

Community Champions

Deborah Breen, County Durham Together Community Champions Lead

[Text: Deborah Breen, County Durham Together Community Champions Lead]

Images [Graphic skyline image across bottom of page. Logo with County Durham Together Partnership logo and Better for everyone strapline]

[Video: Deborah sat against a plain wall]

[Deborah: The Community Champions programme originally started in 2020, so it was originally called Covid Community Champions and that was set up as a result of the council's response to the covid pandemic]

And then after Covid, we've seen the successes of that Community Champions programme, so we wanted to continue with that model but to look at how we use Community Champions to address wider health and wellbeing issues across County Durham. So, we started with a review of the original programme, and we surveyed all of the champions and from that we brought together a small group of interested people who wanted to be on a co-production group with us. Lots of the feedback that we got back from the original project was that they really felt like this could be an opportunity for champions to shape the Community Champions programme. So, the whole programme is designed by them and it's for them.

So, our Champions helped us design the sign-up procedure, the wording for the website, the posters and the flyers and also an animation that we've been sharing across social media.

Absolutely anyone can be a Community Champion, you just need to be over the age of 18, live in County Durham and have an interest in health and wellbeing. We're not expecting anyone who is an expert in any particular health subject, so we're just looking at people who have an interest in improving health and wellbeing, are willing to come along, learn a little bit more about various different health topics and share what they learn with the community. The idea is that by sharing information with your community, with your networks, with your friends, with your families, again just like Covid Champions, our Community Champions are able to get that information out much wider and into places that we wouldn't be able to put that information.

We have people who run community radio stations, who might talk about some of those things there, we have people who develop their community newsletter, or lots of people who sit on different types of residents meetings, they sit on AAP meetings, community wellbeing meetings, School Governor meetings, lots and lots of different types of connections within their service. And people have told us is that what they enjoy doing is getting a little bit of info here and sharing it there. A real range of different people, very diverse from lots of different backgrounds, lots of different areas across County Durham.

[Images: County Durham Together Partnership logo]