work Agency Rules, based on the (seemingly) successful NHS Agency Rules. The full proposal, jointly written with Cheshire & Merseyside TP can be found here;
- Contributed to Social Work England's Programme of Events as part of Social Work Week, delivering an in-person conference on 'Attachment Theory Throughout the Lifecourse', with key experts in the field delivering sessions to 39 practitioners;
- In 2021, the TP was selected by the DfE to establish, manage and quality assure a new National Teaching Partnership document library, which has been set up on Sharepoint. This generated an income from the TP and positions us as a reliable and trusted body, the DfE have since confirmed their intention to fund this initiative for a further year as they recognise that the platform provides significant value for Teaching Partnerships;
- Held our annual social work celebration event and awards ceremony, 'For the Love of Social Work: A Celebration and Awards Ceremony'. The event was well attended with over 55 practitioners and students in attendance. The event celebrated the achievements of qualified social workers and social work students from across the Partnership, and promoted the brilliant work of those in the social work profession. We were inundated with positive feedback after the event and will again be running this celebration event in December this year;
- The TP team took part in cross-TP Action Learning Sets, a Continuous Improvement Fund project submitted by another TP. It was an excellent opportunity for TPs to collaborate, share learning and



support each other to address 'wicked problems' and also provided an opportunity to highlight our TP as a key player and contributor within the national network;

- The TP has used its existing infrastructure and professional relationships to successfully bid for new work, for example the Step Up to Social Work Programme, and will look to submit a further application for cohort 8 in 2023;
- Shared information with key professional and regulatory bodies and networks to promote our achievements. For example, we were asked by Social Work England to write a blog about our experience of developing our popular Early Career Manager's programme - you can read the full blog [here](#);
- The TP was also invited to present the Career Pathways & CPD Framework and the Early Professional Development Framework to the Social Work Education Network, chaired by Skills for Care. Following this we met with a number of other TPs and local authorities to share more details. Most recently, we were asked to meet with the Scottish government in regards to these frameworks; they were keen to understand more about the Frameworks as they begin to develop a framework and pathway of their own.

Impact includes:

- Through promoting our work nationally, through Skills for Care, Social Work England, the National Teaching Partnership Network and SWTPAG, both chaired by the DfE, as well as the pan-London TP Network, we hope to see a positive effect on our reputation in the sector, being seen as trailblazers and further solidifying our identity and brand. Social Work England advised in May 2021 that they were not aware of any other examples of such detailed frameworks being developed in the sector, like the ones we have produced for Career Pathways & CPD and Early Professional Development;
- We know from website analytics that PEs are regularly using the TP branded resources and tools which are shared at the workshops and available through the website, e.g. the [PCF Toolkit](#), with this page alone averaging almost 2,000 visits in the last year, up 123% on the year previous. This evidences that the resources are in demand and useful to staff;
- Website analytics also tell us that the website as a whole is an extremely rich source of information and resources for those in the sector, with over 26,000 visits in the last year, and this figure is increasing each month;
- Prospective students and employees can see the joined up approach across the region and may factor this into their decision when choosing which academic institution to study at or which region to work in;
- The number of followers and supporters on our Twitter account increases steadily each month. Since the last annual progress report, the [Twitter](#) following has increased by 29%, going from 668 to 860 followers. We also have some high-profile supporters through the relationships we have developed. Please see a table below demonstrating the reach of our Twitter account in comparison to other SWTPs. We aim to reach over 1000 followers by the end of this



year:

SWTP	Joined Twitter	Followers
Developing Together	Jun 2018	860
Yorkshire Urban and Rural	Jun 2017	999
Suffolk & Norfolk	Oct 2017	929
South East London	Jul 2015	734
Leeds and Wakefield	Jun 2017	683
Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire	Oct 2017	759
North London	Jul 2017	577
Hertfordshire	Nov 2018	418
North East London	Sept 2018	490
Greater Cambs	Jan 2019	345
West Midlands	Jan 2018	2608
Cheshire and Merseyside	Apr 2019	199
Greater Lancashire	May 2019	237

4. Future Ambitions

The first Visioning Day in January 2020 provided a clear direction for the TP for 2020-22, and the Strategic Board has since attended a similar event each year to date, in order to refresh priorities as needed and respond to emerging themes/challenges within the sector. The 2022 Visioning Day was held at the start of May, and the existing Logic Model will be updated in due course to reflect relevant changes. As expected, the key focus was on addressing the recruitment and retention crisis faced by partner agencies, as well as new developments in the areas of equality, diversity and inclusion, research in practice, and post qualifying education. Some new areas of focus for the coming year/s are likely to be (not an exhaustive list):

- Enhancing the strategy for research in practice and supporting partners to become 'learning organisations';



- Developing our aspiring and experienced managers;
- Further promoting the coaching and mentoring scheme to increase awareness;
- Building on and growing the current student internship scheme;
- Conducting a skills gap analysis to understand more about the learning and development needs of practitioners across the TP;
- Strategising to create more roles for social workers who would like to progress, not limited to linear progression through management, with new job titles, responsibilities and reward package
- Pursuing the proposal to implement national 'Social Work Agency Rules' with the DfE
- Developing a TP or Pan-London jobs site
- Enhancing our Think Family approach, supporting partners to understand more about each other's business and breaking down barriers
- Strengthening the promotion and marketing of KU's new post qualifying offer, raising awareness of what is available to practitioners who want to develop
- Liaising with another TP working with Research in Practice (RiP) to adapt the Practice Supervisor Development Programme (PSDP) for aspiring black social work managers
- Supporting partners to meet the requirements of the new Care Quality Commission's Inspection Framework
- ASYE development, including aligning practices across the TP and exploring what more can be done to support ASYE Assessors:

'I would like the opportunity to join a support group for assessors as I believe this would be of great benefit to my learning and development'

5. Added Value of the Teaching Partnership

- The Teaching Partnership has enhanced collaborative working between all member agencies. Feedback from the Stakeholder Survey suggests that there is a common understanding of the purpose of the partnership and how improved relationships, appreciation of roles and collaborative working can enhance the development of the social work profession;
- The Teaching Partnership approach and stretch criteria have brought a new focus and stimulated a new way of working in comparison to previous working arrangements (pre-2018) which were less effective in agreeing, sharing and achieving improvements. The culture of the partnership has progressed and most stakeholders are convinced by the value of a new way of partnership working;
- The Teaching Partnership Team posts have supported the programme with a range of activities, including but not limited to; planning and delivering training, planning events and activities, driving forward ad hoc projects, updating processes, monitoring data and progress on key metrics, communication, evaluations, clarifying expectations and setting up specific groups. The roles have been critical to facilitating pace, communication, stakeholder engagement and accountability. The national evaluation of TPs noted having a central function as one of their key transferable



lessons.

6. Challenges and risks

- There are challenges to the impact and sustainability of the Teaching Partnership at both a national and local level. At a national level, there remains a policy and economic context that could restrict the positive effect of the TP or divert its attention - e.g continued poor financial climate, negative national media around social work, conflicting national policy and the introduction of new regulations and frameworks;
- At a partnership level, restructures of services and lack of resourcing can impact on key staff involved in the partnership which affects the continuity and tests the depth of commitment to the whole partnership;
- There is a risk that the DfE's commitment to continuing to fund SWTPs might wane, as well as potential reprioritisation of government resources leading to lack of funding available for SWTPs. However since the inception of our TP in 2018, the DfE has committed to funding SWTPs three further times with sustainability funding and invited applications to access additional funding on three separate occasions. The likelihood of this risk is therefore diminishing and the DfE has made apparent their ongoing commitment and desire to establish longer-term funding solutions for TPs to aid in sustainability and longer term planning;
- Whilst continued funding from the DfE is paramount, the ongoing financial commitment of primary partners is also key in achieving long term sustainability and ultimately ensuring less reliance on the funding from DfE, should this become unavailable in the future. To date, primary partners have made financial contributions to the TP in 2020, 2021 and 2022 and the number of primary partners increased from 9 to 11 in 2022;
- Effectiveness was initially impacted by the number of partners, 14 in total, signed up to the Partnership which can prolong decision making and the progress of activities, especially if engagement is inconsistent. However, the TP is affected to a much lesser extent by inconsistent levels of engagement since the move to a two-tier membership structure in early 2020 and it is likely that this governance structure, along with partner investment helps to solidify and incentivise engagement from partners;

7. Recommendations

This report has generated the following recommendations:

- The two-tier membership structure should continue. There are many moving parts to the programme and numerous activities in flight at any one time and the current arrangements are proving to work well in terms of communication, understanding, engagement and



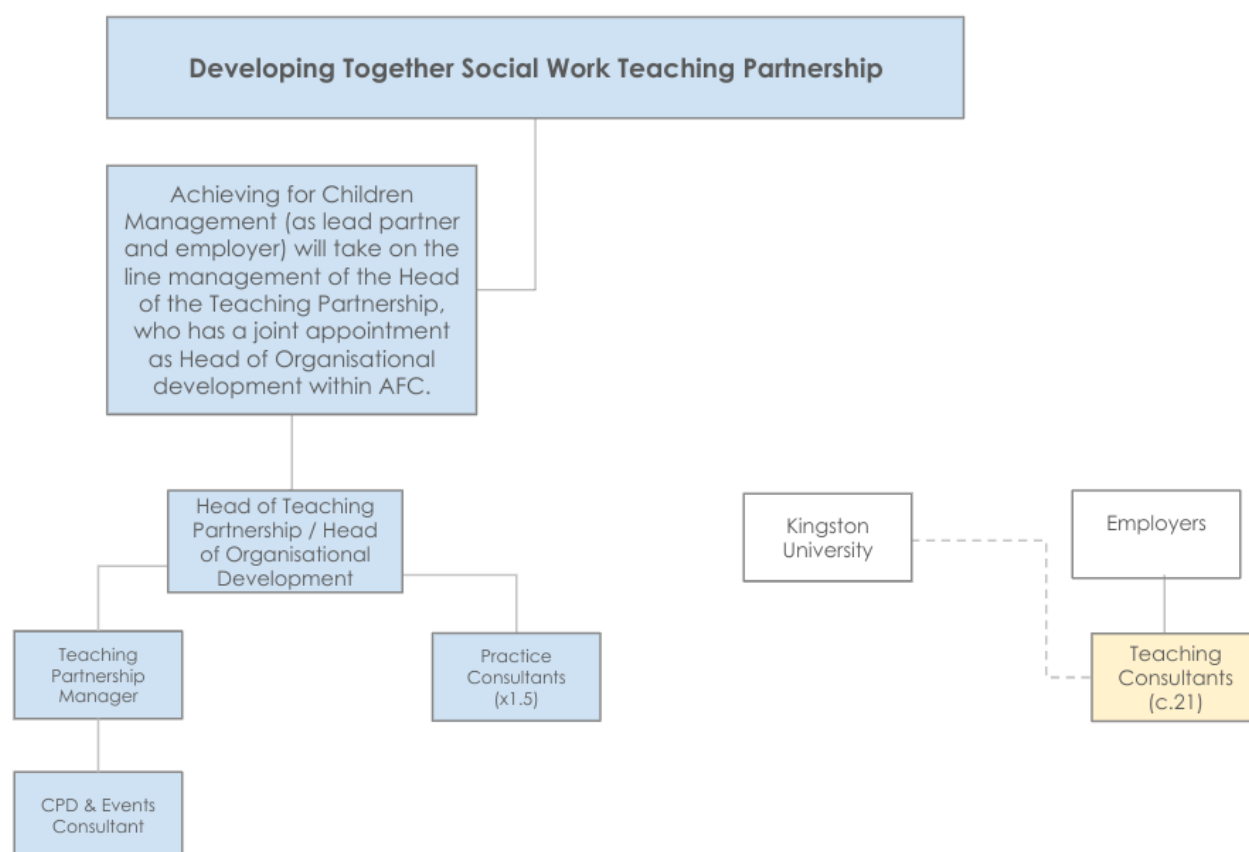
decision making;

- In light of the recent confirmation that the DfE will provide further funding for the National SWTP Programme, those agencies who pay an annual membership fee should use this report as a basis for reviewing their return on investment and identifying their own savings that have resulted from the TP. Even with the DfE funding and the independent income that the TP generates, it would not be possible to sustain the TP beyond March 2023 in its current form without this contribution;
- All primary partner agencies (Achieving for Children, Croydon Adults, Kingston Adults, Merton Children, Merton Adults, Sutton Children, Sutton Adults, Wandsworth Children, NSPCC, Welcare and Kingston University) should attend the annual Visioning Day, where future priorities are agreed. It is also essential for a consistent senior leader from within each agency to attend the quarterly Strategic Board;
- The TP should continue to take advantage of how accustomed those across the TP have become to working virtually, moving the majority of governance meetings online to enable maximum attendance and reduce the administrative burden on partners. This should also be extended to the CPD offer, taking a blended approach to learning, with a mixture of online and face to face provision;
- The TP should further build on engaging with and sharing information with key professional and regulatory bodies and networks to promote its achievements and communicate future priorities within the sector.
- The TP should continue to actively seek out opportunities that will provide additional income, to ensure the sustainability of the partnership and less reliance on the DfE funding should this cease to be available in the future.



Appendix 1: Organisational Structure

Organisational Structure





Appendix 2: Logic Model 2021-23





Appendix 3: EPD Handbook Contents Page



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Appendix 4: Annual Learning & Development Report

Below is an overview of bookings and attendance both overall and by partner, where this data was available. The Eventbrite signup form for bookings was amended based on the previous year's recommendations to have a drop down list of partners, as opposed to a free text response, so the data is more accurate for partners this year. Please note that this table covers sessions that took bookings via Eventbrite, and not those that were by invitation only. To view the full Annual Learning & Development report, please visit our [website](#).

	Total no. of Bookings	Total attendance	Total non-attendance	% attendance	% non-attendance	% cancelled	% no shows
Overall							
	1382	796	586	57.60%	42.40%	8.61%	31.48%
By Partner							
Achieving for Children	117	70	47	59.83%	40.17%	9.40%	24.79%
Croydon Adults	174	105	69	60.34%	39.66%	4.60%	32.18%
Croydon Children's	58	33	25	56.90%	43.10%	17.24%	25.86%
Central Bedfordshire TP	52	30	22	57.69%	42.31%	9.62%	30.77%
Kingston Adults	108	77	31	71.30%	28.70%	8.33%	20.37%
Kingston University	97	41	56	42.27%	57.73%	7.22%	46.39%
Merton Adults	54	35	19	64.81%	35.19%	1.85%	33.33%
Merton Children's	36	21	15	58.33%	41.67%	5.56%	33.33%
NSPCC	52	29	23	55.77%	44.23%	17.31%	25.00%
Surrey Children's Services	105	55	50	52.38%	47.62%	5.71%	40.95%
Sutton Children's	201	123	78	61.19%	38.81%	8.46%	27.36%



Sutton Adults	82	53	29	64.63%	35.37%	8.54%	24.39%
Wandsworth Children's	78	38	40	48.72%	51.28%	10.26%	39.74%
Welcare	19	15	4	78.95%	21.05%	10.53%	10.53%
Teaching Partnership	10	10	0	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Other	129	58	71	44.96%	55.04%	10.08%	35.66%
Unknown	10	3	7	30.00%	70.00%	0.00%	70.00%

Table 1 - bookings and attendance by partner