



Actions from the One Ilfracombe Closing the Gap Meeting held on Wednesday 9 September 2026

Present:	Cllr Sara Wilson	Devon County Councillor for Ilfracombe
	James Lander	Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
	Phil Harris	Devon Mind
	Cllr Teresa Elliott	Councillor for Ilfracombe Town Council

Meeting notes:

- **Action Tracking and Reporting:** Cllr Wilson reviewed outstanding actions, confirmed follow-ups for the reporting template, Link Centre plans, service communications and risk reporting, and set an 11 September deadline for activity reports.
 - **Reporting Template:** Steve circulated a concise reporting template intended for use across the One Ilfracombe theme groups. The template includes a risk section, and Cllr Wilson will recirculate it because some members may not have seen the August email. Steve requested completed activity reports by 11 September.
 - **Link Centre Planning:** The group still requires Steve to provide a clear timeline for the Link Centre's renovation and usability, together with clarification of what integrating it into the Campus Model means and who would be responsible for its operation. This remains an action for a future meeting.
 - **Service Communications:** Terry Elliot said they had not received the expected email connecting them with the Communications Team about confusing A&E and maternity messaging. Cllr Elliott agreed that James should make the connection and ensure the issue is followed up.
 - **Risk Reporting:** The group agreed to trial the risk-reporting section in the new template rather than maintaining a separate risk log immediately, with the option to revisit the approach if it does not work.
- **Male Mental Health Communications:** Phil outlined existing digital male mental-health resources, while Sarah and Cllr Wilson supported placing information in men's community spaces and developing a wider North Devon distribution approach.
 - **Current Resources:** Phil explained that male mental-health support is available through the Devon Mental Health Alliance calendar, with additional access through the local drop-in and potentially Wellbeing Wednesday. The calendar is slow to load because of a technical issue affecting the Alliance, so Phil will identify a practical location for a direct link in One Ilfracombe resources.
 - **Local Outreach:** Sarah suggested using locations where men are likely to see information, including toilet doors, counters and hardware stores, rather than relying only on formal websites. They proposed a town-wide campaign highlighting services such as Man Down and enabling people to save information discreetly on their phones.



- **Wider Distribution:** Phil accepted responsibility for exploring how up-to-date leaflets and posters can be produced and distributed, noting that individual projects currently hold responsibility for printing while the Devon Mental Health Alliance mainly holds the information digitally. The issue should be considered both locally and across North Devon.
- **Community Connectors:** Phil described a possible longer-term model based on a Somerset programme offering short, medium and extended training for volunteer community connectors. Sarah confirmed that they had seen the programme in Frome and supported exploring a similar approach, while Phil noted that an interim communications solution is needed first.
- **Maternity Service Closure Impact:** Terry Elliott presented concerns that the Maternity-Service closure was announced without sufficiently early planning for transport, accommodation, childcare, financial pressure and health inequalities; the group agreed to make a formal representation.
 - **Access Barriers:** Terry reported that support arrangements developed through several iterations: initial advice focused on claiming costs through an HC1 form, then public transport, before a taxi scheme with Devon County Council was announced on 3 September. The final arrangements were not clearly available publicly, creating uncertainty for pregnant women without private transport or the money to pay costs upfront.
 - **Family Impact:** Terry and Cathryn Hewitt explained that the closure affects more than people on the lowest incomes. Families may face hotel, travel and childcare costs, while partners travelling to Exeter may be unable to return safely or quickly to North Devon to manage existing children and work commitments. Cathryn noted that current support includes family hubs, antenatal services, early-help triage and a maternity drop-in, but these were brought in late.
 - **Stress And Support:** Cllr Elliott highlighted anxiety caused by fragmented information, long journeys and the possibility of needing additional appointments in Exeter, including after birth. They noted that a postnatal baby clinic was eventually established at North Devon District Hospital, but only after many babies had already been born. Cathryn reported that the Ladywell Unit drop-in had supported approximately 17, 17 and 20 expectant parents over three successive weeks.
 - **Planning And Accountability:** The discussion identified the need for health-service decisions to include an advance assessment of effects on people with limited transport, finances, support networks or resilience. Terry referred to the absence of a sufficiently developed contingency plan despite known service fragility, and Cllr Wilson said this was also raised at the scrutiny meeting as a lesson requiring follow-up.
 - **Formal Representation:** The group agreed to submit its concerns to the Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee before the 24 September meeting. Terry will draft a summary of the report and discussion; Sarah will share it with Frank O'Kelly, an ICB primary-care representative focused on health inequalities, and Cllr Wilson will coordinate the submission.



- **Campus Integration Programme:** Phil updated the group on the developing Campus Model, including statutory-service workshops, data-sharing barriers, person-centred access, community navigation and planned reporting in October.
 - **Upcoming Sessions:** Phil said September includes an event hosted by Marie Gould on 16 September covering local-government reorganisation, neighbourhood health and integrated pathways, followed by a 29 September session with Devon Partnership Trust and health colleagues. Six sessions over approximately six months are intended to identify the needs, enablers and barriers to campus integration.
 - **Data Sharing:** Phil identified GDPR and information-sharing arrangements as a major barrier to integrating organisations. Resolving this would allow participating services to share relevant information more effectively when supporting people across the Campus.
 - **No Wrong Door:** The proposed Campus Model includes a warm welcome and no-wrong-door approach, alongside staff training and improved communication between organisations. Phil used the example of people experiencing addiction and mental-health needs being directed between separate services to explain why services must work across their traditional boundaries.
 - **Participation Model:** The initial work will focus on statutory organisations, including mental-health, primary-care and council services, so that their operational barriers can be addressed before VCSE organisations and people with lived experience are brought into the process. Phil said this is intended to avoid consuming volunteer organisations' time before statutory services are ready to work effectively with them.
 - **Poverty Truth Outputs:** Phil said the 15 products arising from the Poverty Truth Commission are being allocated through a responsibility chart rather than being left with Phil and James alone. Work includes peer-support navigation, humanised service principles and housing-related activity, with an update planned after the October commission gathering.
 - **Directory Development:** Local directories and maps have been tested with community members and sent for development, but sustainability and ongoing administration remain issues. Phil said feedback from Ilfracombe will inform discussions with Marie Gould on 16 September about redesigning Devon Connect as a more usable and sustainable community directory.
 - **Future Briefing:** The group discussed holding a dedicated One Ilfracombe session, potentially in January, to receive a fuller campus update. Phil said this could also include learning from the first 100 days of the Health and Justice pilot and the expected October update.
- **Health And Justice Representation:** Cllr Wilson invited Simon Rapsey to the 14 October meeting to provide an update on the Health and Justice Project, while Phil confirmed ongoing information-sharing with related Poverty Truth Commission work.
 - **Future Attendance:** Cllr Wilson apologised that Simon Rapsey was not present at this meeting after not responding promptly to their earlier availability. They have invited Simon to the 14 October meeting and are awaiting confirmation.



- **Avoiding Duplication:** Phil said they would keep the action open through December, sharing progress from the Poverty Truth Commission with the Health and Justice Project at forthcoming meetings. They will prepare a tangible, summarised community update in October, supported by website content, blog material and locally distributed posters with QR codes where possible.
- **Relevant Events:** Phil identified a VCSE session on 16 September and a wider campus meeting with DBT and health colleagues on 29 September, aimed at sharing learning and reducing duplicated activity. Members interested in attending were asked to contact Phil so their details could be passed to Kerry Durkin.
- **Meeting Schedule and Next Steps:** Cllr Wilson confirmed the immediate reporting deadline, forthcoming One Ilfracombe dates and completion of outstanding actions by email, including the maternity representation.
 - **Confirmed Dates:** Members were reminded that the next One Ilfracombe meeting is on 30 September, completed activity reports using Steve's template are due by 11 September, and the next meeting of this group is on 14 October, when Simon Rapsey is expected to discuss the Health and Justice pilot.
 - **Administrative Follow-Up:** Cllr Wilson will resolve their permission issue so they can start future meetings, circulate the reporting template, capture Phil's event dates in the notes and coordinate the maternity letter and other outstanding actions by email between meetings.

Follow-up tasks:

- **Reporting Template:** Recirculate Steve's reporting template to the group and request completed activity reports from each area. (Cllr Wilson)
- **Link Centre:** Obtain an update from Steve on the Link Centre renovation and usability timeline, including its integration into the campus model. (Cllr Wilson, Steve)
- **A&E And Maternity Communications:** Arrange for James to connect Terry Elliot with the communications team so Terry's feedback on confusing A&E and maternity messaging can be addressed and a response obtained. (James, (Volunteer) Cllr Elliot)
- **Mental Health Information:** Identify suitable locations and communication methods for distributing male mental-health support information locally and across North Devon, including an interim solution while wider community-connector work develops. (Phil)
- **Community Connector Learning:** Share a link or information about the Mendip community-connector programme with the group for consideration. (Phil)
- **Health And Justice Representation:** Confirm Simon Rapsey's attendance at the 14 October meeting to discuss the Health and Justice pilot. (Cllr Wilson)
- **Poverty Truth Commission Updates:** Prepare a tangible, summarised update on the Poverty Truth Commission's current work for wider community distribution, supported by online information and local posters where feasible. (Phil)
- **Campus Coordination:** Circulate the dates and purpose of the 16 September VCSE event and 29 September campus meeting and forward interested participants' details to Kerry Durkin for invitations. (Phil)
- **Maternity Services Impact:** Draft a summary of the group's concerns about the maternity-service closure, particularly inadequate advance planning and impacts on



people experiencing health inequality, for submission to the Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee. ((Volunteer) Cllr Elliot, Cllr Wilson)

- **Maternity Services Impact:** Share Terry Elliot's maternity-services report and the agreed summary with Franco Kelly and the Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee. (Sarah, Cllr Wilson)
- **Meeting Materials:** Attach Phil's campus-model document to the meeting notes and circulate it to the group. (Sarah)