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| **Minding the Gap - News Brief: No. 144** |
| **At a Crossroads: Building Foundations for Healthy Communities**The environments in which we live have a critical role in determining our health and wellbeing throughout our lives. Residents of poor-quality places and homes are more prone to communicable diseases like COVID-19, more likely to suffer from heart disease, diabetes and obesity, and have an increased risk of disability, stress, depression and anxiety. High-quality places promote physical activity, access to fresh food and engagement with nature. They are well-connected. They are sociable and safe, and provide adaptable housing for diverse needs. They also help communities to be productive and resilient to shocks and strains, including to climate change and major disease outbreaks.This report calls on the Government to put public health at the heart of housing delivery; empowering local decision-makers to create healthy and high-quality places. The report condemns a decade of deregulatory planning reform which has failed to acknowledge the crucial role local authorities play in designing healthy places and driving up the standard of new housing. The report also finds that a stark contrast has emerged between England, Scotland and Wales. Whereas English authorities find significant barriers to creating healthy places, in Scotland and Wales, where different regulatory measures are in place, better approaches are supported.[Report](https://apse.org.uk/apse/assets/File/At%20a%20Crossroads%20Complete%20Version%282%29.pdf) |
| **Our Place: Local Authorities and the Public’s Mental Health**Actions that promote positive mental wellbeing and prevent mental health problems help us stay healthy, live productive, meaningful lives and avoid serious and sometimes lifelong distress. Local authorities play a key role in improving the mental health of their communities, bringing together and supporting partners and citizens to address the determinants of our mental health and reduce inequalities. This report presents learning from local areas alongside an overview of the evidence for prevention and the national policy context. The councils involved seek to improve population mental health, reduce inequalities and prevent mental ill health in their communities through a combination of strategic and practical approaches. The report examines the initiatives of nine local councils (Including Leeds City Council) that are rising to the challenge of promoting good mental health and preventing poor mental health in their communities. The report presents learning from these areas, prior to the pandemic and in the midst of the challenges brought by Covid-19, alongside an overview of the evidence for prevention and the national policy context.[Report](https://www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-08/CentreforMH_OurPlace.pdf?utm_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters%20%28main%20account%29&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=11747858_NEWSL_HMP%202020-08-18&dm_i=21A8,6ZSPE,FLWQCU,S6OF1,1) |
| **Impact of COVID 19 on Health Inequalities in Bradford District**In Bradford there is a 10 year gap in Life Expectancy for both men and women between the most and least deprived areas of the District. A male who lives in the most deprived ward in Bradford can expect to live approximately 10.5 years less than a male who lives in the least deprived ward (72.8 years compared to 83.2 years). Similarly, a female can expect to live approximately 10.3 years less (78 years compared to 88.3 years). In areas of Bradford with higher unemployment, lower incomes, more social isolation and poorer housing quality, people are experiencing greater levels of poor mental wellbeing and more people are living with more ill health and dying earlier.These inequalities have led to 40.7 per cent of COVID deaths coming from the most deprived areas of the district, and this report suggests that the correlation between dying from COVID-19 and deprivation is strong. The report describes health inequalities, provides national and local data on health inequalities in relation to COVID-19, discusses what actions have been taken to date and are planned. The ongoing report to Bradford Council’s Health and Social Care Scrutiny has “shone a light” on the health inequalities that have existed in Bradford for many years.[Report](https://bradford.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s30181/Hlth18AugDocC.pdf) |
| **Responding to COVID-19 in the Liverpool City Region: Prioritising Health and Equity in Recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic**It is now clear that the health and wellbeing impacts of COVID-19 are not being borne equally. The pandemic has both exposed and exacerbated longstanding inequalities in society. Men, older people, those with existing health conditions, ethnic minority communities, low-paid workers and those from poorer areas are all at a greater risk of infection, of serious illness and of dying from COVID-19. The consequences of social distancing and other measures designed to control the spread of infection (isolation at home, economic shutdown, school closures and reduced access to services) have had their own, unequal impacts on health and wellbeing. By examining the effects of the control measures on the “wider determinants of health” – the factors that determine our opportunities to keep well and be healthy – the full extent of the health and wellbeing consequences of the pandemic can begin to be understood This briefing provides a summary of the health and wellbeing impacts of COVID-19 and looks ahead to the implications of the findings and how a public health approach to recovery presents opportunities to do things differently and improve the health, resilience, and sustainability of all our communities.[Policy Briefing](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/publicpolicyamppractice/covid-19/PB023.pdf) |
| **Building Back Health and Prosperity: Report of the Health Devolution Commission**The Covid-19 pandemic has affected every child, adult, family and community in our country with the biggest impact on the most economically disadvantaged and those from Black, Asian and minority Ethnic communities. It has put the severest pressure on our NHS, social care and public health services exposing in the starkest terms the divide - the lack of parity - between them. It has touched upon every aspect of our lives – the way we work, our enjoyment of sport and the arts, our leisure activities and holidays, and our family and relationships to name but a few. Crucial action to control the pandemic has had a catastrophic consequence for our economy and jobs that will be with us for years to come.This report suggests that there is a fundamental choice to be made: between greater centralisation of NHS and social care services or a comprehensive health devolution approach which incorporates national entitlements and targets but embeds the delivery of an integrated NHS, social care and public health service within broader, powerful, democratically led local partnerships. The report calls on the Government to build back healthy, resilient and prosperous communities through radical comprehensive health devolution that delivers the ‘levelling up’ of our economy.[Report](https://healthdevolution.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/DEVO-Report-of-the-Health-Devolution-Commission-Final.pdf?utm_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters%20%28main%20account%29&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=11747858_NEWSL_HMP%202020-08-18&dm_i=21A8,6ZSPE,FLWQCU,S6S7W,1) |
| **Voice And Place: How to Plan Fair and Successful Paths to Net Zero Emissions**Climate change is the most pressing existential threat facing the planet. In an attempt to meet this threat, the 2015 Conference of the Parties (COP) 21 summit in Paris agreed to try to limit global warming to 1.5 per cent above pre-industrial levels. This is a stretching target; success requires cuts of carbon dioxide emissions by 45 per cent by 2030. We do not have long, this report suggests that failure to meet this threat is unthinkable.This report considers a just transition for the regions and nations of the UK and begin with a look at climate change policy, from the 1970s to the UK’s recent adoption of a policy of net zero carbon emissions by 2050. The report look at the implications of that policy, from an industrial perspective, based on evidence produced by the independent Committee on Climate Change (CCC). The report also considers the regional divide in the UK, as well as the divisions within regions and how much does this rely on a solid national, regional or local economic strategy?[Report](https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-08/Just%20Transition%20final_Contents_Updated_MN%20%281%29.pdf) |
| **'Eat Out to Help Out': A Forlorn Dream for those Struggling to Feed a Family**This article accepts that the current pandemic affects everyone, it also suggests that it is affecting some more than others and that people in low-income communities are more likely to become unwell more rapidly than they would have done previously. We know that BAME communities have a higher risk of becoming seriously ill or dying from COVID-19 and we also know that families living with children, and carers of children, face particular challenges, especially when they are trying to get by on low incomes. The article points us towards emerging evidence that the financial struggle and costs of getting by on a low income with dependent children have worsened and that rising costs from being at home all day, every day, have not been offset by any additional support, such as an increase in the standard allowance for universal credit, and replacements to free school meals.[Article](https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/aug/04/eat-out-to-help-out-a-forlorn-dream-for-those-struggling-to-feed-a-family?CMP=share_btn_tw) |
| **Voices from Lockdown: A Chance for Change**Lockdown has particularly affected women and girls, with domestic violence rates soaring and mental health getting worse. At the same time it has become more difficult for them to get help. For those from minority groups experience additional discrimination, inequality and barriers to appropriate support add layer upon layer of challenges. This report appreciates that lockdown has been hard on everyone, but the pandemic has exposed inequalities that already existed in society and failings within the systems intended to act as a safety net and protect the most vulnerable have not always been successful. This has resulted in conditions that individuals have been enduring have worsened the mental health, wellbeing, support networks and economic conditions of many. For women and girls already living with abuse and trauma and facing hardship and poor mental health, those problems have been magnified. This research helps us to understand that the scale of the problem is likely to be hugely underestimated and the organisations that are anticipating a surge in demand as restrictions ease. Hidden and increasing demand, unsustainable funding and the stress facing staff working in these conditions means the future of a whole sector providing vital services hangs in the balance. [Research](https://weareagenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Voices-From-Lockdown-A-Chance-For-Change.pdf?utm_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters%20%28main%20account%29&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=11747858_NEWSL_HMP%202020-08-18&dm_i=21A8,6ZSPE,FLWQCU,S6Q78,1) |
| **COVID-19 and English Council Funding: How are Budgets Being Hit in 2020–21?**The public health and economic effects of the COVID-19 crisis are creating a perfect storm for councils’ finances, simultaneously increasing spending and reducing incomes. For example, personal protective equipment (PPE) and social distancing requirements have increased unit costs for a range of services, and most notably adult social care, where many service users are particularly vulnerable to the health effects of COVID-19. Councils are taking on additional responsibilities to house rough sleepers, support those shielding at home and help with the testing, tracing and control of COVID-19 outbreaks. And the wider economic effects of the crisis are hitting councils’ various income sources to different extents as households and businesses radically change their behaviour and struggle to pay tax bills, rents and service charges.This report uses councils’ own estimates of the financial impact of COVID-19 to examine the scale and variation in impacts on budgets in 2020–21. In particular, it estimates the effects of the crisis on service costs and on income from sales, fees and charges, commercial activities and other sources. The report examines how the effects of these essential changes may vary across council types, regions and council characteristics and compares the impacts with the resources provided to councils by central government and with the resources available to them in the form of reserves.[Report](https://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/R-174-COVID-19%20and%20English-council-funding-how-are-budgets-being-hit-in-2020%E2%80%9321.pdf?utm_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters%20%28main%20account%29&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=11757079_NEWSL_HMP%202020-08-21&dm_i=21A8,6ZZTJ,FLWQCU,S7YD7,1) |
| **'Found Guilty Without Trial': The King's Fund Response to the Shakeup of Public Health**The CEO of the Kings Fund comments on the recent announcement from the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care that Public Health England will be replaced with a new body, the National Institute for Health Protection.[Press Release](https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/press/press-releases/found-guilty-without-trial-response-shake-up-public-health?utm_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters%20%28main%20account%29&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=11767507_NEWSL_The%20Weekly%20Update%202020-08-21&utm_content=press_release_button&dm_i=21A8,707V7,GRXTGF,S8FL4,1) |
| **The Future of Public Health: Many Questions Still to be Answered**The announcement of changes to the public health system in England has raised more questions than it answers. This is an excellent appraisal of the current situation by David Buck and he also considers what the most pressing questions are and what needs to happen next.[Blog](https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/blog/2020/08/future-public-health-questions?utm_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters%20%28main%20account%29&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=11774757_Copy%20of%20NEWSL_The%20Weekly%20Update%202020-08-21&utm_content=dave_buck_blog_button&dm_i=21A8,70DGL,FLWQCU,S97ED,1) |
| **Babies In Lockdown: Listening to Parents to Build Back Better**Lockdown has been a seismic shock for every family and community. Sadly, the voices of the hardest hit have been heard the least. This report sets about to change this by exploring pandemic and lockdown reflections from a diverse group of expectant and new parents during the critical first months and years of their babies’ development. As, The report examines the experiences of new born babies and their parents at a time when family support systems withdrew and the world socially distanced. The report reveals the disproportionate impact of COVID -19 and subsequent measures on those pregnant, giving birth or at home with a baby or toddler. For generations, no other group of parents has had to navigate pregnancy, birth and beyond under such extraordinary circumstances. The report reveal a mixed experience for expectant and new parents during lockdown. Many parents have coped well but our findings reveal that large numbers of parents across the UK are struggling, anxious, concerned about their babies and young children and unable to access the support they need.[Report](https://babiesinlockdown.files.wordpress.com/2020/08/babies-in-lockdown-main-report-final-version-1.pdf?utm_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters%20%28main%20account%29&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=11747858_NEWSL_HMP%202020-08-18&dm_i=21A8,6ZSPE,FLWQCU,S6OZB,1) |
| **Excess Debts - Who has Fallen Behind on their Household Bills Due to Coronavirus?**Without further government help, huge numbers of people will be pushed into long-term debt as a result of coronavirus. Millions of people who have helped the country respond to the pandemic now face years of financial difficulty dealing with lockdown debtsThis report suggests that help could include mechanisms, such as funding for local authorities to support people behind on council tax due to coronavirus, loans and grants for landlords and tenants to make up rent arrears and help people stay in their homes, and new guidance for banks to reschedule and provide relief for unaffordable lockdown debts.[Report](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/Debt%20and%20Money%20Publications/Excess%20Debts%20-%20who%20has%20fallen%20behind%20on%20their%20household%20bills%20due%20to%20coronavirus_.pdf) |
| **Why did England have Europe's Worst COVID Figures? The Answer Starts with Austerity**Professor Sir Michael Marmot explains that it is the years of spending cuts and deepening inequality that has meant that the worst off have limped into this pandemic and have suffered the most. It is the rolling back of the state, a reduction in public spending and fiscal retrenchment that has had a negative effect and a regressive way. If we look at spending per person by local authority, we find that the poorer the area concerned, the bigger the reduction. In the least deprived 20% of areas, local government spending went down by 16%; in the most deprived it went down by 32%. This is remarkable – the greater the need was, the more spending was reduced.This article explains that there is a social gradient in mortality rates from Covid-19 and that in the more deprived area, the higher the number of deaths. This social gradient is almost exactly paralleled by the social gradient for all causes of death. It suggests that the causes of unequal Covid-19 outcomes are rather similar to the causes of inequalities in health more generally.[Article](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/aug/10/england-worst-covid-figures-austerity-inequality) |
| **The Longitudinal NIHR ARC North West Coast Household Health Survey: Exploring Health Inequalities in Disadvantaged Communities**Areas with different levels of wealth and opportunity are typically subject to large inequalities in health outcomes Residents of the poorest neighbourhoods in England have a shortened average life expectancy of eight years less compared to those living in the wealthiest parts of the country. This life expectancy inequality between neighbourhoods is predicted to rise. In order to understand the social and economic determinants relating to physical and mental health issues, there is a clear need to conduct a comprehensive survey with input from varied stakeholders and disciplines. The Household Health Survey (HHS) employed in this research provides important insights into socio-economic variations in physical and mental health, with findings having implications for improved care provision to enable residents from any geographical or socio-economic background to access suitable care.The Survey was developed to understand the socioeconomic determinants of mental and physical health, and health inequalities in health and social care. This paper aims to provide a detailed rationale of the development and implementation of the survey and explore socio-economic variations in physical and mental health and health care.[Report](https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-020-09346-5) |
| **The Calm Before the Storm: New ONS Labour Market Data Reveals Scale of the Unemployment Crisis to Come**The latest labour market data gives an early indication of the challenges ahead. With very limited vacancies, a large number of people on furlough and a sharp rise in those without a job who aren’t looking for work, we can see the emerging conditions for a troubled autumn when the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) winds down in October.They article advocates that it is essential that those affected by the crisis are provided with an adequate level of financial support, and that those falling through the gaps of the temporary measures intended to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19, are given greater consideration as the Government develops longer term plans.[Article](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/work-foundation/news/blog/the-calm-before-the-storm-new-ons-labour-market-data-reveals-scale-of-the-unemployment-crisis-to-come) |
| **Over-Exposed and Under-Protected: The Devastating Impact of Covid-19 on Black and Minority Ethnic Communities in Great Britain**This report illuminates why BME groups are at greater risk from Covid-19: they are more likely to be working outside their home, more likely to be using public transport, more likely to be working in key worker roles, less likely to be protected with PPE and more likely to live in multigenerational, overcrowded housing, so much less able to self-isolate and shield. The report suggests that pre-existing racial and socioeconomic inequalities resulting in disparities in co-morbidities between ethnic groups, have been amplified by COVID-19.[Report](https://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/Runnymede%20Covid19%20Survey%20report%20v2.pdf?utm_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters%20%28main%20account%29&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=11728486_NEWSL_HMP%202020-08-07&dm_i=21A8,6ZDRA,FLWQCU,S4OWK,1) |
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| **We Need to Make Sure that Everyone can Benefit from Parks and Green Spaces**It is more important now than ever that continued government funding for parks and green spaces is kept as a high priority, particularly when mental health is reported to have deteriorated during the lockdown. How does walking through a forest make you feel? Peaceful? Blissful? Reflective? For many people, lockdown brought a new appreciation of nature and what it means for our well-being.This article discusses whether funding should be continued, but not limited to popular beauty spots or tourist areas, but be prioritised to areas where people who are commonly overlooked may benefit the most. Not only are parks and green spaces crucial for our mental health and important for reducing inequalities, but quality spaces and green development are essential in the ongoing fight against climate change – it’s good for people and it’s good for the planet.[Article](https://environmentjournal.online/articles/parks-and-green-spaces-are-important-for-our-mental-health-but-we-need-to-make-sure-that-everyone-can-benefit/?utm_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters%20%28main%20account%29&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=11742783_NEWSL_HWB%202020-08-17&dm_i=21A8,6ZOSF,FLWQCU,S61IC,1) |
| **Care Home Visits During Coronavirus: What Does the Government Guidance Mean for People Affected by Dementia?**For many care home residents with dementia, family and friends provide more than just visits. They play a significant role in a person’s care, whether it’s interpreting their needs to staff, or providing personal care. Regular family contact is also important for maintaining mental and communication skills. Visits are key to the health and wellbeing of a person living with dementia in care home. This article explains the government’s visitor guidance in more detail and what it means for families with loved ones living with dementia in care homes.[Article](https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/blog/care-homes-coronavirus-visits-government-guidance-dementia?utm_medium=email&utm_source=dotdigital&dm_i=57EL,8TJ9,2DU87D,Z3N7,1) |
| **E-Cigarette - Induced Lung Disease: From Acute to Chronic**A 52-year-old man attended our hospital reporting breathlessness on exertion that had been worsening over the past 2 weeks. He had smoked 20 cigarettes a day for the past 40 years. He had no other symptoms—specifically no systemic or gastrointestinal complaints. The patient had tried to quit smoking 4 months earlier and had started vaping: he had been using commercially available e-cigarettes which did not have any Δ9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) added.The symptoms started some days after the patient had added a new flavour—blueberry—to the vaping fluid.[Lancet Article](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736%2820%2931755-4/fulltext) |
| **Marmot Review 10 Years On**It has been ten years since the publication of The Marmot Review, for the first time in more than 100 years life expectancy has failed to increase across the country, and for the poorest 10% of women it has actually declined. Over the last decade health inequalities have widened overall, and the amount of time people spend in poor health has increased since 2010. #Marmot2020 confirms an increase in the north/south health gap, where the largest decreases were seen in the most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods in the North East, and the largest increases in the least deprived 10% of neighbourhoods in London.There are a number of key points made within the report, but the principle point I would like to make is that, the more deprived the area, the shorter the life expectancy. This social gradient has become steeper over the last decade, and women in the most deprived 10% of areas for whom life expectancy fell from 2010-12 and 2016-18. There are marked regional differences in life expectancy, particularly among people living in more deprived areas, a general point is that the North is doing worse than the South.Mortality rates are increasing for men and women aged 45-49 – perhaps related to so-called ‘deaths of despair’ (suicide, drugs and alcohol abuse) as seen in the USA. Child poverty has increased with children’s and youth centres have closing and the reduction in funding for education. There is a housing crisis and a rise in homelessness, people have insufficient income to lead a healthy life and there are more ignored communities with poor conditions leaving people with little reason for hope, aspiration and tangible possibility to improve their lot!Marmot Review 2020[Executive Summary](https://www.health.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-03/Health%20Equity%20in%20England_The%20Marmot%20Review%2010%20Years%20On_executive%20summary_web.pdf)[Full Report](https://www.health.org.uk/sites/default/files/upload/publications/2020/Health%20Equity%20in%20England_The%20Marmot%20Review%2010%20Years%20On_full%20report.pdf) |
| **Credit - Exclusive Online Preview** **Date: 16th September 2020****Times: 2pm & 7pm****Rehearsed Reading & Live Q&A**There will be two streamed rehearsed readings of the play 'Credit' which was scheduled to be performed live earlier this year. Award-winning writer Laura Lindow and Cap-a-Pie Theatre Company are previewing the play online on Sept 16th. The play is about the experiences of people claiming and living on Universal Credit, told through the story of Lisa. The work is based on academic research and collaborations between the creative team and Universal Credit claimants. Since March this year, there have been 3.2 million new claims for Universal Credit, it is therefore even more important to discuss and debate whether this welfare system is fit for purpose for the millions of people who are caught up in it. I hope that you can see one of the performances on the day, and take part in the Q&A. You can do so by clicking on the links below. Please share with your friends, colleagues and networks.[More Information](https://www.cap-a-pie.co.uk/credit/) |
| **Marmot ‘Ten Years On!’ (Conference Postponed until the Spring)****Venue: Leeds City Hilton Hotel, Neville Street, Leeds, LS1 4BX,****Date: Monday, 21st September 2020** |
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