

BUILDING TRUST ACROSS THE SYSTEM

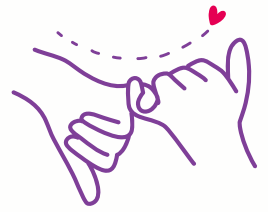
Thanks for joining us for our first How & Why Hub! We hope you enjoyed the discussion and found it a useful time to reflect. Your input helps us gather valuable insight and put learning into action, helping inform practice, strategy, and investment.

SESSION THEMES: WHAT TRUST LOOKS LIKE

- ✓ **Trust is structural:**
It governs speed of collaboration, openness about problems, and willingness to share risk. In high-trust spaces, partners step into shared work even when the path is unclear; in low-trust spaces, they protect silos.
- ✓ **Built through small, consistent behaviours:**
Following through on promises; acknowledging mistakes; early honesty; quick, respectful check-ins (emails/calls); and reliable delivery even for one attendee.
- ✓ **Psychological safety enables creativity:**
Vulnerability (admitting when things went wrong) creates a safe climate where people take risks and explore new ideas.
- ✓ **Trust operates at multiple layers:**
Personal relationships (often faster to build) vs organisational trust (can lag or be uneven across departments). Aligning these layers matters.
- ✓ **Trust is fragile:**
It takes work to build and can be set back quickly by overpromising, failing to follow through, or when people change roles. Sustainability and consistent delivery are critical.

THE INGREDIENTS OF TRUST

- **Vulnerability & honesty** (admit wrong turns early)
- **Reliability & consistency** (deliver even for one attendee; have contingencies)
- **Responsiveness** (quick emails/calls; visible action on feedback)
- **Listening before acting** (context first; design with, not for)
- **Shared ownership** (co-prioritise; invite partners/residents to shape)
- **Relationship density** (know capabilities; be present in the place)
- **Tailored communication & channels** (letters vs social; use word-of-mouth)
- **Sustainability beyond individuals** (team-level trust, backup plans)
- **Nuanced reputational stance** (be transparent, but avoid triggering distrust)



HOW TRUST WORKS IN PLACE

“WE OFTEN ARE THE COMMUNITY”

Community anchoring & place-based work: Trust diminishes with distance; place-based delivery strengthens trust and connection.

SOME EXAMPLES OF TRUST IN PRACTICE:



TENDRING COMMUNITY PLAY & RIDE SCHEME

Established Trust: Built through prior collaborations (Active Essex, Pedal Power, partners).

Outcome: Secured £2.5m for inclusive play/ride (pump track, loop, new play) + funding to activate sessions post-build, trust unlocked investment and sustainability.



HAF CLUBS “PICK UP THE PHONE” RELIABILITY

Mechanism: Relationship officers “show up”, deliver, and stick to commitments; when deadlines are tight, trusted partners respond quickly.

Outcome: Rapid coordination under pressure; reduced friction due to credibility.



TRUST LINKS SCALING PLACE LEARNING

Mechanism: Took learning (on how to earn trust locally) into new geographies; started by building relationships first.

Outcome: Smoother launches and stronger early buy-in through transferred trust practices.



INCLUSIVE ACCESS WITH SEND FAMILIES

Challenge: Policy/operational changes hindered leisure access for a mum and her son.

Mechanism: Consistent listening, holistic support (beyond the immediate barrier), and transparent progress updates sustained trust even when outcomes weren't yet ideal.

Outcome: New opportunities explored via trust-based engagement.


We'd love for you to join us for our next conversation.
To find out more about our How & Why Hub approach or to be invited to an upcoming session contact Rachel Newby: rachel.newby@essex.gov.uk

UPCOMING THEMES



We'd love for you to join us for our next conversation!

Our next topic is “**Insight to Action**” where we will delve into how data, evaluation, and community insight are being used to adapt local delivery. We will explore how places gather, interpret, and use insight, consider where feedback loops work well, and how evidence supports local decision making.

Building Trust Across Systems	_____	04 DEC 25 
From Insight To Action	_____	04 JUN 26
Community Voice and Capacity	_____	03 SEP 26
Embedding and Sustaining Change	_____	TBC

WHAT IS A 'HOW & WHY HUB'?

A regular learning conversation facilitated by the Evaluation team and designed to help Active Essex and local partners make sense of how and why change is happening in Essex. The aim is to strengthen collective understanding of what enables progress and where barriers remain and support ongoing learning across Essex. Expect open discussion as a group and smaller, more focused break out conversations.

WHO CAN JOIN?

Hubs include a diverse mix of strategic, operational, and community-level voices to ensure learning is grounded in a range of perspectives. e.g. Relationship managers, Place Leads, Local Authority Officers, VCSE Partners, and Health and Care Partners. Contact Rachel Newby to hear more or get involved: rachel.newby@essex.gov.uk

WHAT DO WE DO WITH THE INFORMATION WE GATHER?

Insights from How and Why discussions help feed real-time qualitative evidence into our reporting cycles throughout the year and support a rhythm of learning-in-action, ensuring insight continually informs practice, strategy, and investment.