

Fairer East Ren: Delivery Plans 2023/2024

Delivering the outcomes of the East Renfrewshire
Community Plan

Background

- Fairer East Ren is the Local Outcome Improvement Plan for East Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership.
- A requirement of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, is that a Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) is produced to outline how community planning partners will work with communities to improve outcomes for individuals, families and communities and reduce socio-economic inequality.
- Fairer East Ren is set out in a number of themed delivery plans:
 - 1.1 Child poverty in East Renfrewshire is reduced (Local Child Poverty Action Report)
 - 2.1 Residents have the right skills, learning opportunities and confidence to secure and sustain work
 - 3.1 East Renfrewshire's transport links are accessible, attractive and seamless
 - 4.1 Residents' mental health and wellbeing is improved
 - 5.1 Residents are safe and socially connected within their communities
- Our Local Transport Strategy is currently in development and will contribute to achieving the activities laid out in outcome 3.1.
- In early 2023, the relevant thematic groups considered the outcomes, progress indicators and critical activities from previous plans in line with the pandemic recovery and renewal, as well as the ongoing cost-of-living pressures, and updated them accordingly.
- These updated plans allow us to work together in partnership to ensure that critical activities to reduce socio-economic inequality remain a key focus for the Community Planning Partnership.
- The Council is currently undertaking a longer-term strategic planning exercise in collaboration with Community Planning Partners and there have been a series of development workshops. The recent publication of the [Verity House Agreement](#) indicates that strategic and service level plans, including Local Outcome Improvement Plans, and associated reporting will be streamlined and refined. In this period of transition, a one year Fairer East Ren plan has been produced and over the course of the next year we will continue to collaborate with our Community Planning Partners to review our intermediate outcomes, indicators and activities and ensure that we create a shared vision for the future.

Child poverty in East Renfrewshire is reduced (Local Child Poverty Action Report)

Responsible Delivery Partnership: Child Poverty Oversight Group, Chairs Louise Pringle (ERC) and Julie Murray (HSCP)

East Renfrewshire has the highest proportion of children in any local authority in Scotland; one in every five people in the area are aged 0-15 years. There are twice as many large family households (with 3 or more children) in East Renfrewshire than the Scottish average; 9% compared to 5% nationally.

Child poverty in East Renfrewshire is the lowest in Scotland at 14.4% however, this still equates to around 3,200 of our children and young people living in relative poverty. Child poverty estimates vary across the authority; with the highest rates in parts of Barrhead, Neilston, Mearns and Thornliebank. East Renfrewshire has fewer than average young mothers (6% compared to 16% nationally) and fewer than average lone parents (11% compared to 19% nationally). However, we know that around half of the children living in poverty are in a lone parent household.

Child poverty can be reduced by supporting parents to increase their income from employment and/or from social security, while also reducing their costs of living.

Those living in East Renfrewshire earn significantly more than those working in the area. The median full-time earnings for residents is £809, compared to £626 per week for those working in the area. Further, around a third (30.9%) of employees over 18 earn less than the living wage in East Renfrewshire which is double the Scottish average.

Two thirds of children living in poverty in East Renfrewshire are living in a household with at least one adult in employment, indicating that employment may not be a mitigating factor where there is low pay and unreliable work hours. Addressing low pay and low work intensity are key in reducing working poverty.

Families in East Renfrewshire are less likely to receive income through social security than other parts of Scotland. 4 out of 5 children (81%) are registered for child benefit and only 1.26% of all Education Maintenance Allowance claimants in Scotland were from East Renfrewshire. Less than one in ten children in primary school (8.4%) receive free school meals based on low-income eligibility.

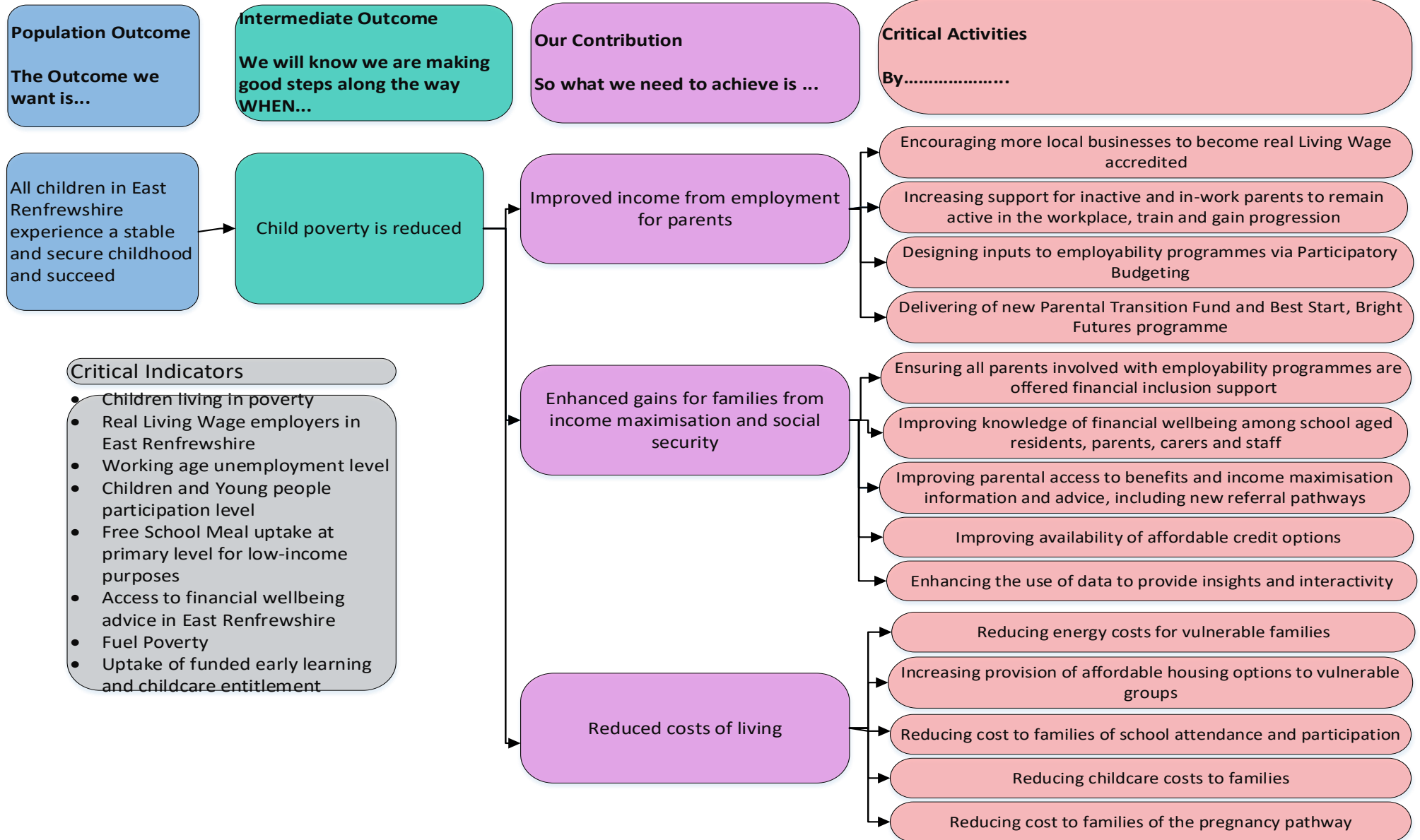
However, we have seen an increase in demand on the Scottish Welfare Fund, with crisis grant applications increasing by 39% from the previous year.

The costs of living in East Renfrewshire are higher than average, particularly in relation to housing costs. The average property price in East Renfrewshire is £280,323 compared to £180,287 Scottish average. Property value and size mean council tax cost are high in the area; whilst our council tax costs are around average, three out of four properties (73.3%) are in the higher council tax bands (D-H). The average amount of council tax is £1,734.

Whilst East Renfrewshire has the lowest rate of child poverty in Scotland, we are not complacent and are keenly aware of the gap that exists between our most affluent families and our most vulnerable. We also recognise the potential for our poverty profile to change over time as we see more families who are 'just about managing' and with increased mortgage interest rates know that many are living on a cliff edge. We remain concerned about the impact of the cost-of-living crisis and the outlook for future public sector finances will make it increasingly challenging for us to take preventative and early intervention approaches.

East Renfrewshire's approach to child poverty is linked closely with the priority outcomes of employability and promoting positive mental health and wellbeing as outlined in the following Fairer East Ren plans.

1.1 Child Poverty in East Renfrewshire is reduced



Inclusive Economic Recovery and Growth

Responsible Delivery Partnership: East Renfrewshire Local Economic Partnership, Chair: Michael McKernan (ERC)

In 2021 East Renfrewshire's population was 96,600, an increase of 0.5% from 96,100 in 2020 although the number of working age residents has remained the same at around 57,000 (59%). Over the past year we have seen an increase in the number of working age residents in employment at 79.5%. This is an increase of more than seven percentage points from the previous year and above the Scottish average of around 77%. Similarly, the number of residents aged 16-64 who are claiming out of work benefits has continued to decrease slightly this year, with around 1,000 local residents claiming Job Seekers Allowance or Universal Credit, lower than the Scottish average of 3.3%.

Whilst there has been a slight increase in the number of workless households (those with no adult in employment) to 19.9%, the working age employment rates and low reliance on benefit support may suggest that a proportion of these households are economically inactive due to retirement or choice including those who have alternative sources of income and do not rely on income through employment. 97% of 16–19-year-olds are participating in education, employment or training, comparing favourably to the Scottish average of 92.4%.

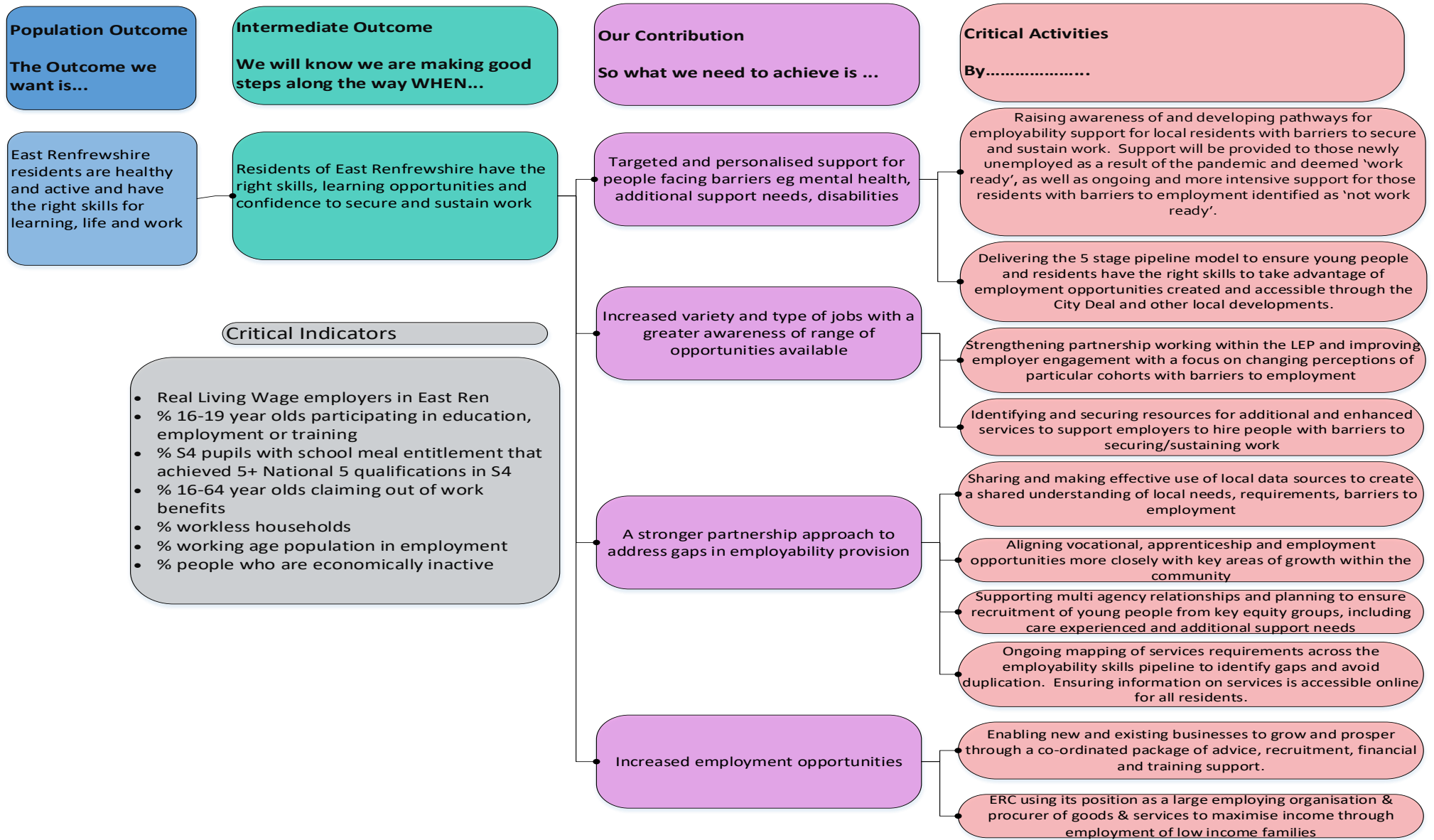
Membership of East Renfrewshire's Local Employability Partnership (LEP) has now been extended to include East Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce, Business Gateway East Renfrewshire and Include Me 2 (specialised employability support for those residents with additional support needs) and employability partners along with Work EastRen have delivered a wide range of inclusive services aimed at getting our local residents into vocational training or suitable employment. Examples of employability activity focused on young people include childcare modern apprenticeships, Positive Pathways programmes, paid work placements with local businesses as well as activities tailored for cared experience young people and young people with additional support needs.

Through the Scottish Government's Local Authority Covid Economic Recovery Fund (LACER), funding was secured for the *Scotland Loves Local* card supporting thousands of households across East Renfrewshire with the cost-of-living crisis while at the same time bringing a financial boost for local businesses, helping their recovery from the pandemic. These cards can only be used in businesses in East Renfrewshire that have joined the Scotland Loves Local scheme, a scheme to encourage people to think local first and support businesses on their local high streets. Over 175 retailers and restaurants in East Renfrewshire have signed up to the scheme and more will be encouraged to join in the coming months.

The Council's Business Liaison Officer has been working closely with businesses at the newly developed Barrhead Retail Park, Glasgow Road, to help local residents take advantage of upcoming employment opportunities. This has included bespoke recruitment events and job fairs.

East Renfrewshire's approach to employability is linked closely with the priority outcomes of ensuring our residents have the skills for learning, life and work, reducing child poverty and residents' mental health and wellbeing is improved.

2.1 East Renfrewshire residents are healthy and active and have the right skills for learning, life and work



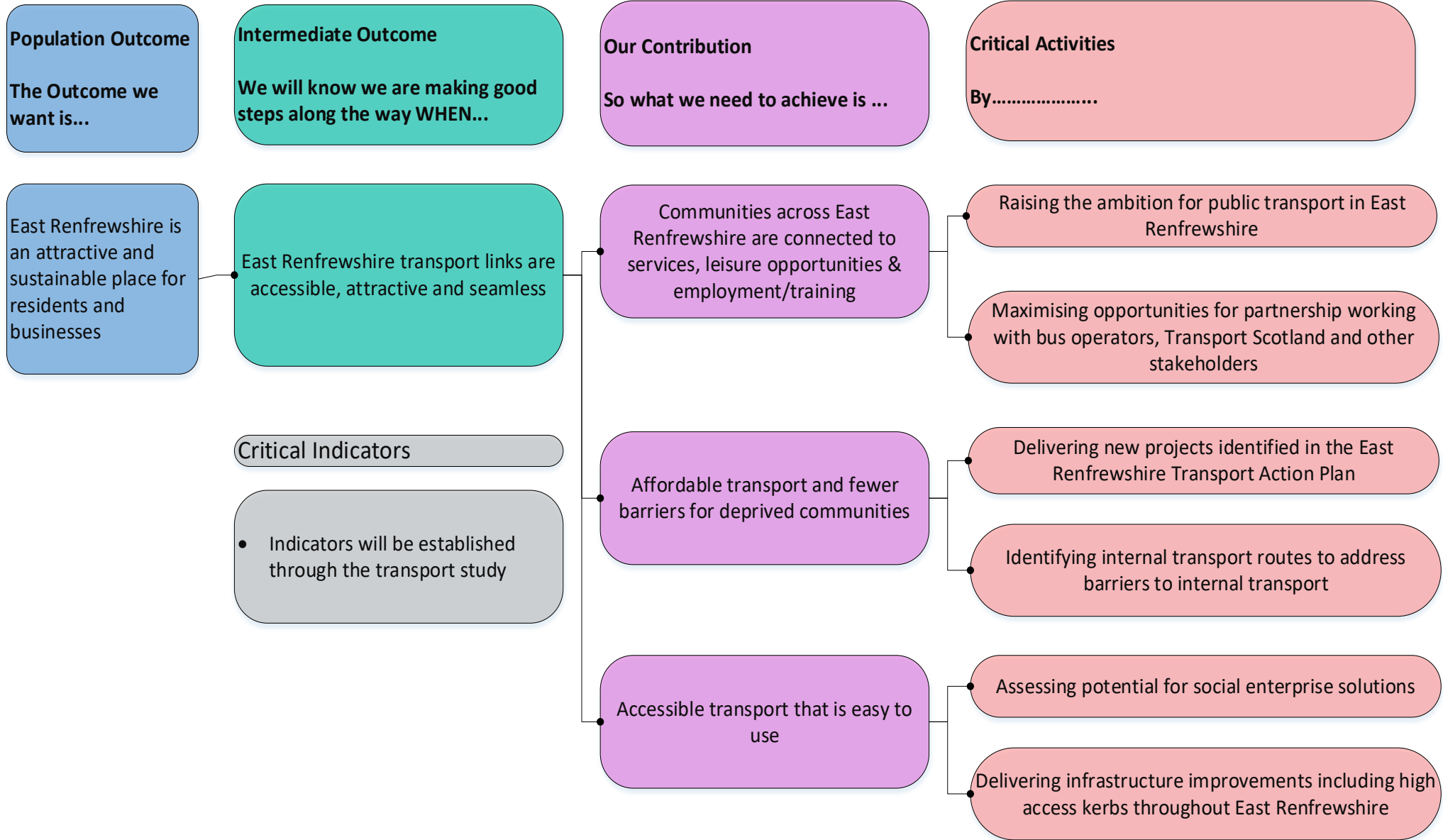
East Renfrewshire's transport links are accessible, attractive and seamless

The Council's draft 'Case for Change' which was launched in September 2022, is the first stage in the development of a new Local Transport Strategy and outlines the evidence base for transport and transport systems within East Renfrewshire. The report incorporates findings from the Community Transport review carried out pre-pandemic, which recognised the growing need for Community Transport services, often fragmented across different service providers thus limiting the effectiveness of current service provision. This combined with an ageing population and an increased number of concessionary passes/blue badges, is only likely to add to pressure.

In the summer of 2023, we will launch our Local Transport Strategy Main Issues consultation and reconnecting with Community Transport stakeholders regarding the future delivery model(s) and opportunities for future development. In addition, the new Local Transport Strategy will be supported by an Equality, Rights and Fairness Impact Assessment. This will consider existing evidence, knowledge gaps and reach out to under-represented groups, people with disabilities, protected characteristics and young people to support future policy development.

The new Local Transport Strategy will subsequently consider the role of Community Transport and how future policy and plans can meet strategic outcomes, such as ensuring that transport meets the needs of our most vulnerable residents. It will also have to consider the shifting landscape due to the pandemic and the changes that this will have on travel patterns – both short-term and long-term.

3.1 East Renfrewshire's transport links are accessible, attractive and seamless



Community Wellbeing and Connectivity

Responsible Delivery Partnerships: East Renfrewshire Wellbeing Network, Chair: Ruth Gallagher (Voluntary Action East Renfrewshire); East Renfrewshire Digital Inclusion Partnership, Christine Cairns (ERC)

Following the Humanitarian Research carried out on behalf of the Council at the end of 2021 which highlighted the importance of a strong sense of community and social connections, this delivery plan continues to build on an early intervention and prevention approach to promote wellbeing through self-help and community support.

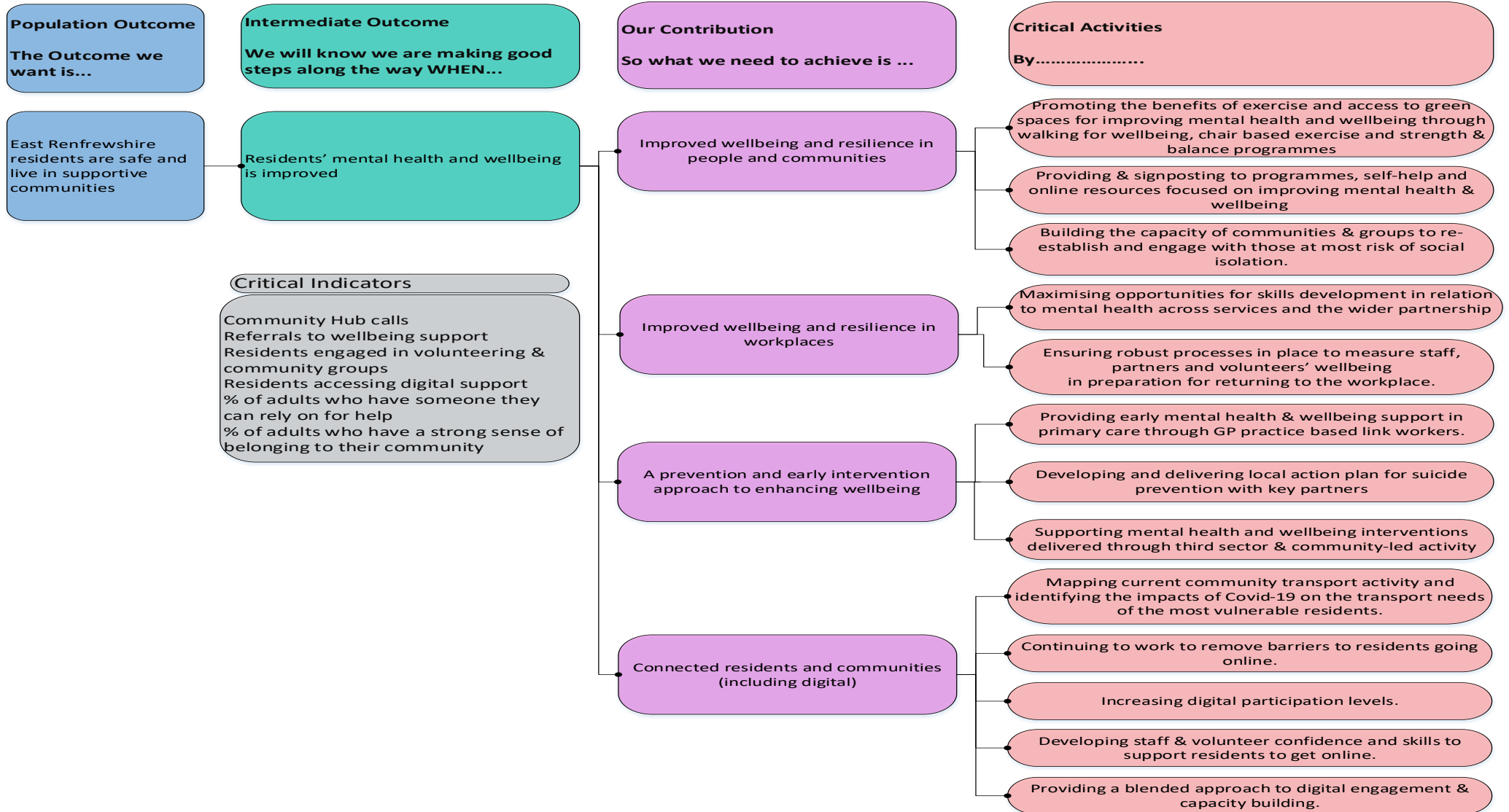
In the past year, a £150,000 Humanitarian Fund (developed in partnership with the Council and Voluntary Action East Renfrewshire) has been available for projects which focused on community-led wellbeing and resilience activities. Local community groups and organisations could apply with the chance of getting up to £5,000 for their project. Through a Participatory Budget programme, residents had the opportunity to have a say in the projects they wanted to see happen in their community via two voting cycles held in November 2022 and February 2023. Some of those 37 organisations/groups benefiting from the fund include Chat & Plant (gardening group), East Renfrewshire Young Carers' Project, Back to School Bank East Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire Carers' Centre dementia family support and Jewish Care Scotland.

East Renfrewshire's Community Hub has responded to more than 1,000 calls on its community helpline over the last year, the majority of which have been from residents seeking information on what local activities are available, what groups have re-started (following the pandemic) and how they can access these, therefore there remains a real appetite amongst residents for community and social connections.

In 2022 it was highlighted through the *East Renfrewshire Citizens' Panel survey* that there was a lack of welcoming places and opportunities to meet new people in local neighbourhoods. We were also experiencing the ongoing impacts of the Cost-of-Living crisis and associate fuel poverty being experienced by our most vulnerable residents. As a result, 33 *Warm and Welcome Spaces* were created over the winter period so that residents could participate in activities, access support on the cost-of-living crisis or simply spend time somewhere warm. Venues included The Community Hub, Barrhead; Barrhead Foundry; all local libraries and The Market Place, Newton Mearns. We are using learning from the Warm and Welcome spaces initiative to inform our winter response planning for 2023.

In terms of digital connectivity, East Renfrewshire's Digital Inclusion Partnership strives to increase digital inclusion across communities within the local authority area. The Partnership includes representation from Council departments, public sector and third sector partners and members work together to understand the barriers to residents going online, increase digital participation levels as well as developing staff and volunteer confidence and skills to support residents getting online. In this way we are also reflecting priorities at national level with the Scottish Government's '*A Connected Scotland*' Plan highlighting the role of connected communities in tackling social isolation and loneliness.

4.1 Resident' mental health and wellbeing is improved



Residents are safe and more socially connected within their communities

Responsible Delivery Partnership: Safe East Renfrewshire, Stephen Bell (ERC)

Building on previous engagement and our Humanitarian Research and the importance residents placed by on a strong sense of community, social connections and feeling safe, partners such as Voluntary Action East Renfrewshire (VAER) and the HSCP's Talking Points continue to work to get residents more involved in their community. In the last year, a new online referral system was developed as well as three 'community based' Talking Points in libraries. Talking Points has also supported and developed three community groups for older people in Busby, Newton Mearns and Neilston and partners continue to build the capacity of communities to develop and deliver their own inclusive activities. During 2022-23 VAER offered capacity building support to 75 local groups and organisations, covering issues such as funding, policies & good governance and legal structures.

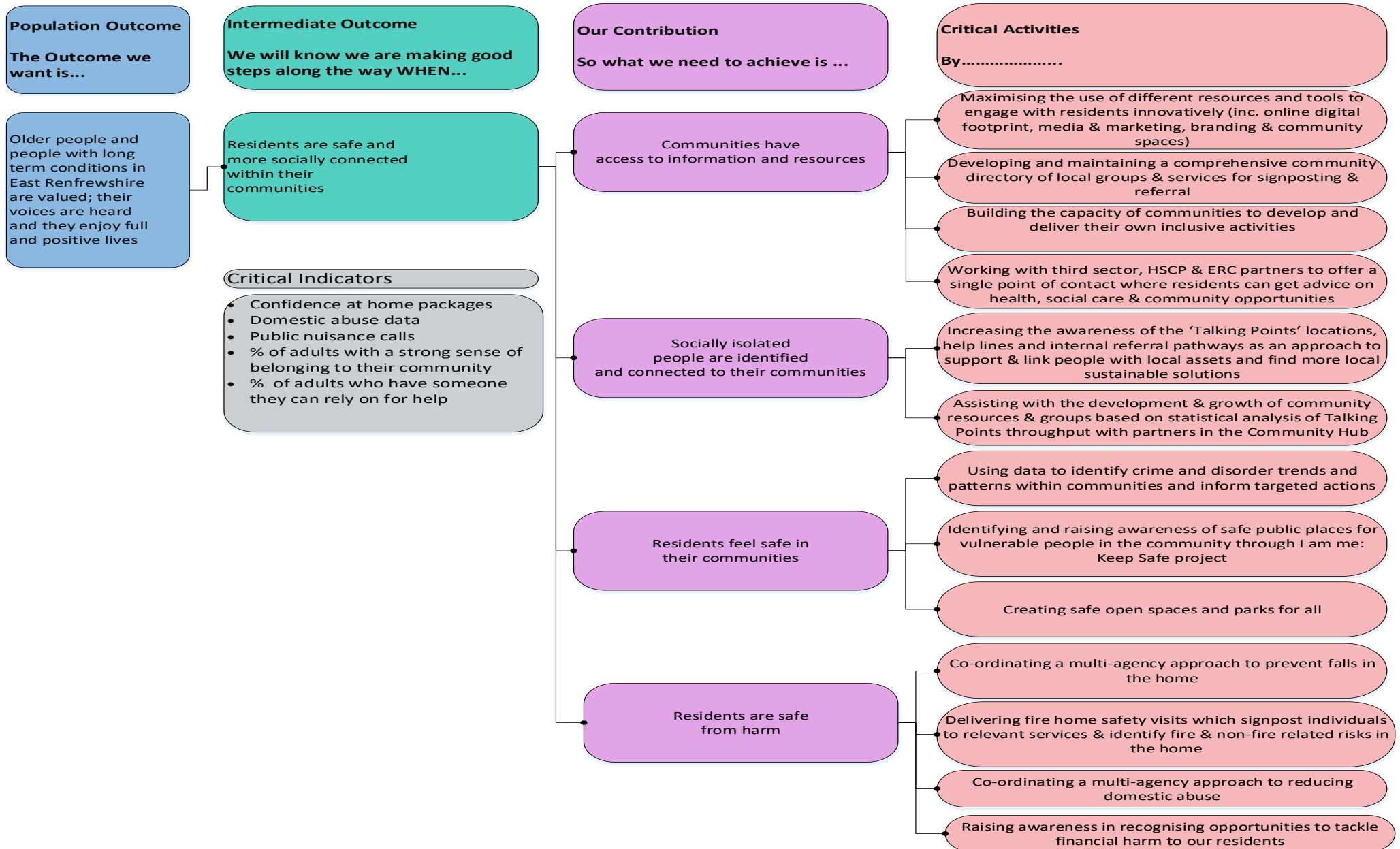
The *2022 East Renfrewshire Citizens' Panel Survey* reported residents' concerns about online and local scams with 84% highlighting this as an issue and 87% said that preventing scams should be a priority. In the past year, 51 doorstep cameras and 59 active cameras have been installed to protect those residents who are particularly vulnerable to scams. In addition, 89 True Call Units were installed blocking more than 90,000 nuisance scam calls and since the project trialled 2012, 1.1 million scam calls have been blocked from reaching vulnerable residents. In March the [Building Consumer Confidence](#) project was launched to protect residents from bogus traders and support reputable home improvement businesses. Run by Trading Standards, any suspicious activity is investigated by Police Scotland and Trading Standards Enforcement Officers and genuine traders are encouraged to sign up to the East Renfrewshire Trusted Scheme.

This year saw over £1 million being invested in a new next-generation Telecare system to enable people to live independently in their own homes and the HSCP continues to work with colleagues in Culture and Leisure to support individuals to engage in weekly community strength and balance classes. The development of a network of volunteer drivers through the *Kindness Collaborative* is helping with access where required.

East Renfrewshire Women's Aid continue to provide emotional and practical support to women, children and young people with 1,086 women and children being supported over the last year across the three core services, helpline and drop-in enquiries compared to 1,226 during the same period the previous year (11% reduction). They also reported significant change and improvement for women across all reported outcomes, with 90% of women assessed noting improvement in their overall outcomes (an increase from 79% in 2019-20).

East Renfrewshire's outcome delivery approach will also contribute to national efforts around mental health and social isolation.

5.1 Residents are safe and more socially connected within their communities



The Community Planning Partners will oversee the progress towards a Fairer East Ren and will publish updates on our webpages at <https://eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/community-planning-partnership>

As we continue to deliver a Fairer East Ren we will create opportunities for working together with local people to ensure the plans meet their needs.

