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Learning from Innovation in a Crisis

GMCA Real Time Learning Project
May - September 2020

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Introduction

23 March 2020 signalled the first day of a national lockdown across the UK intended to arrest the exponential spread of novel coronavirus sars-cov-2, to avoid an overwhelm of health services and prevent as many deaths as possible from COVID-19, the disease that the new virus causes in humans.

Across Greater Manchester, providers of public services, voluntary and community organisations, businesses, families and individuals mobilised and committed their talents, energy, ideas and resources to protecting the most vulnerable members of their communities. Their actions were unprecedented in recent times, inspiring, and visibly and rapidly transforming neighbours' capacity to help one another.

As the national lockdown began to ease it became clear that, alongside the loss and hardship caused by the virus, innovation was flourishing; new ideas, roles, relationships and practices were emerging that hinted at solutions to some long standing challenges and deeply held ambitions of system leaders committed to supporting vulnerable people in Greater Manchester, not just during a national emergency, but all the time.

Determined to capture and learn from the experiences and insights of the innovators - individuals and teams galvanised by the crisis - in May 2020 the Public Service Reform Team in the Greater Manchester Combined Authority partnered with Innovation Unit to codesign and co-facilitate a rapid, appreciative enquiry into the activities, effects and implications of innovations introduced across the City Region, focusing on early help for families with young children, support provided through community hubs and *Everyone in*; an emergency response ensuring homeless people and rough sleepers had somewhere safe to stay.

This summary report shares the findings from the enquiry and, in particular, the direction that innovations that grew up in the crisis implies for the future of public service reform. GMCA and Innovation Unit would like to thank the 100 bold, ambitious colleagues who took part, and hope that we have done justice to the brilliant leadership, practice, insights and ideas they so generously shared.

As we acknowledge the best of innovation during the crisis, it is important to note the huge differences in system conditions and their role in what proved possible during the emergency response, compared with the environment that existed before the virus hit. The big challenge will be to ensure that system leaders go beyond high level support for the ideas and principles that are captured here to ask: *How can we practically apply what has been learned to bring about real change across GM?*
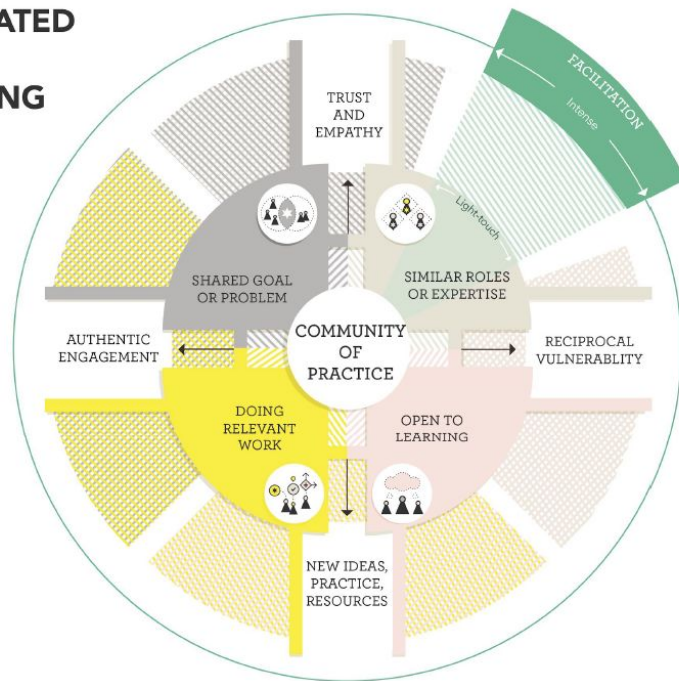
Approach

Each of the three themes was led by an officer of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority with strategic responsibility for the work: Jacob Botham for Children's Services, Dave Kelly for Community Hubs and Molly Bishop for Homelessness. Jane Forrest was the overall lead for the project and Ian Wraith the project manager.

This team worked with Innovation Unit to codesign three communities of practice (CoP), one for each theme. Members of the CoPs were drawn from the ten local authorities that comprise GMCA, relevant VCSE organisations and private providers active in the emergency response. Members took part in a sequence of three online workshops:

- Workshop 1: Storytelling by participants - the GM Covid 19 response
- Workshop 2: Horizon scanning - examples from elsewhere that connected to and amplified aspects of GM Covid 19 stories
- Workshop 3: Anticipating a preferred future, post-Covid, and articulating first/next steps

Facilitation was critical to the success of these workshops. CoPs need only light touch facilitation where participants share expertise, goals and similar roles, however these were diverse groups with different experiences and perspectives on the crisis and its implications for public services. Participants valued their engagement and have expressed a desire to continue to connect and learn together in the future.

FACILITATED PEER LEARNING

Approach

To complement the three Communities of Practice, Oldham invited a deep dive, local enquiry exploring the emergency response from the point of view of residents and the informal groups and leaders who are part of the fabric of local communities.

A detailed report setting out the stories gathered and the findings and insights developed as a result is included at appendix 4. Also in the appendix are the tools and frameworks used by the enquiry team to map relevant stakeholders in communities and to build the relationships they needed with residents and community leaders, in order to understand how the emergency response unfolded on the ground.

Interestingly, findings and insights from the Oldham Community Enquiry align significantly with those from the CoPs. Both enquiries surfaced the critical role of VCSE organisations, informal community leaders and individual residents in ensuring that the most vulnerable members of communities were connected and supported during the crisis. What the Oldham Community Enquiry adds is more granular detail about how communities achieved this, providing clues therefore about what it will take to sustain and build on community capacity and capability in the future.

Framing the enquiry

An enquiry covering three themes: early help; community hubs; and homlessness, and involving ten local authorities, and numerous voluntary and private sector organisations results in a rich, complex and diverse data set.

Data were organised using this simple framework, which defines but holds together the different 'moving parts' of a complex public service environment. Using the framework, the enquiry team was able to find patterns and connections and develop and test insights as the enquiry progressed in real time.

The framework was used to:

- capture and summarise headlines from stories of local emergency response;
- select and make connections with examples of relevant innovations elsewhere, collected through a domestic and international horizon scan;
- develop future scenarios to model what might be possible and desirable in each of the three theme areas.

The outputs from these three activities can be found in Appendices 1,2 and 3 to this summary report.

The key findings are summarised on the following slide.

Leadership & Governance (how decisions are made and direction is set)	**Practice & Citizen Experience** (what happens on the frontline)
System Conditions (funding, regulation, accountability, data)	**Workforce & Culture** (what it's like to work in GM)

Key findings

Leadership & Governance

The emergency response brought a unity of purpose that **aligned and liberated informal leadership** across the City Region, cutting across hierarchies, professional affiliations and organisational boundaries. Groups and individuals without formal leadership roles took charge and others willingly followed.

Formal leaders became more visible, accessible and connected to each other and their teams. They created a strong sense of **mission and permission** increasing teams' confidence to act.

Rapid and participatory decision-making empowered people and places, creating **prototypes for local governance** in which outcomes are locally determined and co-produced with residents, risk and responsibility are widely shared, leadership distributed and power and resources significantly devolved.

Practice & Citizen Experience

Self organising local response teams initiated a rapid shift in modality to provide **support driven by people not programmes**, meaning early and specialist help were made available at the point of need with only minimal recourse to formal assessment. Help was available to those who said they needed help.

Anytime anywhere digital access significantly increased reach and consistency of participation in programmes, which were streamlined and made freely available online. Waiting times for specialist services were radically reduced.

People found help where they lived; help came to them. Community assets (e.g schools, churches) became the bases for a **coordinated hyperlocal response** involving, sometimes led by, VCSE, business and residents, alongside public services.

System Conditions

Existing system levers failed during the crisis. Regulation, inspection, commissioning, funding, designed to manage quality, risk and resources simply evaporated. In their absence risk and resources were shared by locality teams and **quality outcomes were co-produced with residents.**

Shared and combined data and intelligence from different sources, in particular health providers, VCSE, councils and residents, generated the information needed to provide timely and useful support. The risk of censure for sharing data was weighed against the risks to residents' health and wellbeing presented by covid.

How the system conceives of community/neighbourhood/locality was challenged and new understandings of **community as felt identity** connected variously and in complex ways to place, faith, culture, interest took shape.

Workforce & Culture

A pattern for **a new community workforce** was drawn, characterised by blended and flexible teams that include residents and volunteers working as equals alongside professionals in the service of communities.

New, people/family/place-centred roles that extend beyond organisational or professional boundaries were modeled, expanding opportunities for professional learning and career development.

Flexible and home working, enabled by technology, increased productivity and staff satisfaction for the majority, with the potential to reduce absence and to improve recruitment and retention.

What next?

This enquiry unfolded in real time, exploring with participants their experiences of the emergency response while these were still fresh in their memories. In some areas the crisis was far from over and, at the time of writing (September 2020), parts of Greater Manchester are again under tighter restrictions with the prospect of a further national lockdown very real.

However the enquiry was always about the future, specifically the future of public services in Greater Manchester. We wanted to know what from the emergency response was likely to be unique and unrepeatable - even undesirable - and what might turn out to be a potentially seminal new idea, or to align with and add value to longer-term trends and plans. The Public Service Reform Team, engaged in a long term strategy with local councils to modernise public services across Greater Manchester together, was eager to capture and incorporate this learning.

So, we asked participants for their recommendations: "What from the emergency response is it most important to sustain or discard?" To stimulate the conversation, we projected forward to 2025 with aspirational scenarios that amplified and operationalised the features of the emergency response that they considered most significant in each theme area (scenarios in appendix) and asked what would need to happen next if their aspirations were to be realised. We also asked them what gaps the emergency response had highlighted, which it would be important to fill.

The following slide summarises their responses in each category.

Keep Carry this on post-Covid	**Amplify** Do more of this/do it better
Discard Things we must stop now	**Create** Things we have learned are missing

What next?

Keep Carry this on post-Covid

- The sense of urgency (but not panic), mutual trust and shared mission
- Partnership, collaboration, collegiality especially with VCSE, schools, private sector
- Openness/permission to be creative, innovate and to step outside role descriptions/remits
- Faster decision making
- Fewer, shorter online meetings/home working
- Data/intelligence/information sharing

Amplify Do more of this/do it better

- Volunteering and the role of business, faith and community leaders
- Listening to/valuing of residents' views, voices, assets, needs
- Co production
- Networks and new/improved relationships
- Collective responsibility and sharing risk
- Local, collaborative problem solving
- Use of digital platforms to connect and collaborate
- Flexibility in roles and working conditions

Discard Things we must stop now

- Elaborated, unnecessary process (bureaucracy, meetings, reporting)
- Risk aversion
- Default to services and programmes to provide help
- Commissioning, procurement, KPIs in their current form
- Detailed and constraining role descriptions
- Silo working that excludes residents
- Presenteeism, 9-5/inflexible working hours, big expensive, uninviting offices, commuting

Create Things we have learned are missing

- New forms of accountability that engage residents/communities
- More community owned assets and spaces
- Ways to empower peer and community support
- A workforce that understands and can practice coproduction
- New, sustainable funding models
- Genuine joint commissioning with and for communities
- Diversity in the workforce; have them reflect more accurately the communities they serve

Conclusion: What we lost (and found) in the fire

An overarching theme in this enquiry has been the retreat of formal systems and process during the crisis and what grew up in their place. Levers of conventional administration and control were utterly disrupted and failed to function in their ostensible roles of assuring quality, safety, equity and value for money in Greater Manchester's public services. Worse, in the earliest days of the emergency response, some of those levers risked getting in the way of actually helping people, at a time when helping people was the only priority. Commissioned providers worried they might miss critical KPIs, budget holders that they would emerge from the crisis worse off and unable to meet expectations, and everyone was concerned that they would be penalised for sharing the now genuinely useful data they held on where people, families and communities were and what they might need.

Chaos, corruption and failure did not ensue, quite the contrary. Instead the people and organisations that inhabit this system shifted into a new shape; they flipped the logic and narrative of public services from "This is what we have, who needs it most?" to "How can we help you to help one another?" and, even more simply, "How can we help?" What resulted was at times imperfect - how could it be otherwise? However, the determination of the c 100 participants in this enquiry to resist a snap back to how things were before the pandemic is evidence that things before were imperfect too. This won't come as a surprise. In fact many of the changes brought about by innovators during the crisis align closely with longer terms trends and plans in public service reform and, helpfully, may have provided a significant system disrupter, which will accentuate and accelerate these.

Based on the findings from the Communities of Practice workshops and the Oldham Community Enquiry, the following foundational insights capture the key features of the emergency response, which together suggest a set of design principles for what the future of public services in Greater Manchester could and should look like. Each insight is explored individually in the following slides. However, it is critical to note that it was the dynamic interaction between the features that created the energy and the necessary conditions for innovation to thrive, so that support could rapidly adapt to the context changed so radically by Covid 19.

1. A **mission driven unity of purpose**, which aligned human efforts and drew discretionary energy
2. A **humanitarian emphasis on places and people**, not services or sectors
3. A belief that **liberating and connecting local capacity** should be the first line of support
4. A **permissive, risk confident culture** that allowed good things to happen

1. A mission-driven unity of purpose

The system response to the extreme circumstances of the pandemic demonstrated beyond any reasonable challenge that meaningful cooperation, collaboration and collegiality *are* possible, when there is a shared focus and purpose - a mission - around which different people, groups and organisations across local systems can unite.

Covid 19 and its impact for individuals, families and communities was so immediate and so overwhelming that it pushed all other considerations aside. Everyone had or took on a role that was mission-critical in the battle to protect lives and livelihoods in Greater Manchester against the worst effects of the virus.

With this single, clear and urgent focus, inarguable in the earliest days of the crisis at least, long-standing barriers to inter-agency and cross-sector partnership and collaboration were overcome or simply ignored.

Data and information were shared, roles and remits were fluid, resources were pooled and redistributed, contracts were flexed, performance indicators and sanctions suspended and so on.

2. A humanitarian emphasis on places and people

Participants in the enquiry consistently told us that the requirements to conform to strict rules and frameworks make it hard to respond flexibly and creatively to, for instance, diversity of circumstances, unpredictable events or needs that change over time. Commissioning, KPIs, inspection, and top down governance and oversight all featured frequently in this recurring theme.

Stockport Turbocharging Team Around the School
In TAS the CSC front door is in the school - during Covid the MASH effectively moved there too. Police, adult and children's social workers, housing and health came together to do whatever it took to protect the most vulnerable children and families in the school community. Triage happened daily (previously these were weekly meetings) Whole family issues came into scope e.g. jobs, adult mental health - anything that might affect the community's children. New opportunities have been created by this intense period of collaboration to work effectively across agencies.

In the emergency response, released from these rules and frameworks, people and organisations naturally reorientated to what was genuinely needed. They disassembled, or stopped offering all together, programmes and services for which they were contracted and instead listened, watched and learned with residents in communities to figure out quickly together what help was required and how best it might be provided. Unsurprisingly formal programmes and discrete services hardly featured at all in the response as a result.

As life and systems eventually, slowly, return to something approaching normal, the threat that governance and regulation will reassert themselves and force a return to more formal, less people- and place-centred provision feels very real to those who have valued the opportunity to be more creative and responsive during the crisis.

3. Liberating and connecting local capacity

An emerging strategy, precipitated by the pandemic, has been coproducing support that can be characterised as: *people and families first; community next; services last.*

The long-standing understanding that asset- and strengths-based approaches and co-production with residents are the surest routes to improving outcomes - and the only routes to growing sustainable capacity and capability - has been given a new lease of life during the emergency response.

Local brokerage that builds out from the support that is latent in families and that connects individuals and families to voluntary and community support has been empowering for communities. In particular support for community groups has

generated a renewed sense of confidence that local solutions and responses can and should be found to local problems and opportunities.

4. A permissive, risk confident culture

In place of oversight and regulation, which largely failed to function during the pandemic, 'new' ways to quality assure support, ensure equity and value for money and safeguard the most vulnerable were demonstrated:

'new' because for many contributors to this enquiry, they felt like a rolling back of recently added layers of bureaucracy and control, making way for professional judgement based on expertise and public service values as system governors.

The emergency response saw formal leaders step back to make space for self organising teams to form and to develop responses that could operate successfully, literally to protect people and save lives.

High trust, mutual accountability, authentic collaboration and a mature and pragmatic - empowered - attitude to risk were noted and highly prized by the frontline.

Teams were fluid, flexible and free to innovate on behalf of the residents and communities they serve, and many express a real reluctance to return to the formality and scrutiny that were so powerful in shaping the culture that had grown up before the virus struck.

VCSE in the lead in Trafford

The development of 6 community hubs in 4 localities in Trafford was led by the VCSE sector. They provided food banks and benefit help, and had lists of people that were shielding and needed additional support. The statutory sector offered volunteers training in safeguarding and identification, and over time began to drip in statutory help in instances of family and relationship breakdown. These community hubs have connected to and signposted wider commissioned services, but really the council stepped back and enabled the VCSE sector to shape the local offer for their own communities. The VCSE sector very much invited the statutory services in, and not the other way round.

Conclusion: Four strategic challenges for GMCA

Together the findings and insights from this indicate four strategic challenges for further discussion:

Leadership & Governance

What would a post-covid mission look like that recreates the sense of unity demonstrated during the pandemic, galvanising the system with enough urgency and energy to create alignment and sustain into the future?

Practice & Citizen Experience

How might GMCA and local system leaders work together to shape an offer that reflects and flexes to the needs of people and places; one that is no longer captured by programmes and services?

System Conditions

What should leaders do to create a culture that is conducive to innovation; a culture in which individuals and teams are valued and trusted to make great decisions and where risk is managed and shared to powerful effect?

Workforce & Culture

What kind of workforce is required to work in, with and on behalf of communities where identifying, growing and connecting local capacity and capability are the primary sources of support for residents and families?

Find out more

To learn more about Greater Manchester's Covid 19 response, public service reform in Greater Manchester and the people and places taking part in this enquiry contact Dave Kelly
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To learn more about Innovation Unit and support for the GMCA Innovation in a Crisis project contact Sarah Gillinson, Chief Executive, Innovation Unit
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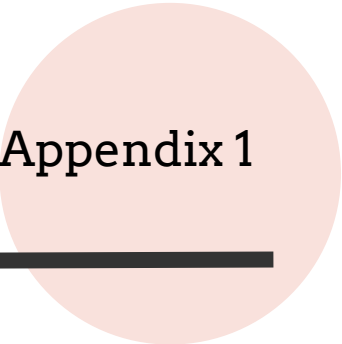
About Innovation Unit

Innovation Unit is a not for profit social enterprise.

We grow new solutions to complex social challenges and are committed to taking solutions that work to scale.

We combine service design, research and change management expertise, with a disciplined, rigorous approach to innovation and a deep understanding of systems and system leadership.
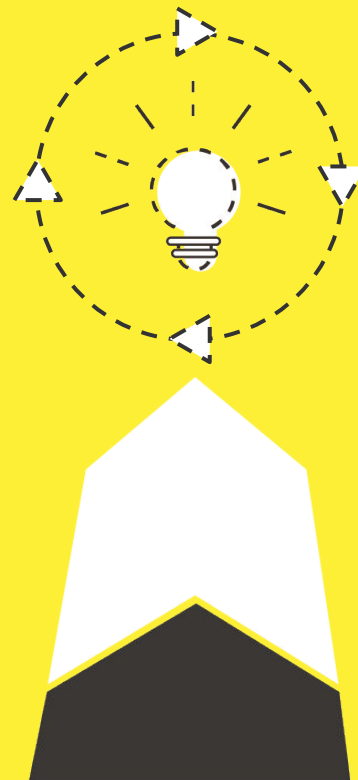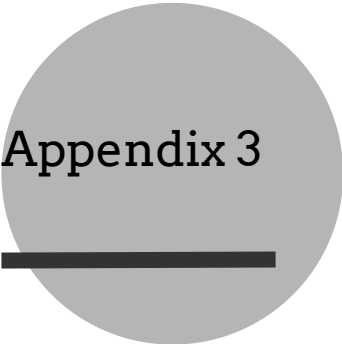
Appendices

Appendix 1

What happened during the emergency response? Headlines from participants' stories, told during COP workshop 1.
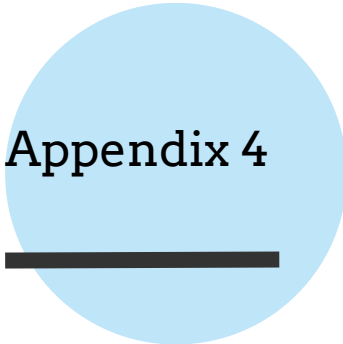
Appendix 2

Horizon scan of curated relevant innovations explored by participants during workshop 2.

Appendix 3

GM2025 preferred future scenarios in each theme area, generated by synthesising the stories from 1 and features identified in 2.

Appendix 4

The findings and insights from the Oldham Community Enquiry.

Appendix 1
Headlines from GM Stories

Workshop 1 Children's Services, Early Help

Leadership & Governance

- Decision making was informal, decentralised and mission led; less command and control more distributed and closer to the frontline
- There was greater 'permission to act'; senior leaders empowered managers and frontline staff to respond creatively to presenting need
- Senior Leaders and decision makers were available and more engaged with the day to day because of/via remote working
- Senior leaders were more present and visible; briefings and communications were reassuring and instilled confidence

Practice & Citizen Experience

- New categories of vulnerability emerged and conversations about prevention and universal provision were revitalised
- Teams used data with more urgency and better questions in order to be more proactive, less reactive and help more people
- Families were able to gain earlier access to specialist services - MASH at the Front Door
- Coordination with VCS was critical and much improved, sharing intelligence and matching support to need
- Use of digital platforms enabled families to access programmes and support from home, resulting in big increases in reach and attendance (and therefore impact

System Conditions

- Bureaucracy was radically reduced; "stripped back." In particular there was far less assessment - and far more help
- Data sharing became more pragmatic and more rapid - who needs to know what to get things done?
- There was less friction at organisational/sector boundaries, although some challenges remained between adult's and children's services

Workforce & Culture

- Partnerships took on a more practical focus - people were doing real stuff together with common purpose, not just attending meetings
- Partnerships became more relational. Covid19 was a common cause - a shared mission - connecting humans across professional and organisational boundaries
- Individuals stepped outside their job descriptions to get things done
- Individuals felt empowered, trusted and confident to act
- Home working/Zooming changed relationships;people became more than their roles and got to know each other better

Workshop 1 Community Hubs

Leadership & Governance

- Leadership was widely distributed and permission granted to "just go away and do it" " I have your back"
- It was immediately obvious that no single organisation had everything communities needed, so power, resources, people, intelligence, ideas were shared freely at all levels
- Senior leaders acted swiftly and were decisive in ways that were reassuring and instilled confidence in their teams
- Leaders became facilitators instead of directors; acting as brokers and connectors; removing barriers and creating space for their teams to act

Practice & Citizen Experience

- VCS orgs demonstrated extraordinary levels of collaboration and generosity e.g.using reserves in the early stages before councils could mobilise, connecting a food solutions network rather than competing food banks, raising funds. However some areas were less well served
- The importance of a place based approach was brilliantly demonstrated. Previously something of a special interest group, place based working became widely understood and valued
- Some 'irreversible' shifts to online provision took place e.g. prescriptions, coordination using WhatsApp groups, group consultations via Zoom

System Conditions

- No red tape and 'whatever it takes' funding is made anything seem possible; some concerns about what happens next
- Access to good data and its even better use were critical and improved rapidly in accuracy and sophistication. Teams were increasingly able to obtain and read across multiple data sets (NHS, authority, housing, utilities) to develop useful intelligence
- Alignment around a shared mission modeled an alternative approach to accountability; KPIs and performance monitoring became redundant when a system oriented to shared values, goals and purpose

Workforce & Culture

- Staff realised they are also residents and community members and it was often this 'private self' who engaged in the response
- Staff redeployed to the frontline found the experience inspiring and felt a renewed sense of the value of their 'day job'
- Close and purposeful engagement across sector lines and with communities and VCS meant staff built new and valuable relationships
- Capacity, flexibility and productivity increased due to homeworking
- Appetite for autonomy grew; staff became less fearful and felt more empowered to act

Workshop 1 Homelessness

Leadership & Governance

- Everyone In galvanised action and decision making at every level creating a unity of purpose, an imperative and a shared mission
- Covid made homelessness visible to the public and to other sectors so it rose quickly up the agenda and became everyone's concern
- Senior leaders' tolerance of risk significantly increased; Covid was the greater threat in any calculation
- Senior leaders listened; "never was the voice of front line workers been more valued"
- Space was created for the voluntary sector to partner and to lead

Practice & Citizen Experience

- Consistent and longer term placements enabled provision of holistic support to tackle underlying reasons for homelessness
- Preconceptions (and prejudice) about homeless people were challenged e.g fears that residents would abuse hotel facilities were unfounded, in fact they cherished them
- Operations enabled by creative use of technology turned out to be much more efficient e.g. online recruitment
- Digital platforms enabled greater and faster access to specialist services and expert advice for frontline staff and residents
- Everyone In delivered benefits to communities, staff and the local economy as well as residents

System Conditions

- Sudden injection of central Govt funding, clear direction and additional resources (more people) were 'massive enablers' as was available accommodation
- Bureaucracy was rolled back, dramatically increasing the speed and efficiency with which it was possible to get things done
- Better sharing of intelligence across sectors, services and organisations e.g. vulnerable people identified through community hubs
- Providers were willing partners, rapidly able to renegotiate contracts where it became clear that what was originally commissioned was insufficient or unhelpful to the Covid emergency

Workforce & Culture

- A collective sense of urgency and uncertainty brought people together in flatter, tighter multi-agency teams
- People felt more confident and empowered to take risks and try new things; partly to do with backing by leaders and permissions granted by central Govt, partly to do with working in tight-knit teams where risks were shared
- There was increased and improved communication and learning between LAs across GM
- Collaboration with VCS, providers and across sectors (e.g. hospitals and prisons) was authentic, purposeful, non-hierarchical

Appendix 2
Horizon Scan

Bromley by Bow Centre, Family Playrooms

An online activity group for families with children from 0 – 11 years old run by a neighbourhood hub. There are nine rooms to explore, each filled with fun things to do, tips and resources to keep children healthy and entertained whilst socially distancing.

OVERVIEW

The neighbourhood hub provides a wide variety of integrated services, supporting individuals and families based on their specific needs including: employment and training support, health services and advice, adult social care support and activities, and wide community services.

The Bromley by Bow Centre has collaborated with the ActEarly team, to create an online resource to support families during the lockdown. Family Playrooms is an online resource designed to be educational and fun, providing activities, tips and resources to keep children entertained while out of school and early years provision. Family Playrooms offers a digital activity group for families with children aged 0-11. Virtual rooms offer an opportunity to meet other local families virtually, and provide practical resources to support families. There is a Facebook Group where families can share their learning and thoughts on the virtual group. The Parents' Corner is a virtual room containing tips and advice for parents. Resource topics range from tips on supporting mental health, advice on how to explain the coronavirus to children, to suggestions of daily activities for families to do. The service is focused on providing early support to families, providing them with the skills and resources to support one another. The virtual service has been put in place to ensure families still receive this support whilst they can not access early help services in person.

Family Voices

Family Voices is a genuinely co-productive parent-led volunteer group that provides universal child care in Knowsley. Volunteers draw on their own experiences as parents to offer insight and support.

OVERVIEW

Knowsley is one of the most deprived boroughs in the UK. Through Nesta's Transforming Early Years programme, children's centres staff found that in some parts of the community, parents were sceptical about the value of services, and there was a lack of trust in professionals. The team began with the assumption that providing more and different services would improve their service, but they realised that, in fact, their work needed to empower families to support themselves and to feel more willing and confident to engage with services. They came up with the idea of developing a parent-led model that would enable volunteer parents to co-produce and co-deliver early years services with staff. As a result, Family Voices was born.

Family Voices began as a parents' forum consisting of one enthusiastic volunteer in 2010, and it has since grown into a thriving parent-led charity consisting of 33 parent volunteers. The volunteers work alongside paid staff in the children's centres, designing and delivering universal early years sessions, doing extensive outreach work, and running large community events.

Family Voices and the Children's Centre represent a relationship of genuine co-production. Family Voices volunteers have their own office, design events and services, and are treated as 'professionals'. One lady from the Children's Centre who works alongside Family Voices said, "When I come into work in the morning I feel like I'm coming in to my family."

Volunteers are offered an accredited training package that was put together by the Children's Centre which helps to recruit more volunteers. Volunteers from Family Voices say that they have become more confident and gained more skills.

IMPACT

The children's centres' reach have increased from 22% in 2010 to 90% in 2013, while the charity has been able to expand and diversify the range of services that the children's centre offers. Parents believe that their children have benefited from the social aspects of the Family Voices sessions. Parents from the community are also often more willing to speak to volunteers than Children's Centre staff as they can relate to them more.

"People feel more happy to engage with us because, you know, we're just the people you see in Tesco's."- Family Voices volunteer

Youngballymun

Youngballymun is a place-based strategy which seeks to improve outcomes in education, health and mental health for all children, young people and families in the Ballymun area.

OVERVIEW

Youngballmun delivers a set of integrated services to support the complex and varied physical, emotional and developmental needs of infants, children and families. Through multifaceted programmes of intervention, they provide a continuum of care to children from before they are born, through infancy and childhood, up to young adulthood.

Youngballymun sought to better integrate existing services to improve outcomes for children and carers, by making it easier for complex needs to be met. New programmes have been introduced which meet children's specific health and educational needs, and help carers to address stress factors in their own lives.

The strategy is needs-based, evidence led, outcomes focused, and based on the principles of collaboration and consensus. Earning the trust of families, residents, and partner organisations is an overarching principle. An emphasis is placed on local strengths and resources: parents, extended family and community resources are all used to maximise the potential of the child.

Youngballymun's programmes of work spread across Infant and Early Years Mental Health; Family & community language & literacy in partnership with schools, community practitioners, and speech and language therapists; and Social & Emotional Wellbeing work which provides support to parents in school and community settings, as well as capacity building for teachers and practitioners. Youngballymun works closely with both local and national organisations in the field of prevention and early intervention, to develop and share learning about what works in implementing evidence-based approaches to improve outcomes for children and families.

IMPACT

Since June 2011 youngballymun has been monitoring and tracking the performance of each new intake of 1st class pupils across all 11 primary schools in the community. Data suggests the narrowing or closing of the literacy achievement gap for Ballymun pupils.

There is also evidence of better social and emotional outcomes for children across the Ballymun area, and compelling evidence of better outcomes for parents. The key performance indicator is children's rating by classroom teachers and parents on the Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ).

Parenting offer, Tameside

Within parenting there has been a requirement to completely change ways of working and move to a virtual based service. Tameside have worked to ensure they are still meeting the needs of parents, carers and children across the borough.

Why did we choose this?
- Covid-19 response
- Virtual service delivery of Early Help services
- Collaboration across services
- Flexible team working

OVERVIEW

In response to the multiple challenges presented by Covid-19, the Local Authority; Health; Early Attachment; HYM; Voluntary Sector; Early Years; and Action Together worked to radically shift practice and delivery around their parenting offer. Tameside improved confidence in use of IT and virtual platforms to deliver their parenting offer; staff worked with partners to develop innovative ways of working; flexible team working was established; and permissions were created to think out of the box. As a result, they developed an accessible service during lockdown; they learnt that having an online offer in place for all services was positive; their reach widened to families and feedback was positive; and they developed an offer out of core hours. Working differently has invigorated staff to find new and exciting ways of working, ensuring Tameside are reaching their most hard to reach families.

Tameside delivered differently with the virtual launch of their Parenting Strategy – Grow With Me; virtual Solihull and Incredible Years courses; the development of a Parenting Helpline for parents, carers and professionals; increased promotion of the Solihull Online course; crèche workers delivered differently with support to parents through WhatsApp, and with home learning; the creation of a 'Successful Families' Facebook Page; development of a 'Parenting Teenagers' online support group; development of a virtual training offer for all parenting and parental conflict; Traffic Light resources; facebook live resources; and promotion of packs and resources for families. (activity packs)

IMPACT

The Incredible Years and Solihull programmes, were completed using Skype and phone calls, and have since started 2 new groups.The Online Solihull Offer has had 188 additional parents sign up to access the offer, in the same period last year 107 parents signed up for the courses. A telephone support line was launched in April 2020 and has supported families and professionals.

All the parents on the Solihull Teen waiting list have been offered support to them via SKYPE and phone calls when required. Young parents are able to access daily WhatsApp support and weekly activity packs. Crèche workers are continuing to support parenting group families by providing activity packs for the children and videos on how to use the packs. They are also available for advice and guidance.

The Home Interaction Programme for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY), Australia

HIPPY is a two-year home-based parenting and early childhood enrichment programme targeting families with young children.

Why did we choose this?

- Families and communities treated as an asset
- Wisdom and expertise are distributed across professionals and families
- Capacity building for parents and Home Tutors

OVERVIEW

HIPPY creates a structured network of support which brings together parents, tutors and professionals. The aim is to empower parents to be their child's first teacher.

Each HIPPY programme is staffed by a qualified Coordinator and a team of Home Tutors. Home Tutors are paid employees in receipt of training and support from the Coordinator, and they are also usually parents from the community. Becoming a Home Tutor can offer a pathway to training and employment, as well as mobilising assets and strengthening resources within the community

The HIPPY approach develops foundations for learning in the home, including improved literacy in maths and reading. It fosters social inclusion by actively building a structured network around families and children. Parents are supported to read, play and undertake educational activities with their child for around 15 minutes per day, 5 days per week over the two years that the family is encouraged to be involved with the programme. They also attend regular parent group gatherings and social activities.

Home Tutors work with families and encourage parents to undertake the role of Home Tutors themselves. Families are empowered and engaged in their children's learning, as well as engaged and invested in their local community. Children are at the same time supported in their learning, and parents and carers gain skills, training and employment.

IMPACT

98% of HIPPY parents reported an improvement in the interaction and relationships between them and their child by graduation; 96% of HIPPY parents felt that HIPPY taught them more about how their child learns and grows; 95% of HIPPY parents used ideas they gained from doing HIPPY when interacting with other children; 47% of HIPPY parents commenced in some form of paid employment; and 85% felt that HIPPY helped to teach them about useful groups and organisations in their community.

Derbyshire Thriving Communities

Derbyshire Thriving Communities is a multi-agency programme designed to improve the outcomes for families with complex needs in five of the most deprived communities in the county. Derbyshire is shifting away from 'services' that react at times of crises, to models which focus on prevention and empower communities to act.

Why did we choose this?
- Families and communities treated as assets
- Integration and collaboration across services and sectors
- Guided by need

OVERVIEW

The Thriving Communities initiative emerged from a desire to better understand the needs of communities, and to radically improve support for the most vulnerable families who suffer from multiple disadvantages; financial crisis, long term unemployment, family breakdown and poor physical and mental health.

The vision for Thriving Communities starts with a simple premise: that communities in Derbyshire already have many of the key ingredients to enable families and individuals to thrive. However, the services and support provided through both state and voluntary organisations are not making the best use of these valuable and transformative assets. Instead, support often restricts their potential and, in the worst cases, excludes it.

Thriving Communities is both a strategic programme of cross-agency transformation, and a set of activities and projects in five localities in the county. Their work in each community is shaped by local ambitions and needs. The Thriving Communities team is embedded in each community, and conducts ethnography, co-design and prototyping to find out the specific needs of that area, as well as identifying the people and organisations that already exist and can make it happen. Each community has its own set of priorities, and these are fed back up to the Thriving Communities Board- which includes most major agencies operating in Derbyshire- to set county-wide priorities.

IMPACT

While the project is still in development stages, there has already been significant impact on activity, including the number of families who have taken part in co-design and prototyping; the number of agencies and communities involved; the number of practitioners trained in the Thriving Communities approach; and the new projects and services that have been set up as a result. There has also been real culture change, with intangible benefits such as increased joint working; increased enthusiasm of staff; and better relationships between agencies and communities. The headline figures from projected cost savings were potential savings per community per year of £360k, and social return on investment of £2m if scaled across the county.

Harlem Children's Zone

Harlem Children's Zone is an interconnected programme of schools and social services which offers schooling and childcare as well as adult learning and advice on how to access financial, legal and medical services to all families in the area.

OVERVIEW

Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) is a place-based non-profit organisation. HCZ focus on a particular area – some 100 blocks of Harlem – marked by high levels of disadvantage. It seeks to create a 'pipeline' of support for children by linking high-quality schools and early years provision with personal, social and health support for them and their families. Intervention at the level of the child and family is supported by broader community development initiatives. It is doubly holistic in working with children over time and across all contexts in which they learn and develop. It tackles multiple forms of disadvantage simultaneously and works right across the childhood years.

HCZ has established an integrated package of programmes to support children's education in early childhood, elementary school, middle school, high school and college contexts. It also runs its own charter schools called Promise Academies. HCZ wider programmes of family and community support are built around this education-oriented pipeline. A core belief is that educating children requires whole community engagement, and that transforming a neighbourhood facing complex problems will transform young people's lives.

The Zone began in the early 1990s when the area suffered from problems related to poverty, school truancy and drug abuse. The Harlem Children's Zone aimed to break the cycle of generational poverty by bringing support services into a single area.

Why did we choose this?
- Genuinely holistic pipeline of support for children in all contexts of their lives
- Interconnected programme of schools and services

IMPACT

HCZ track 600 goals each year, carefully evaluating and refining programmes to ensure they are responding and changing in order to keep improving and inspiring. Since 2000 there have been 6059 baby college graduates. Since 2010, 1200+ families have remained together and avoided foster care. In 2017 HCZ supported 13,447 children, and 861 young people were in college.

Family by Family, Australia

Family by Family is a network of families helping other families to make change. The programme links 'seeking families'- families seeking change- with 'sharing families'- families who are thriving but have overcome adversity, often in contexts of real disadvantage.

Why did we choose this?
- Families treated as an asset
- Wisdom and expertise are distributed across professionals and families

OVERVIEW

Family by Family is a peer to peer, strengths-based approach designed for and with families to help them thrive. Paired families organise link-ups, and sharing families are supported by professional Family Coaches to help families meet their goals.

Family by Family treats lived experience as a resource and a strength. Families are engaged and trained to help each other reach and sustain goals, creating shifts in the way people accept and offer help. One professional Family Coach works with 15 Sharing Families, who in turn work with 40 Seeking Families, reaching up to 100 children at risk.

Family goals are co-developed by families during link ups, periodically supported by a Family Coach. Goals attend to attitudes, behaviours, and social connections, from ending drug and alcohol abuse to spending more time with family. They also relate to 'thriving behaviours' identified in initial research.

When a family joins the programme, their place on a 'thriving scale' is determined by a Family Coach. This helps ensure that the programme is engaging families in genuine need of support. There is also a broader focus on building community capacity and strengthening connections, as well as putting resources back into the community through families.

IMPACT

A 2012 independent evaluation found overall positive outcomes for both adults and children, including outcomes that potentially have significant longer term child development outcomes. Since 2012, the programme has supported upwards of 1,500 families, with impact on family support, educational attainment, employment and career pathways, health and wellbeing outcomes for parents and children, and social capital.

Family by Family have engaged independent research partners to help them understand longer term outcomes. Non-judgemental relationships, voluntarism, and partnerships between agencies are cited as important enabling conditions for the programme.

Blackpool Better Start

Blackpool Better Start is a 10 year multi-disciplinary and multi-agency partnership programme. They design, test and implement free events, services and programmes from pre-nought to school and beyond, with a focus on co-design and prototyping with families.

Why did we choose this?
- Families and communities treated as an asset
- Wisdom and expertise are distributed across professionals and families
- Integration and collaboration across services

OVERVIEW

Blackpool has the highest rate of looked after children in the UK, with children growing up to have some of the worst outcomes. In many neighbourhoods, parents face multi-level and complex problems such as violence, substance misuse, and mental ill health. Blackpool Better Start aims to reduce critical pressures and barriers by empowering parents and communities and improve children's social, emotional, and learning development. Interventions use collaborative methods and are aligned with community assets, needs and priorities.

The partnership developed a Community-Engaged Research approach to consult the Blackpool community and cross-sector professionals about the needs and priorities for child health and development. They used a visual research tool to help elicit discussion from those with low literacy levels, and champion the lived experience of people whose voices often go unheard.

The initiative is funded by The National Lottery Community Fund and led by the NSPCC. The Centre for Early Child Development (CECD) is their cross-agency planning team which includes local families, communities and agencies from across public, private and voluntary sectors. The partnership design, implement, deliver and test solutions to improve outcomes for children from conception to age three. Their focus is on prevention to improve language and communication, social and emotional development, and diet and nutrition. Programmes currently running include: parenting classes, services to support people suffering from addiction or anger in the home, as well as free activities in public spaces like libraries, parks and children's centres, focusing on literacy, health and wellbeing.

IMPACT

So far, the programme has provided extra time, capacity and expertise to redesign local services, which Blackpool would not have otherwise had. It has fostered strong partnership working between local services, made up of the local council, NHS commissioners and providers, the voluntary sector and the police. In 2018/19- Blackpool Better Start's fourth year- 8519 families attended Better Start events, 1323 families engaged with community connectors, 266 families attended weekly literacy events, and 846 attended conferences and learning events.

Team around the Early Years (TAEY), Stockport

Targeted early help offer focused on Early Years settings that have high number of children taking-up the 2 year offer.

Why did we choose this?
- Information sharing across organisations
- Collaboration and coordination around the Early Years

OVERVIEW

All Early Years settings across Stockport were RAG rated, based on the number of children taking-up the 2 year offer (using that as a proxy for vulnerability). All red and amber settings have an assigned start-well co-ordinator (equivalent to School Age Plus), and a linked health visitor. There is no social worker input into TAEY, but it does include additional services, such as portage, and signposting to groups such as language groups for children who don't reach SALT thresholds but need support. TAEY does not include childminders or green-rated settings. These have named health visitors, as required.

The start-well coordinator works with the setting to identify children to be discussed at a TAEY meeting, which is also attended by the health visitor. If the child has a health or development need the health visitor will be the lead professional, if there are more complex issues, such as poverty the start well co-ordinator will be the lead professional. In advance of children being discussed, the setting discusses with parents to gain consent. If consent isn't given, the setting will talk to the health visitor and decide who is best placed to work with the family. The aim is for all children across Stockport to have a named health visitor, and for the health visitor to coordinate more complex needs, and complete early help assessments (as required).

For under 2s Stockport has a named health visitor approach, and there are more mandated contacts with a tight procedure about contacting families. The mandated contacts build up relationships with families, and at the 9 month check the health visitor will undertake a wider assessment to determine whether a child needs more than universal support. By the age of 10 months, about 90% of all children across Stockport have been seen by a health visitor. And about 98% of all eligible 2 year olds take-up the 2 year old offer.

During Covid, Stockport have cross-referenced the SEND list with paediatrics to share information. This will now be an annual check.

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Creative Homes

Creative Homes sends storytellers, early childhood professionals and various artists into families' homes dressed as characters which are co-designed with families to share skills that tackle the challenges of daily life.

Why did we choose this?
- Families and communities treated as an asset
- Capacity building for parents
- Parents connected to local services

OVERVIEW

Creative Homes target families in need who are still falling through the net. Artists are experienced at working with families with complex needs and at working directly in family homes. Home visits consist of a consultation where song, dance and games help to identify the family's biggest challenges. Support offers will change according to a family's need.

Creative Homes aims to build parents skills and capabilities to better support their children, as well as assisting them to build stronger social networks and connections to health and children's services. They partner with other local services to engage and support struggling families and group sessions connect families to support each other on a local level. Their pathways service helps families to access further support around them. They work with some of London's most in need families, such as those living in social and sheltered housing and those living on income support.

Creative Homes delivers all aspects of their service through artistic activity: from door knocking to pathway support. The service finds families that children's services want to reach through strong relationships with housing organisations. Families are also referred from children's services if it is felt they would benefit from the programme.

The service is fully funded by their partners who are both government and non government organisations, including local councils. Families access this service free of charge.

IMPACT

Introducing families to local services improves health and has encouraged cross-sector working.The Tooth Fairy recently visited Honor Oak Dental Surgery attracting 12 resident families to visit the surgery.
210 unidentified at-risk families have been reached through door knocking. Parents gain knowledge of local services & further support.
52 families connected to an average of 1.5 in-house and local services each through the pathways programme.
22% of families report an increase in connection to their community. Families report an increase in confidence in instigating routines and a 64% increase in the quality of the routines in the home. Parents involved have experienced a 37% reduction in target stress e.g toilet training and 50% of parents report a reduction in general stress.

Finland Ministry of Education and Culture

The Finland Ministry of Education and Culture oversees around 3500 schools which serve the needs of students from birth to age 19. Early childhood education (0-7 years) is optional, but is used almost universally.

OVERVIEW

A special education for every child

Finland's instructional system is mostly cross-curricular, requiring both students and teachers to think and work across the boundaries of school subjects. Finland's special education teachers work closely with classroom teachers to identify students in need of extra help, and then work individually or in small groups with struggling students to help them keep up with their peers. It is not left solely to the regular classroom teacher to identify a problem and alert the special teacher; every school has a 'multiprofessional care group' that meets at least twice a month for two hours. The group consists of the principal, the special education teacher, the school nurse, the school psychologist, a social worker, and the teachers whose student needs are being discussed. The parents of these children are kept up to date and often asked to attend. Finland's mindset is that special education is not synonymous with teaching students with learning difficulties. Instead, it believes that most children will become a special-needs student at some point in his or her education, because the school has recognised that it can do more to support them to all reach their full potential.

High degree of teacher agency

Teaching is a highly selective profession in Finland, with a high bar for entry, high demand for places and a rigorous training process. Teachers finish their training with a Masters degree and are encouraged to contribute to research on effective teaching practices throughout their career. Teacher training is intellectually rigorous, and as a result graduates are given more autonomy to make pedagogical decisions than many of their counterparts in other countries.

Why did we choose this?

- The removal of thresholds and assessment for special educational support
- Guided by need and personalisation
- Professionals are empowered to make their own decisions

IMPACT

In Finland, performance differences between schools account for only 5% of the variation in student performance, indicating consistency in the quality of schooling and teaching, and a low level of social inequality across the country.

Lion's Barber Collective, Torbay

The Collective is a collection of top barbers who want to raise awareness about male suicide.

OVERVIEW

Torbay is in the top 20% of deprived areas in the country, with high numbers of male homelessness, young people self-harming and alcohol abuse, and rates of male suicide that continue to rise. The vast majority of local men who take their own lives do not access mental health services and few saw their GP. Suicide is now the biggest killer of men under 45 in the UK. Recognising the special trust that can be generated between hairdresser and customer (because of the physical closeness and relative intimacy), The Collective started to engage men in conversations about mental health. They have set up a 'BarberTalk' programme to train hairdressers in how to "recognise, talk, listen and advise" on mental health.

The Collective educates men on the links between physical and emotional health and when appropriate links them to local services. Included among other initiatives The Collective has trialled are: a Lion's Den with a cafe, gym equipment, and access to peer support groups, a Lion's Link phone line run by men on evenings and weekends, and 'Lion Lairs' pop-up awareness raising events.

The Collective is an example of innovations that come from, and are given life by, the everyday environments in which people ordinarily live, work, buy, share and socialise. The language the founders use is non-professional, non-medicalised. The instinct of public policy makers, including public health professionals, is often to talk in terms of 'targeting', 'empowering' and 'engaging with' local communities, and to publish guidelines on how to do this effectively. But The Collective, like many other self-generating innovations, didn't need professional direction or impetus. It is a living embodiment of the idea that communities are 'asset based' and that solutions don't have to be 'services'. It has no procedures for gatekeeping, managing demand or categorising 'service users' by level of need or risk. Indeed, barbers in the Collective don't mention the words 'mental health' as they cut and trim their way to ever more trusting relationships of care and support.

Why did we choose this?
- Wisdom and expertise are distributed commodities
- System capacity is widespread
- Citizens have assets that can be built upon
- Guided by relationships and principles

IMPACT

The Collective is still an early-stage innovation but has ambitions to build an internal network of like-minded barbers to address male mental health and suicide.

Mosaic Clubhouse

Mosaic Clubhouse is a charity in Brixton providing services to the Lambeth community and surrounding boroughs. It has been funded by Lambeth Council and the NHS Lambeth since 1994.

OVERVIEW

Mosaic Clubhouse provides support and opportunities to people living with a mental health condition, plus information and signposting for the wider Lambeth community who may be concerned about their own or others mental health. It is part of a worldwide network of clubhouses that exist to provide support and opportunities to people living with a mental health condition.

All services are delivered in partnership with 'service users', known as members. They are the key stakeholders within the organisation and participate in all work, decision-making and governance.Members of the Clubhouse Community work side by side with staff to co-deliver clubhouse activities. Members work on reception, run the café, maintain the gardens, support administration and finance activities and deliver workshops for the benefit of their peers.

Every member has strengths, talents and abilities to offer the Clubhouse community and by working side-by-side with the staff team to deliver clubhouse activities and supporting fellow members, members can help the community achieve a common goal - to support individuals on their recovery journey. There is an absence of job titles and formal hierarchy. Everyone has equal status and, working side by side on everyday tasks, are supported to make an equal contribution to the organisation's success.

By offering a non-judgmental, safe working environment, Mosaic becomes a welcoming place for members to develop their skills and interests – somewhere they are needed and valued, where being part of a community provides a sense of belonging and meaning.

Why did we choose this?

- Citizens have assets that can be built upon
- Services delivered side-by-side with 'service users'
- Wisdom and expertise are distributed commodities
- System capacity is widespread

IMPACT

Clubhouse members have been supported to develop more positive relationships and build trust, increase their trust in their own strengths and potential, and develop increased interpersonal and work-related skills (e.g. office-based digital skills).

There is evidence of positive Member satisfaction; successful transitions into employment; and positive outcomes in education, vocational work and training.

Chayn

Chayn is a global volunteer network founded in 2013, addressing gender-based violence by creating intersectional survivor-led resources online. They aim to empower women to become masters of their own fate and bring services directly to them through a range of digital projects.

OVERVIEW

Chayn has launched a number of digital projects aimed at supporting woman directly and quickly, including Soul Medicine and Little Window.

Soul Medicine is a platform that provides micro-courses or pathways on key topics that help survivors on the path to recovery. This multilingual digital service delivers critical information that is designed and delivered by women who have experienced abuse. Users access courses or pathways in the form of easily bite-sized pieces through email, with the ambition to also use Facebook messenger. The content ranges from existing Chayn guides such as on how to build a case without a lawyer, to new courses such as dealing with self-confidence and stress. A simple but important feature of Soul Medicine is the option to disguise emails or messages. Soul Medicine sends notes and emails with an option to disguise subject lines so that they appear as random topics such as '10 Beyoncé songs to release your inner Sasha Fierce." This online method of support, combined with the disguise option, offers women who are currently in a violent environment, the support they need without putting themselves in further danger. Little Window is a smart search bot that directs women to the information they are looking for as quickly as possible. This can drastically reduce time searching for information which could save their life.Recognising the power of using digital platforms, Chayn has expanded its online services online during the Covid-19 pandemic. For example, they have created Notes From Chayn-a trauma resilience group, which takes the form of a web-based daily support group for survivors called The programme is 10 weeks long and is free for anyone experiencing gender-based violence.

Why did we choose this?

- Citizens have assets that can be built upon
- People helped to find solutions
- Services designed and delivered by people with lived experience
- Wisdom and expertise are distributed commodities
- Digital service offer

IMPACT

Online tools can be a vital method of providing support to those not always visible in society, or for those who are more comfortable and in some circumstances safer, receiving support Online.

Over the past 7 years, 380,000 people have viewed Chayn's online resources, generating 1.3 million page views.

The Friendship Bench, Zimbabwe

The Friendship Bench is a platform – literally, a bench – that creates space for healing through storytelling, and is anchored in evidence-based talk therapy.

OVERVIEW

In Zimbabwe, the Friendship Bench began by recruiting 'grannies' – middle-aged or older women with little education who earn a small stipend doing community health work. The grannies are given four weeks to learn what depression is, how to diagnose it using a simple questionnaire and how to do a form of problem-solving therapy.

Since 2006, Dr Chibanda and his team have trained over 600 of the grandmothers in evidence-based talk therapy, which they deliver for free in more than 70 communities in Zimbabwe, and in 2017 alone 30,000 were seen on a Friendship Bench. The FB has now expanded beyond Zimbabwe; it is being used in Malawi and Zanzibar, and it has been adapted for New York City, highlighting that interventions created in low- and middle-income countries can be adapted for high-income countries. There are several FB studies currently underway.

IMPACT

In 2016, the results from a FB randomized controlled trial were published in JAMA, showing that the group from the Friendship Bench had a significant decrease in depressive symptoms, compared to the control group.

Earl's Court Health and Wellbeing Centre

Earl's Court Health & Wellbeing Centre is a primary care centre developed with an ethos of community-led design and delivery.

OVERVIEW

Run by a consortia of Turning Point, Greenbrook Healthcare, NHS Dentists and the Terrence Higgins Trust, the centre integrates GP, dentist and sexual health services with a range of community and social value services including peer support groups, a timebank, exercise and diet classes, a job club and space for community-run groups. Health and wellbeing coaches help provide support and build social networks, while multi-lingual patient navigators help users explore services on offer. The centre was established following a campaign from local people for more primary care services and community space. Through its Connected Care Team, its approach to designing and delivering services is to involve its users and the community at every stage – including in research, commissioning and building up community skill and capacity to develop services from the bottom up.

Key to this is the use of Community Researchers, a team of service users who provide a link between the centre, patients and the wider community by researching local need, identifying gaps in provision, gathering feedback and disseminating information. Researchers are given training and support to fulfil this role. Researchers use existing networks such as libraries, schools, neighbourhood centres and children's centres as well as visiting people in their homes.

Community Researchers sit on the social value steering group to share their findings from the research, and are included on interview panels for the centre's staff.

Why did we choose this?

- Wisdom and expertise are distributed commodities
- Integration and collaboration across services
- Researches embedded in the community
- Needs-led
- Citizens Have assets that can be built upon
- System capacity is widespread

IMPACT

Services that have come out of the research programme include: a weekly coffee morning, run by researchers, which provides a social space to find out what's on offer; a peer mentoring scheme helping people with long-term conditions to better manage their health; activities focused on those with chronic conditions, including a weekly walking group; the timebank, allowing community members to share and exchange time, skills and support at the rate of one hour to one credit; a patient participation group which feeds into board level; the job club, linked to peer mentoring, volunteering and the timebank and including support for getting back into work, CV advice and applications; longer opening hours, flexible session times and use of community rooms.

Monmouthpedia

Monmouthpedia is the first Wikipedia project to cover a whole town– the Welsh town of Monmouth. The project aims to cover every single notable place, people, artefacts, flora, fauna and other things in Monmouth in as many languages as possible, but with a special focus on Welsh.

Why did we choose this?

- Wisdom and expertise are distributed commodities
- Citizens have assets that can be built upon
- People helped to find solutions
- System capacity is widespread

OVERVIEW

Local people contribute articles, photographs and resources on interesting and notable places, people, artefacts and other aspects of Monmouth life.

Smart phone technology that makes use of QRpedia codes, readable with smartphone cameras, allow users to scan at points of interest and have information about the landmark sent to their mobile. The codes enable users to be directed to information in the language of their choice, making the service accessible to as many people as possible.

To support the project, Monmouthshire County Council has installed free internet access across the whole town. To integrate the project into the community, a celebration was held to mark the launch of the town's connection to the Internet, at which people were taught how to edit Wikipedia and add relevant details of their own at drop in centres at the library and Monmouth Museum.

IMPACT

At project launch, some 500 articles in other languages were available thanks to the collaboration of editors abroad. In addition to this, the project covers over 250 pre-existing entries on Monmouth-related topics. In the same period, over 1,000 photographs were uploaded.

The project has acted as a catalyst for local people to teach and learn a range of skills, from photography to computers to literacy to historical research. Within days of the launch, Stevie Benton from Wikimedia UK reported that the project page had been viewed 10,000 times. Benton also reported there had been inquiries from towns in Norway, Britain, France, Scotland and Texas, USA.

Street Champions, Lambeth

There are 'street champions' everywhere. They're often the kind of people who check on elderly neighbours when the weather's cold, who make a point of saying 'hello' when new people move in, and who let the council know if a pothole appears. They care about the street they live on, and the people they share it with.

OVERVIEW

Lambeth's Street Champions project is designed to recognise those people who go the extra mile for their street, and offer them support to make even more of a difference.

Street Champions are encouraged to work with their neighbours, the council and Veolia (recycling and rubbish collection) to carry out any activities that are focused to improving the environment or bringing their communities closer together.

By joining the Street Champions scheme, street champions are able to access support for all sorts of activities, from tackling litter and dog fouling, to organising street parties or play street events.

The scheme offers as much flexibility as possible so that street champions can identify the issues they want to address and find solutions that particularly suit their street.

IMPACT

Some of the things Street Champions have already done include:

Spraying dog poo pink to send a message to irresponsible dog owners; putting posters up to deter litter; organising street parties; creating community gardens; conducting online surveys for neighbours to say what's important to them; building planters to prevent fly-tipping; putting stickers on bins to remind people to take them in after emptying; holding 'Play Street' events; setting up Facebook groups for streets; clearing rubbish out of alleyways; litter-picking; helping elderly neighbours tidy their front garden; cutting back overgrown hedges.

Hackney Council briefing pack

Hackney Council have developed a briefing pack to alert their staff to the scale of the COVID-19 health crisis and the broader range of issues that are likely to impact vulnerable groups in Hackney.

OVERVIEW

The briefing pack highlights that current circumstances may impact groups in different ways, with some more vulnerable to the illness itself and others more vulnerable to its economic consequences. There are also numerous instances where these factors will intersect.

Groups identified as particularly at risk in Hackney are people above the age of 70, people with a disability, people who are renting (especially if on a low income), and people who are self-employed. Demographic and risk factors are presented for each group.

To build a live view of the most vulnerable residents in Hackney, the council joined together data at a property level, using the Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN) from their master address database (the LLPG). They have identified data fields that will help them better understand residents living at a property in terms of vulnerability. The data sources joined so far include council data from across services, as well as external data such as Land Registry price paid, Energy Performance Certificates, and Tenancy Deposits. Hackney intend to integrate parking data, tenancy sustainment data, Free School Meals data, and information about people living in temporary accommodation (not self-contained) with an underlying health condition.

IMPACT

The work Hackney has done to collate this information has given thema starting point for a central, single source of truth. This includes names and addresses of the people they have identified and what flags them as vulnerable.

This means they are now in an excellent position to share this with services who need access to this information and to continue to build out this data source by including other service specific data, previously held in silos.

Emmaus Communities, Worldwide

Emmaus Communities enable people to move on from homelessness, providing work and a home in a supportive, family environment. Communities are set up when local people decide that the tried and tested Emmaus approach to homelessness would benefit their area.

Why did we choose this?
- Citizens have assets that can be built upon
- People helped to find solutions
- Problem support exists laterally and multi-directionally

OVERVIEW

Emmaus offers a home in a Community for as long as someone needs, where people can live and work, sharing a life together, but retaining their own dignity and independence. Companions, as residents are known, receive accommodation, food, clothing and a small weekly allowance. In return, Emmaus asks that Companions work for 40 hours a week (or as much as they are able) in the Community's social enterprise, and that they come off all government benefit payments, with the exception of housing benefit.

Work is an integral part of Community life, with the main business activity for Emmaus Communities being collecting donated goods and selling them in the Community shop. Companions work in all aspects of the business, doing a variety of tasks such as driving the van, refurbishing items in the workshop, working in the customer café, preparing meals and maintaining the grounds. Emmaus residents work to support themselves and to help others, with each Community aiming to become self-supporting. Sharing (or solidarity) is central to the Emmaus ethos; all the proceeds of the Community's work go into the 'pot' and every Companion receives out of that their board and clothing, plus weekly spending money and savings. Any surplus created by the business is used to help those who have less.

IMPACT

An evaluation of the programme in 2012 looking at seven Communities in the UK found that for every £1 invested in an established Emmaus community, £11 is generated in social, environmental and economic returns.

"Emmaus helped me work on my trust issues and find things within myself which I thought I had lost forever, I feel like a better person. Emmaus communities are like a family and we look after each other through good times and bad."

The House Project, Stoke

The House Project supports young people in and leaving care to manage their own homes and achieve successful independence. Young people aged 16 and over manage the refurbishment of empty properties in Stoke-on-Trent, which will be their homes for as long as they want to stay there.

Why did we choose this?
- Collaboration across a range of partners
- People helped to find solutions
- Citizens have assets that can be built upon

OVERVIEW

The House Project is a collaborative business, in which adults and young people work cooperatively for the benefit of all the members. The goal is a sustainable home that provides a secure base from which they can thrive, building ownership, responsibility, community, independence and direction.

Its core aims and beliefs are that young people should:
- Have their own home and the support of a community for as long as they need it.
- Take ownership of decisions affecting their own lives, their property and the development of the business.
- Gain independence and the skills to support themselves emotionally and financially through the support they need when they need it.
- Take responsibility for keeping themselves safe, looking after others and the project.

The model comprises a staff team, (including facilitators to support young people) and a range of partner agencies including a legal team, architect and training company.

IMPACT

The project was the first of its kind for care leavers in the UK, and involved young people having a lead role in developing and running the overall project, as well as choosing and refurbishing their own tenancy, and identifying the support needed to sustain it.

The co-operative model increases young people's sense of community and integration, and their choice and overall agency in their transitions from care to independent adulthood. A key aim of the project was to reduce the feelings of isolation and powerlessness that many care leavers can experience after leaving care.

Bud Clarke Commons, Portland Oregon USA

Bud Clarke Commons seeks to provide stability to the lives of those experiencing homelessness. The environmentally sustainable, eight-floor building contains two levels of transitional and supportive housing and a comprehensive support services centre.

OVERVIEW

In 2003 approximately 17,000 people in the Portland area suffered from housing instability at some point during the year. A 10 year plan was developed which proposed three routes of attack: focus on the most chronically homeless populations; streamline access to existing services to prevent and reduce other homelessness; and concentrate resources on programmes that offer measurable results. These strategies provided the inspiration for the Commons project, which opened in 2011. The building is close to existing providers of homeless services, and has a deliberately prominent design and location to act as a physical testament to the city's commitment to its most vulnerable citizens.

Home Forward, which runs the housing component, prioritises placement using a vulnerability assessment tool, using 10 'domains of vulnerability'. These indicators include ability to meet basic needs, risk of mortality, social behaviour and the nature and extent of homelessness. Case managers and counsellors help residents move toward self-sufficiency and housing stability, and the shelter partners with more than 20 agencies to coordinate the range of available services.

IMPACT

In its first year, the Commons Day Centre served more than 7,000 homeless people, including approximately 200 veterans at the shelter. 3,600 individuals have been connected with social services, and 350 permanent housing placements made.

For the most vulnerable homeless people, the 130 permanent supportive housing units have been effective in creating stability, with resident retention at over 80%.

Housing First

Housing First is an evidence-based approach to successfully supporting homeless people with high needs and histories of entrenched or repeat homelessness to live in their own homes.

OVERVIEW

The overall philosophy of Housing First is to provide a stable, independent home and intensive personalised support and case management to homeless people with multiple and complex needs. Housing is seen as a human right by Housing First services. There are no conditions around 'housing readiness' before providing someone with a home; rather, secure housing is viewed as a stable platform from which other issues can be addressed. Housing First is a different model because it provides housing 'first', as a matter of right, rather than 'last' or as a reward

People don't lose their housing if they disengage with support, and flexible support is provided for as long as it is needed. The offer of support remains even if the tenancy fails. People are supported through person-centred planning and given the lead to shape the support they receive. Support is based on people's strengths, goals and aspirations and people are supported to develop increased self-esteem, self-worth and confidence, and to integrate into their local community. Staff are responsible for proactively engaging people: making the service fit the individual instead of trying to make the individual fit the service. There are clear pathways into, and out of, the Housing First service.

IMPACT

Research by Homeless Link's Housing First England found:
- Improved engagement with services
- Better outcomes for individuals, including improvements in wellbeing and reductions in substance misuse and offending behaviour
- A decreased workload and pressure of wider service providers
- It addressed a gap in local service provision for people for whom no previous interventions or services had been successful
- It is a catalyst for wider culture and systems change, enabling learning and reflection on working practices in agencies across the system
- A positive impact on the community, particularly in smaller towns

Overall, the presence of a Housing First service is deemed to improve residents' outcomes, increase effective inter-agency working and fill gaps in service provision and has a particularly positive impact on the workload of the police, community safety and anti-social behaviour teams.

Resettlement Passport, Knowsley

Resettlement Passport is a tenancy skills course developed through work with homeless young people.

OVERVIEW

Developed by staff working with homeless young people from Local Solutions' homelessness services, the course is now being used by housing associations, leaving care teams, hostels, mental health services and organisations working with people leaving prisons. 48% of course learners have been in care.

The course is made up of 10 units, covering areas key to sustaining a tenancy and available online and offline. It is updated each year with new benefit and housing policy changes. The online course is mobile and tablet friendly, with the same content as the offline course. It has been designed to be very easy to use and benefits from embedded videos, inbuilt data collection and responsive exercises where learners are given immediate feedback on their answers.

The course materials also specifically target areas where tenancies often fail; for example, housing associations reported that tenancies often fail when people do not respond to benefit letters, so the course includes sample benefit letters to look at and discuss.

IMPACT

Impact data is collected before and after the course. Data in September 2018 showed that:
88% of people say completing the course improved their confidence levels
46% felt more confident about accessing help with debts and money issues
44% felt more confident paying council tax
39% felt more confident about paying for gas/electric/water/TV licence
37% of people felt more confident dealing with difficult neighbours.

Rough Sleeping SIB in Greater Manchester

A pioneering collaboration between the housing sector, social sector and social investors delivering a programme to tackle rough sleeping across Greater Manchester, which has provided a personalised & asset based approach to support during covid-19

Why did we choose this?
- Covid-19 response
- People helped to find solutions
- Citizens have assets that can be built upon
- Support guided by personalisation

OVERVIEW

The GM Homes SIB (Social Impact Bond) aims to provide the wrap-around support needed to enable individuals to sustain a tenancy made available by 15 Greater Manchester housing providers and two private rented sector partners – with charities Shelter, Great Places and The Brick ensuring individuals receive the intensive emotional and practical support they need to access appropriate health, training and employment services. One of the key contributors to success of both the programme overall, and during the covid response, is the focus on providing personalised support, often using an and asset based approach.

The Brick in Wigan champion an asset based approach, and their Asset Coaches work closely with participants to identify and build on strengths. This innovative approach has had some really positive results throughout the programme, and has really helped engage and support participants through lockdown. During the covid crisis, delivery partners have been able to provide even more of a person centred approach as they and participants have more time to talk over the phone, enabling participants to open up about their lives and interests.

Using the 'personalisation fund' they were able to provide not only the basic essentials, but also more personalised essentials for each individual to help them through lockdown, making their accommodation feel like a home, and supporting individuals to build on their assets and hobbies (home gym equipment, art supplies, radios & televisions etc.)

IMPACT

One participant talked about enjoying crosswords, and so their support worker and the participant started buying the same weekly paper and completing the crossword together over the phone. This small change helped keep the participant engaged and occupied and they looked forward to this every week. It helped keep them feeling safe, secure and supported through a very challenging time.

It has also given some participants the confidence to demonstrate their independence, contacting housing providers and services themselves, where they would have depended on delivery partners previously. It has also given some participants confidence to detox from drugs/alcohol.

Appendix 3
GM2025
Preferred Future Scenarios

3.1 Children's Services, Early Help

Practice & Citizen Experience (What happens on the frontline)

Help that meets you where you are
Help can be found in the places people ordinarily live, work, buy, share and socialise. A network of local residents, businesses and community organisations is trained to help residents make the best out of what is available in their neighbourhood for them and their family, When a resident needs help, they might visit, text or call their hairdresser, local shopkeeper, someone at the school or nursery their child attends, or focal community hub. However they choose to make contact, they can get the help they need. There are no forms to fill in or awkward questions to answer.

Building on the strengths of people in your neighbourhood
Every resident has strengths, knowledge and talents that can be built upon. Members of the community, often those missing out on traditional forms of employment, are trained to support their neighbourhood as Local Guides. They know everything there is to know about where they live and what's available, so they can help people to identify the precise nature of their problem, work out what they can do, with help, to sort things themselves, and who else there is in their family or network who can help or arrange for it to happen. Once a relationship is formed, Local Guides will only be a text message away when a person needs help.

Community first
Help can usually be found in the local community, by building from assets. Residents will be introduced to some people, community groups or voluntary organisations who live nearby with lots of experience with connecting and supporting local families.

Fast and flexible access to experts, online or face-to-face
Where professional help is also called for, Local Guides will help people sign up for programmes, services and resources that they can access online at a time which suits them. There are brilliant activities and programmes that help with nutrition or giving up smoking; housing and coping with debt. If people need a face to face or virtual appointment, for instance with a healthcare professional, a counsellor, a social worker or police officer, their Local Guide will get them in, in the fastest possible time and make sure that all their information is available for every appointment.

Impact
Dispersed and digital access to help has increased reach, involving more residents in both receiving and giving help in their community

Waiting lists for specialist services are radically reduced.

There have been significant improvements in employment, health and wellbeing outcomes for residents

Inspired by
GM community response to Covid 19

Friendship Bench, Zimbabwe

Street Champions, Lambeth

Lion's Barber Collective, Torbay

Leadership & Governance (How decisions are made and direction is set)

Mission and vision-led

System leaders and local leaders are united around a shared purpose, which places the needs and assets of local neighbourhoods at its centre. Leaders in the council and the community are mission-led, and inspire staff, partners and residents with a powerful vision, both for what the present should look like and what the future can become. And they instil a sense of urgency about the need to achieve it. Leadership is modelled in ideas, values and actions centring on service, equity and setting a high bar for what every resident, family and community can expect and, through their own active involvement, achieve.

Community ownership and governance

Leadership sits firmly within local communities. Local decision-making and accountability always involve, and are often led by, the community workforce alongside residents. Leaders in the council don't just step away, but help to nurture and grow new leaders in the community. Trust and resources are placed with the people who live in and know their neighbourhood. Groups are involved in consultation and co-design focused on the future direction of travel for their neighbourhood. There is a shared desire by councils and their partners to demonstrate to local governance arrangements how their engagement in neighbourhoods lives out their values, principles and commitments.

Leadership is distributed and enabling

Leadership is widely distributed; flat and flexible teams, made up of the community and professional workforce, are empowered by council and community leaders to share decision-making and evaluate and manage risk locally. Leaders are part of extended neighbourhood teams and commit to regularly connecting with the frontline. All neighbourhoods have a Community Broker, a new leadership role that connects partners and builds capacity locally, supporting the community to own their neighbourhood. Leaders, staff and residents are inspired by this engagement, and for the leaders themselves it keeps them in direct connection with those whom they support.

Impact

Most new leaders are home grown. Leadership in GM is an attractive option; staff turnover and vacancies are low and engagement, motivation and quality are high.

Co design and co production of support and engaging residents in governance has led to radically improved outcomes, transformed relationships and reduced costs.

Inspired by

GM Covid 19 leadership response

Mosaic Clubhouse

Earls Court Health and Wellbeing Centre

Hackney Council briefing pack

Workforce & Culture (What it's like to work here)

Neighbourhood as workplace

Teams, dedicated to supporting people in small geographical areas or neighbourhoods, work together in a combination of formal settings (school, GP surgery, council offices) community buildings (places of worship, shops, the library, community centre) and from their homes using digital platforms.

Community workforce and professional workforce working as one

Help and support is designed and delivered in partnership with residents and local volunteers. Residents and volunteers work side-by-side with a multi-agency and integrated staff team.There is minimal formal hierarchy, and residents and volunteers are supported to make an active contribution to their community.

Flexible roles and provision

Teams are self organising, blending council staff with workers from voluntary and community organisations; paid staff with local volunteers; and drawing in attached specialist and clinical colleagues when they're needed. Autonomy is granted to blended frontline teams to make good decisions for the people and communities they know. Hours, roles and workplaces are flexible, minimising the need to 'hand off' people and their problems around the team, and enabling people to work from home.

A shared focus on community and place

Everyone is united by the collective care for the neighbourhood - its people and its assets. Team members are united by a single, strengths based model of practice and deep knowledge about both the assets and challenges of their neighbourhood. Many are local to the area they work in and are recognised and trusted in the community. Individual team members each know and regularly connect with formal and informal community leaders to keep their finger on the pulse of what's happening, sharing updates every day amongst the team that connects digitally.

High expectations; high trust; high support

A high trust working environment means teams are required to be highly skilled and values led. Regular, high quality collaborative learning across organisational boundaries and involving residents helps to grow powerful learning communities where ideas, resources and practice are shared and values aligned.

Impact

The community and professional workforce are positive about working in GM. Motivation is high, sickness absence is low and retention of experienced and valuable staff saves huge sums previously spent on agency staff.

Collaboration is the default; no one takes hard decisions or manages risk alone; safety is high and serious cases are unheard of.

Inspired by

Teams across GM responding to Covid 19

Mosaic Clubhouse

Earls Court Health and Wellbeing Centre

Lion's Barber Collective, Torbay

System Conditions (Funding, regulation, accountability, data)

Neighbourhoods co designed with residents

Small geographical areas known as neighbourhoods are identified, agreed and resourced with residents and community leaders, based on a blend of population data and local intelligence. Neighbourhoods are unique in size and composition and often have a very specific identity, which residents recognise and value.

Commissioning outcomes

Not everything is treated as a service. The focus is on directing resources and funding to community-led outcomes, not commissioning tightly defined services with strict KPI's. Trust is placed in the community, underpinned by the belief that not everything that matters can be measured.

Public services as facilitators

Local public services facilitate and help to coordinate a wide range of formal and informal roles and partnerships, which together form an ecosystem of flexible and intelligent support. In some neighbourhoods this role is barely visible, where alliances brokered between community organisations instead make it possible for others to take the lead. Formal public services, such as the Council, work hard to grow this capacity and capability where it's absent or underdeveloped.

Habitual, dynamic data sharing

Public, private and voluntary and community organisations contribute in real time to a dynamic data set, governed by a formal agreement that enables sharing across organisational boundaries. Councils, with health, education, police and housing jointly fund and maintain a digital data sharing platform, which can be accessed directly by professional services and through a personalised portal (a triage service) for community leaders.

A partnership that works

At a strategic level, public services are part of a formal coalition of the local authority/council, health and social care providers, schools, police, housing associations and voluntary and community organisations, committed to providing help that's needed in every neighbourhood across GM. This combination of hard structure and flexible, codesigned and locally accountable support makes agile and dynamic response possible within a shared and sustainable framework of agreements and permissions.

Impact

Costs and risks are shared between strategic partners.

Information flows freely between organisations meaning that far fewer residents fall through the cracks.

Pride and a sense of belonging characterise neighbourhoods, resulting in reductions in crime and ASB.

Inspired by

GM community, authority and VCSE collaboration during Covid 19

Hackney Council briefing pack

Earl's Court Health and Wellbeing Centre

3.2 Community Hubs

Practice & Citizen Experience (What happens on the frontline)

Help when you need it
Wherever you live in Greater Manchester, when you need help, one text or phone call is all it takes. It doesn't matter if that call is to your GP or a housing officer or someone at the school or nursery your child attends, however you choose to make contact you can get the help you need. Someone will contact you within 24 hours - 3 if its an emergency. There are no forms to fill in or awkward questions to answer. Just helpful people who care about you and your family and know how to make the best of what's available in your neighbourhood.

A trusting relationship with someone on your side
You'll get a call or visit (you choose) from a Personal Guide: a member of your community who works for the local council that serves your area. They know everything there is to know about where you live and what's available, so they can help you to identify the precise nature of your problem, work out what you can do, with help, to sort things yourself, decide the help you need, who else there is in your family or network who can help or arrange for it to happen. It's quite likely you will have met your Guide before, because they live in your area and have run local consultation sessions - and they have featured in leaflets. Once you have formed a relationship with your Guide, they will only be a text message away when you need help.

Community first
Help can usually be found in the local community. You will be introduced to some people, community groups or voluntary organisations who live nearby with lots of experience with connecting and supporting local families.

Fast and flexible access to experts, online or face-to-face
Where professional help is also called for, your Guide will help you sign up for programmes, services and resources you can access online at times to suit you. There are brilliant parenting classes, activities you can do with your family and programmes that help with nutrition or giving up smoking; housing and coping with debt. If you need a face to face or virtual appointment, for instance with a healthcare professional, a counsellor, a social worker or police officer your Guide will get you in, in the fastest possible time and make sure that all your information is available for every appointment.

Impact
Digital access has increased reach, involving more residents in both receiving and giving early help.

Waiting lists for specialist services are radically reduced.

Fewer children are coming into care.

There have been significant improvements in key indicators such as school readiness.

Inspired by

GM community response to Covid 19

Family by Family, Australia

HIPPY (Home Interaction Programme for Parents and Youngsters), Australia

Leadership & Governance (How decisions are made and direction is set)

Mission and vision-led

Councils are mission-led. Leaders inspire staff, partners and communities with a powerful vision, both for what the present should look like and what the future can become. And they instil a sense of urgency about the need to achieve it. Leadership is modelled in ideas, values and actions centring on service, equity and setting a high bar for what every resident, family and community can expect and achieve.

Community ownership and governance

Local decision making and accountability always involve, and are often led by, residents. Groups involved in consultation and co-design focus on the future direction of travel for their neighbourhood, while others require councils and their partners to demonstrate how their engagement in neighbourhoods lives out their values, principles and commitments.

Visible Leaders

Senior leaders - officers and elected members - share regular briefings and updates including Q&A via digital platforms. Hundreds of council staff, partners and residents sign in to watch or listen, live or to a recording. Scores get to engage directly in conversation. Often briefings are led from leaders' homes encouraging staff to see their leaders as relevant and relatable. Trust and confidence are high and leaders can rely on broad recognition and positive support.

Distributed leadership

Leadership is widely distributed; flat and flexible multi-agency teams are empowered by senior leaders to share decision making and evaluate and manage risk locally. Leaders are part of extended neighbourhood teams and commit to regularly connecting with the frontline. Leaders, staff and residents are inspired by this engagement, and for the leaders themselves it keeps them in direct connection with those whom they serve.

Impact

Leadership in GM is an attractive option; staff turnover and vacancies are low and engagement, motivation and quality are high. Most new leaders are home grown.

Co design and co production of support and engaging residents in governance has led to radically improved outcomes transformed relationships and reduced costs.

Inspired by

GM Covid 19 leadership response

Family Voices

Derbyshire Thriving Communities

Blackpool Better Start

Workforce & Culture (What it's like to work here)

Neighbourhood as workplace
Teams, dedicated to supporting people in small geographical areas or neighbourhoods, work together in a combination of formal settings (school, GP surgery, council offices) community buildings (places of worship, shops, the library, community centre) and from their homes using digital platforms.

Diverse, autonomous, flexible teams
Teams are self organising, blending council staff with workers from voluntary and community organisations; paid staff with local volunteers; and drawing in attached specialist and clinical colleagues when they're needed. Hours and roles are flexible, minimising the need to 'hand off' people and their problems around the team.

High expectations; high trust; high support
A high trust working environment means teams are required to be highly skilled and values led. Regular, high quality collaborative learning across organisational boundaries and involving residents helps to grow powerful learning communities where ideas, resources and practice are shared and values aligned.

A shared focus on community and place
Everyone is united by the collective care for the neighbourhood - its people and its assets. Team members are united by a single, strengths based model of practice and deep knowledge about the assets and challenges of their neighbourhood. Many are local to the area they work in and are recognised and trusted in the community. Individual team members each know and regularly connect with formal and informal community leaders to keep their fingers on the pulse of what's happening, sharing updates every day amongst the team.

Impact

Staff are positive about working in GM. Motivation is high, sickness absence is low and retention of experienced and valuable staff saves huge sums previously spent on agency staff.

Collaboration is the default; no one takes hard decisions or manages risk alone; safety is high and serious cases are unheard of.

Inspired by

Teams across GM responding to Covid 19

Derbyshire Thriving Communities

Thameside Parenting Offer

System Conditions (Funding, regulation, accountability, data)

Neighbourhoods co designed with residents
Small geographical areas known as neighbourhoods are designated, then resourced with residents and community leaders, based on a blend of population data and local intelligence. Neighbourhoods are unique in size and composition and often have a very specific identity, which residents recognise and value.

Council as platform
Local councils 'host' neighbourhoods; they facilitate and coordinate a wide range of formal and informal roles and partnerships, which together form an ecosystem of flexible and intelligent support. In some neighbourhoods this role is barely visible, where alliances brokered between community organisations instead make it possible for others to take the lead. Councils work hard to grow this capacity and capability where it's absent or underdeveloped.

Habitual, dynamic data sharing
Public, private and voluntary and community organisations contribute in real time to a dynamic data set, governed by a formal agreement that enables sharing across organisational boundaries. Councils, with health, education, police and housing jointly fund and maintain a digital data sharing platform, which can be accessed directly by professional services and through a personalised portal (a triage service) for community leaders.

A partnership that works
At a strategic level, councils are part of a formal coalition of health and social care providers, schools, police, housing associations and voluntary and community organisations, committed to providing help that's needed in every neighbourhood across GM. This combination of hard structure and flexible, codesigned and locally accountable support makes agile and dynamic response possible within a shared and sustainable framework of agreements and permissions.

Impact
Costs and risks are shared between strategic partners.

Information flows freely between organisations meaning that far fewer residents fall through the cracks.

Pride and a sense of belonging characterise neighbourhoods, resulting in reductions in crime and ASB.

Inspired by

GM community, authority and VCSE collaboration during Covid 19

Harlem Children's Zone, USA

Youngballymun, RoI

3.3 Homelessness

Practice & Citizen Experience (What happens on the frontline)

Person-centred and strengths-based support
Wherever feasible, people choose the type of housing that is right for them and are supported through person-centred planning to take the lead in shaping the support they receive. People set their own goals and are provided with support to develop the knowledge and skills they need to achieve them.

Ownership and skills development
There are opportunities locally which link the empty properties team with skills development and apprenticeship schemes to form community-owned cooperatives. People are offered the chance to work collaboratively to manage and refurbish empty properties to provide a secure base from which they can thrive. People's involvement in developing homes for themselves and others brings investment and ownership to help create sustainable tenancies, and connects them into a community of peers with shared experiences.

Building on the strengths of people in a neighbourhood
Neighbourhood residents have strengths, knowledge and talents that can be built upon. Members of the community, often those missing out on traditional forms of employment and with lived experience of homelessness, are trained to support their neighbourhood as Local Guides. They know just about everything there is to know about where they live and what's available, so they can help people to identify the precise nature of their problem, work out what they can do, with help, to sort things themselves, and who else there is in their family or network who can help or arrange for it to happen. Once a relationship is formed, Local Guides will only be a text message away when a person needs help.

Connecting into the community
Help can usually be found in the local community, by building from assets. Neighbourhood residents will be introduced to some people, community groups or voluntary organisations who live nearby with lots of experience with connecting and supporting local people. There is a growing culture of deep relational support.

Fast and flexible access to experts, online or face-to-face
Where professional help is also called for, Local Guides will help people sign up for resources available on and offline covering areas key to sustaining a tenancy. There are brilliant embedded videos, inbuilt data collection and responsive exercises specifically targeting areas where tenancies often fail. If people need a face to face or virtual appointment, for instance with a healthcare professional, a counsellor, a social worker or police officer, their Local Guide will get them in, in the fastest possible time, and make sure that all their information is available for every appointment.

Impact
Dispersed and digital access to help has increased reach, involving more residents in both receiving and giving help in their community

Waiting lists for specialist services are radically reduced.

Residents are supported in obtaining and sustaining a tenancy that is right for them. There have been significant improvements in employment, health and wellbeing outcomes for residents

Inspired by

GM community response to Covid 19

The House Project, Stoke

Resettlement Passport, Knowsley

Housing First

Mosaic Clubhouse

Leadership & Governance (How decisions are made and direction is set)

Mission and vision-led

System leaders and local leaders are united around a shared purpose, which places homelessness prevention and housing as a human right at its centre. Leaders in the council and the community are mission-led, and inspire staff, partners and residents with a powerful vision, both for what the present should look like and what the future can become. Being mission-led, prevention of homelessness is an iconic aspiration for the system's leaders - and they instil a sense of urgency about the need to achieve it. Leadership is modelled in ideas, values and actions centring on service, equity and setting a high bar for what every resident, family and community can expect.

Community ownership and leadership

Leadership sits firmly within local communities. Homelessness is an issue owned at a strategic and a neighbourhood level. Local decision-making and accountability always involve, and are often led by, the community workforce alongside residents, including people with lived experience of homelessness. Leaders in the council don't just step away, but help to nurture and grow new leaders in the community. Trust and resources are placed with the people who live in and know their neighbourhood. Groups are involved in consultation and co-design focused on the future direction of travel for their neighbourhood, with preventing homelessness at its core. There is a shared desire by councils and their partners to demonstrate to local governance arrangements how their engagement in neighbourhoods lives out their values, principles and commitments to eradicating homelessness and supporting people to thrive in their community.

Leadership is distributed and enabling

Leadership is widely distributed; flat and flexible teams, made up of the community, VCSE and professional workforce, are empowered by council and community leaders to share decision-making and evaluate and manage risk locally. Leaders are part of extended neighbourhood teams and commit to regularly connecting with the frontline. All neighbourhoods have a Community Broker, a new leadership role that connects partners and builds capacity locally, supporting the community to own the needs of those within their neighbourhood. Leaders, staff and residents are inspired by this engagement, and for the leaders themselves it keeps them in direct connection with those whom they support.

Impact

Most new leaders are home grown. Leadership in GM is an attractive option; staff turnover and vacancies are low and engagement, motivation and quality are high.

Co-design and co-production of support and the engagement of residents in governance has led to radically improved outcomes, transformed relationships and reduced costs.

Inspired by

GM Covid 19 leadership response

Housing First

Mosaic Clubhouse, Lambeth

Bud Clarke Commons, Portland Oregon USA

Workforce & Culture (What it's like to work here)

Permission and flexibility to do what works

Autonomy is granted to frontline teams, blending council staff with workers from voluntary and community organisations, to make good decisions for the people and communities they know. Hours, roles and workplaces are flexible, minimising the need to 'hand off' people and their problems around the team, and enabling people to work from home. People are empowered to get rid of the things that get in the way, and are not excessively limited by measures or timescales.

Neighbourhood as workplace

Teams, dedicated to supporting people in small geographical areas or neighbourhoods, work together in a combination of formal settings (school, GP surgery, council offices) community buildings (places of worship, shops, the library, community centre) and from their homes using digital platforms.

Community workforce and professional workforce working as one

Help and support is designed and delivered in partnership with residents and local volunteers. Residents and volunteers work side-by-side with a multi-agency and integrated staff team.There is minimal formal hierarchy, and residents and volunteers are supported to make an active contribution to the shared ambitions of their community.

A shared focus on community and place

People are motivated by the collective care for the neighbourhood - its people and its assets. Team members are united by a single, strengths-based model of practice and deep knowledge about both the assets and challenges of their neighbourhood. Many are local to the area they work in and are recognised and trusted in the community. Individual team members each know and regularly connect with formal and informal community leaders to keep their finger on the pulse of what's happening, sharing updates every day amongst the team that connects digitally.

High expectations; high trust; high support

A high trust working environment means teams are required to be highly skilled as well as mission and values led. Regular, high quality collaborative learning (across organisational boundaries and involving residents) helps to grow strong and informed learning communities where ideas, resources and practice are shared and values aligned.

Impact

The community and professional workforce are positive about working in GM. Motivation is high, sickness absence is low and retention of experienced and valuable staff saves huge sums previously spent on agency staff.

Collaboration is the default; no one takes hard decisions or manages risk alone; safety is high and serious cases are unheard of.

Inspired by

Teams across GM responding to Covid 19

Harm Reduction, Homelessness and Drug Use in Dublin during Covid

Housing First

System Conditions (Funding, regulation, accountability, data)

Homes, not homelessness services

Funding is invested in housing provision and addressing the root causes of homelessness, and increasingly not in managing the experience of homlesssness. Barriers in the system are unearthed and no restrictions are placed on obtaining a tenancy. Long-term funding is available for wraparound support which helps people to sustain a tenancy; this funding is not siloed within organisational or project boundaries but is available to be used flexibly and responsively.

Neighbourhoods co designed with residents

Small geographical areas known as neighbourhoods are co-designed, then resourced with residents and community leaders, based on a blend of population data and local intelligence. Neighbourhoods are unique in size and composition and often have a very specific identity, which residents recognise and value.

Public services as facilitators

Local public services facilitate and help to coordinate a wide range of formal and informal roles and partnerships, which together form an ecosystem of flexible and intelligent support. In some neighbourhoods this role is barely visible, where alliances brokered between community organisations instead make it possible for others to take the lead. Formal public services, such as the Council, work hard to grow this capacity and capability where it's absent or underdeveloped.

Habitual, dynamic data sharing

Public, private and voluntary and community organisations contribute in real time to a dynamic data set, governed by a formal agreement that enables sharing across organisational boundaries. Councils, with health, education, police and housing jointly fund and maintain a digital data sharing platform, which can be accessed directly by professional services and through a personalised portal (a triage service) for community leaders.

A partnership that works

At a strategic level, public services are part of a formal coalition of the local authority/council, health and social care providers, schools, police, housing associations and voluntary and community organisations, committed to providing help that's needed in every neighbourhood across GM. This combination of hard structure and flexible, codesigned and locally accountable support makes agile and dynamic response possible within a shared and sustainable framework of agreements and permissions. It is a partnership united by mission.

Impact

Costs and risks are shared between strategic partners.

Information flows freely between organisations meaning that far fewer residents fall through the cracks.

Residents are supported to sustain their own home. Pride and a sense of belonging characterise neighbourhoods, resulting in reductions in crime and ASB.
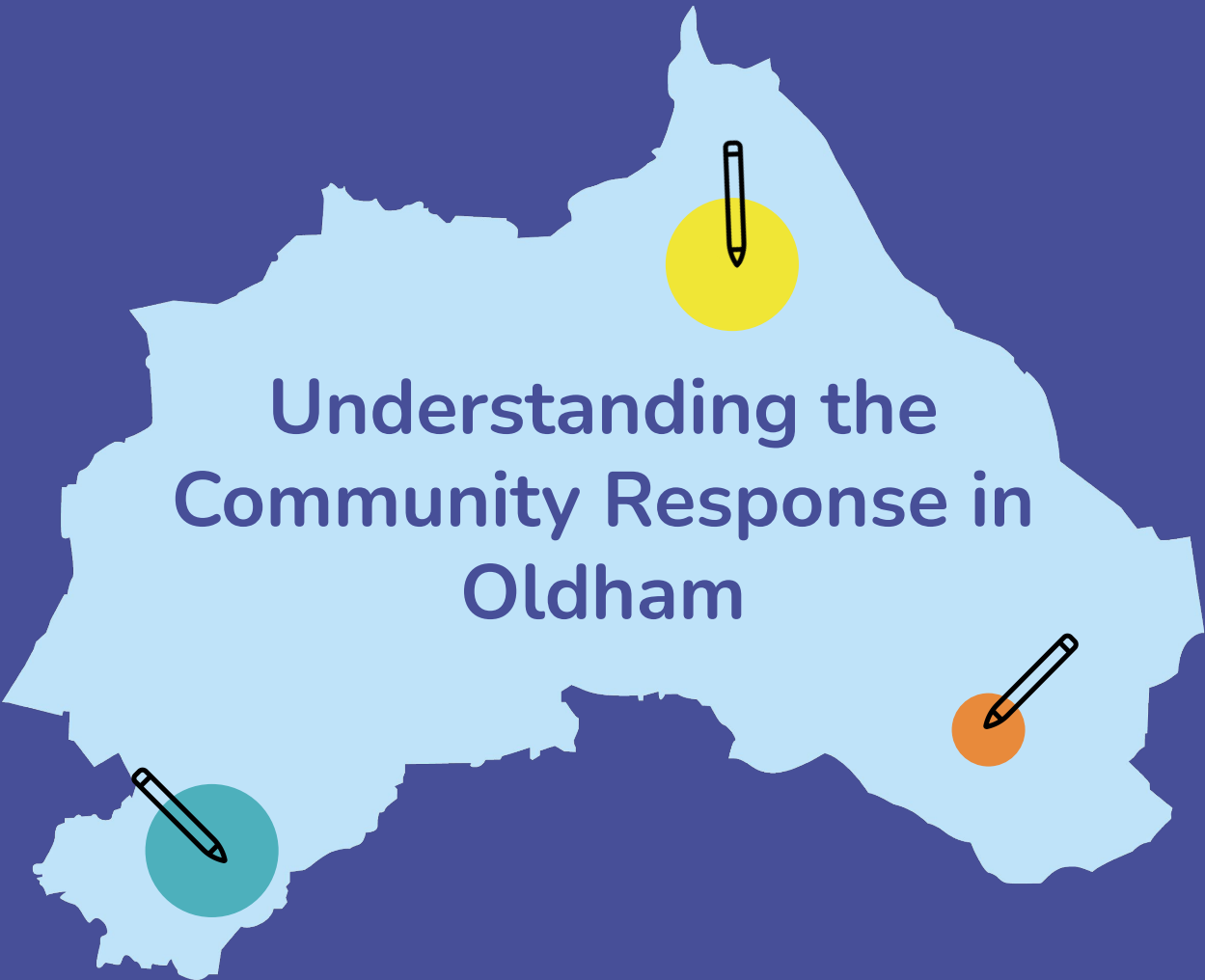
Inspired by

GM community, authority and VCSE collaboration during Covid 19

Housing First

Rough Sleeping SIB in Greater Manchester

Appendix 4
Oldham Community Enquiry

Understanding the Community Response in Oldham

Introduction

This document was created to support the local authority in Oldham to learn from their response to the COVID-19 crisis. Taking a relational approach to the research we held a series of conversations with formal and informal community leaders from across the borough to hear their stories of the crisis.

The stories we heard were inspiring and a testament to the commitment people in Oldham have to their communities. They also showed the role co-construction, collaborative partnerships, and local knowledge played in creating and scaling impactful support. We hope that this learning is used to help the local authority as they move forward to tackle recovery and future crises.

We've also shared the process and tools we used to do this work so that you continue to build relationships and learn from the people at the centre of their communities in Oldham.

Contents

Stories of Community Response

Residents in Failsworth self organise to support 130 people with personalised food parcels and well-being check ins
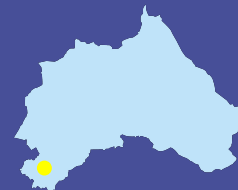
March 2020

A local resident put a callout on Twitter and Facebook asking if anyone needed help. They also set up a facebook group where people could request support.

The resident was soon supporting 12 people and receiving large donations of food which they couldn't store in their kitchen so contacted friend, and local councillor to help

The local councillor reached out to the vicar at St. John's to see if they had space to store and sort the donations. The vicar gave them the church hall for as long as they needed it

April 2020

Collaborated with Teenage Works and the local housing association to find vulnerable people in the Failsworth area and knocked on doors and made phone calls to see who needed help and what their food preferences were

Oldham foodbank rejected the communities offer to become a satellite service on the grounds that there operating processes were not aligned with their own.

April/May 2020

For the next few weeks they were supporting 130 people and receiving large donations of food from individual residents and local businesses

May/June 2020

Supporting fewer people (around 70) with food but still checking in on people to see how they are coping.

Key Insights

Collaboration with local organisations allowed them to scale and find vulnerable people quickly

Collaborating with the Church gave them the space they needed to store and sort larger quantities of food. And, working with local charities they were able to generate a more comprehensive list of vulnerable people in their area.

Lean operating policy allowed them to provide support in a fast and personalised way

By knocking on doors or making phone calls to find out what people needed and what their dietary preferences were, the Failworths team were able to quickly find the people in need of support and provide them with a more tailored service.

Digital platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp provided infrastructure to match supply and demand of community support

Before they collaborated with local charities and the housing association they were able to quickly find people in need through local facebook groups. As well as using it to recruit volunteers to create and deliver food parcels and medication.

Lack of communication with the council is leading to an us vs them mentality

The community is proud of the service they've been able to provide for people but say they've done it with little help from the council. "The Failsworth community came together to look after Failsworth people because it appeared that we were left to our own devices." They didn't have specific asks for the council, but communicated a desire to be recognised by them for what they've done.

Hotel, pub, and restaurant in Lydgate and Uppermill provide beds and 850 hot meals a week to NHS staff and vulnerable people
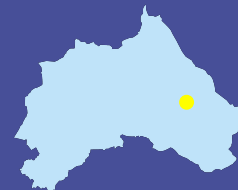
March 2020

Hotel and restaurant close and owners furlough 107 staff

The hotel owner receives a call from the council asking if they can use their rooms for NHS staff who need to isolate themselves

25% of furloughed employees volunteer to come back and look after NHS staff who needed to isolate from their families/usual place of residence

April 2020

The pub and the hotel donates 1,500 litres of beer to local community group Love Lydgate who assemble volunteers and set up a drive through contactless payment collection centre.

The committees of Lydgate Brass Band Contest, The Great Saddleworth Get Together, and members of Saddleworth Round Table all volunteered to help and promote the event on social media.

April/May 2020

Having more money and volunteers than they need. The community contacted the local Age UK representative to see if any local residents would need support with their meals. They then begin delivering 400 meals a week to the local residents identified by Age UK.

Local charity (Saddleworth Round Table) proposes they support the local ICU staff with hot meals. They begin delivering 350 a week to the ICU staff at the hospital.

⭐ Key Insights

Pre-existing local organisations with a history of collaboration gave them quick access to a wider network of volunteers and donors as well connecting them to people they could support

Community groups and hyper local charities existed before the crisis and have worked together previously to put on events in the area. "We all know each other around here and there is a strong sense of community"

Direct communication with the council meant they were able to quickly make use of their assets and provide much needed support to NHS workers

It wasn't clear to the hotel owner who to call in the NHS to offer his support so it was important that the council rang and made the connection. "We were happy to help and provide beds but we didn't know if it was needed until the council called".

Community spirit and furlough scheme made employees keen to re-apply themselves to community focused work

Community spirit was high and 25% volunteered themselves to come back to look after the NHS guests. The furlough scheme also eased staff's financial worries so they felt more empowered to give up their time. "I'm still getting paid so I'm going to do my bit"

Greenfield community try to protect the environment and improve safety at a natural beauty spot
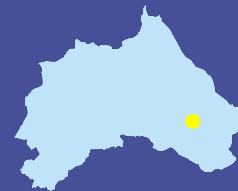
2018

Huge fire breaks out in the moors near Greenfield. Burns for weeks and requires military assistance to put out.

Pre-COVID

Residents campaign for parking restrictions to curb numbers and fines for BBQ's to prevent fires

March 2020

The moorland site part owned by United Utilities, also an RSPB nature reserve, shut its car parks in line with Government advice. Visitors continue to come.

April 2020

The reservoir starts to become overcrowded as the weather gets hotter. Cars park on the roads making it difficult for residents and emergency services to access the town and reservoir.

Residents use local Facebook group to report incidents and share information

Marshalls and local residents confront BBQers and large groups, but receive abuse in the process

May 2020

Mountain rescue and other local volunteers patrol the area looking for fires and picking up litter.

Residents write to Andy Burnham and local MP to explain their concerns and call for the site to be shut to the public.

June 2020

Large fire breaks out and burns 10 acres

Council install double yellow lines around the area to curb illegal parking

People begin parking illegally on verges and other roads around the area. Number of visitors have been curbed but numbers remain high

⭐ Key Insights

Local knowledge could be used to help design and measure council and private organisation interventions

The responsibility for the site appears to be shared by the residents, RSPB, United Facilities and the local authority. Large efforts have been made by all of these groups to protect the site but they haven't always been collaborative and the safety issues seem to persist.

Community resources that are shared by many cause distress for the few that live closest and try to regulate them during a crisis

Residents say they feel overwhelmed by the situation. They say there are too many people visiting and they don't feel they have the resources or the authority to protect the area.

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Stories of Impactful Initiatives
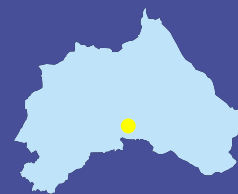
Salvation Army

"Oldham Fitton Hill Salvation Army played a key part in the community response during Covid-19. Our response was very effective as we built on the existing relationships we'd been developing around our local estate for a few years.

Through the Coffee Shop that we set up - where very trendy coffees and teas are available at very cheap rates - we've built a strong sense of community for local residents. Our Coffee Shop has become a central hub where people meet and build friendships. It's also a place very much used by local service providers as they aim to reach people (e.g. housing association).

Our response has included food parcels and wellbeing packs being prepared and delivered but has also included social distancing sing along and music quizzes to those who are shielding and over-70s who live in the bungalows on the estate. These involved 100s of people on a regular basis.

We were supported by For Housing who are the main Housing Agency and their response team joined us and made referrals to us. They also gave us funding of £5000 in the initial response.

The church workers also made contact with the local community so we could meet regularly. As such, our weekly toddler group has involved 6-70 children (when normally we support about 25). Our Sunday School has supported about 200 children, on a regular basis (when normally, we support about 20).

We have supported over 1000 people including food parcels and wellbeing packs and also clothing needs."

⭐ Key Insights

Establishing a Coffee Shop - with fancy drinks available at cheap prices - has helped us reweave the social fabric of the estate.

Our Coffee Shop is used, in normal times, by a large number of residents and, for instance, by the local Housing Association. Indeed, the local Housing Association have managed to have more meetings with residents in a few weeks than they would normally have in a year.

Small grants to establish a process of referrals which our Church could run has enabled us to reach out to people who would probably have got missed. We had the team ready, we had the connections, and people could talk to us as they knew us.

Building programmes of support which included fun activities - e.g. dancing, bingo, etc. - enabled us to keep families engaged. Children have been involved in our fun activities. If we'd not done that, parents (mostly single mothers) would have have been missed out.

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Volunteers with Ghazali Trust, amongst many other community-led initiatives, supported dozens of bereaved families.
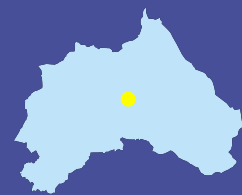
As with many other challenges faced by communities in Oldham, Ghazali Trust were amongst the first organisations to step up to the plate and offer to help. As such, after recruiting a 70-strong team of volunteers, these were pooled together with Oldham's Volunteer Army, supported by Action Together.

Covid-19 meant many people had become unemployed, not able to run their business, or had been classed as vulnerable. As such, many became unable to earn an income. The promise of help from Central Government did provide some hope for communities, but many people needed immediate support and that's what we were able to, and continue to, offer.

As part of the relief effort, we have been running a food bank 7 days a week to serve vulnerable members of local communities who face real difficulty in feeding themselves and their families as a result of Covid-19.

As well as providing food packs and household essentials our volunteers also provide a medicine pickup service, run errands such as going to the post office for the elderly/disabled people, contacting vulnerable people to make sure they are ok and be a source of support for those who have lost loved ones and/or are critically ill. So far 100s of individuals and/or families have benefitted including low-income families whose children would have ordinarily benefited from free school meals.

Through existing relationships we'd built over the past, we have had individuals, Mosques, businesses, and other community groups supporting us participating with food donations.

One of the amazing things happening is that community members themselves were finding the gaps and filling them. As the virus peaked, many individuals and families needed support, be it organising a funeral, helping to cope with bereavement, finances or just someone to talk to. Ghazali Trust with the support of Action Together established a free helpline operated by skilled and experienced volunteers to help members of the community to get through these incredibly difficult times.

☆ Key Insights

Existing relationships enabled our response to be fleshed out very quickly.

The Local Authority trusted us to develop plans which helped many of the most vulnerable members of our communities.

Members of the community saw the direct impact on their lives and, as such, were keen to volunteer.

School leaders at The Oldham Academy North delivered 150 food parcels and supported 50 families with energy payments and household essentials.
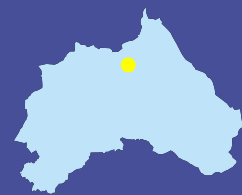
Working in partnership with the Manchester United Foundation and their CEO, John Sheils, we were awarded a £10,000 grant to support some of our most disadvantaged families during the Covid situation.

We know that some of our children and families struggle to get the basics and therefore we knew we had an opportunity to really help. In the first instance, we organised for basics hamper to be delivered to these families, including toiletries, sanitary products, non-perishable foods and some small luxuries to help. We organised for our pastoral team to contact the 50 families we knew had been worst hit by the lockdown and organised times to deliver these parcels. Our staff went out in a series of delivery slots and times to deliver these parcels across Oldham.

At the same time, we also asked them what else they needed and offered new bedding, pillows, duvets, socks, underwear, pyjamas and energy top ups. Families got in contact with us to let us know what they needed so we could place further orders and put these secondary packs together. In our second wave of deliveries and on top of the items above, we provided further food hampers to keep our families and children fed.

We have also organised to purchase full uniforms for all of these families, including winter coats and leather shoes to ensure that they are not at any further disadvantage when we return to the Academy in September.

☆ Key Insights

We knew that many of our children have only one hot meal during the day, the one provided by school so we knew we had to act quickly when we were awarded the funds.

The team at MU Foundation helped us to coordinate deliveries with their vans and transport. This was possible as we had an existing relationship with them.

Being part of a regular forum - organiser online - with other Secondary Headteachers as well as decision makers from the Council, the Police, and Health Services meant we could act quickly and cohesively.

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Key Learning to Take Forwards

Hyper-local organising: a co-constructed, fast, and personalised experience

The community groups we spoke to (faith institutions, schools, charities, formal and informal associations) believe for certain situations they were able to provide better support to their community than centralised services during the crisis.

Some key elements which contributed to their comments include the following:

- Having a lean operating policy allowed them to provide support in a fast and personalised way to their community. In the case of food parcels, volunteers assessed people's needs and gathered preferences through an initial phone or doorstep conversation rather than asking people to fill out paperwork. These conversations with people receiving support continued on doorsteps when the volunteers delivered parcels so they were able to adapt to people's needs over time. We heard lots of stories of parcels from more centralised operations arriving and not being appropriate to peoples culture and dietary requirements.

- The flexibility of hyper local groups better suited a lot of residents whose needs were very situational and sometimes changed overnight during lockdown. One volunteer described it like this: *"One week someone might need some help to just go and get the food, whereas the next they might need help paying for it, and some weeks food wasn't an issue, but they needed emotional support and company."*

- Free and open digital platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp were used heavily during this time as they provided a space for communities to match supply with demand. This meant people were able to access help with things like collecting shopping and borrowing furniture within a day of asking for it.

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Partnerships between local authority officials, community groups and leaders: Share assets and resources to scale operations and meet the needs of vulnerable citizens

The community groups we spoke to (faith institutions, schools, charities, formal and informal associations) all talked about the importance of collaboration when it came to scaling their operations.

Some key elements which contributed to their comments include the following:

- Support services were able to be scaled quickly by groups who shared their human and physical resources with each other. Church halls, sports centres, hotels and other private spaces were offered up for community groups and local authorities to use. Groups also used their digital channels to raise awareness of and promote each other's efforts. We also heard of lots of volunteers coming together from different organisations and professionals such as chef's, cleaners, and web programmers reapplying their skills and time to support the community.

- To move past immediate networks, community groups had to collaborate with others to reach people who were in need of their help. We heard of collaborations between all types of organisations and groups to help match supply and demand. Many spoke of finding work arounds and making quick phone calls to speed up data sharing with each other.

Strategic partnerships between Local Authority officials and community groups and leaders:
A desire to share expertise and knowledge leading to a reshaping of decision-making processes

The community groups we spoke to (faith institutions, schools, charities, formal and informal associations) commented positively on the new interactions with Local Authority officials throughout the Covid-19 crisis.

Some key elements which contributed to their comments include the following:

- Recognition from Local Authority officials that local knowledge is important and this, not only in principle, but also when it comes to including strategies put forward by local groups themselves. Where strategies were most impactful, local groups said, there had been a clear element of co-construction.

- Access to decision makers was facilitated through regular online meetings, many schools commented, which led to much more impactful decisions being made. A regular forum with local Primary and Secondary Headteachers, involving key directorates, as well as key members of the police forces, as well as health services meant that discussions were much more relevant, meaningful, and decisive. Many Head Teachers commented that online forum meant that all could take part much more easily. It was said that more was achieved in a few weeks than in a whole year.

- Social prescribing and colocation of services are effective methods to build capacity from within the community. Many groups we spoke to commented very positively about the fact that Local Authority workers and other services have been physically based amongst existing community infrastructures thus not only working closely with community groups but also enabling local residents to access support more directly.

Human vs physical processes and structures:
Recognising communities' sense of place and belonging

The community groups we spoke to (faith institutions, schools, charities, formal and informal associations) have been reflecting on what constitutes their sense of place and belonging.

Some key elements which contributed to their comments include the following:

- There is a strong sense of place across Oldham communities. Very few people said, when we spoke to them, that they were from Oldham. Rather, they said they were from 'Fitton Hill', 'Roundthorn', 'Failsworth', etc. This was reinforced by the fact that they spoke about the measures put in place at a hyper-local level. When asked about the local hubs put in place during the crisis, many commented that they have been very useful but, nonetheless, not beneficial to all as they were too 'central' (even when they were geographically close).
- Most of the people we spoke to commented that - in normal circumstances - they find it difficult to access central services. Many, however, commented that services collocated within existing institutions (especially schools) helped reach members of the community who would have otherwise been missed.
- We've heard from members of the community that the emphasis placed on human relationships (as opposed to hierarchical or bureaucratic structures) has helped build trust and, effectively, maximise the impact of the solutions put in place over the Covid-19 crisis. This has been particularly strong when members of the local community and Local Authority workers and support services have co-designed solutions. Located things locally and co-producing solutions with the support of local stakeholders has been an effective recipe for success.

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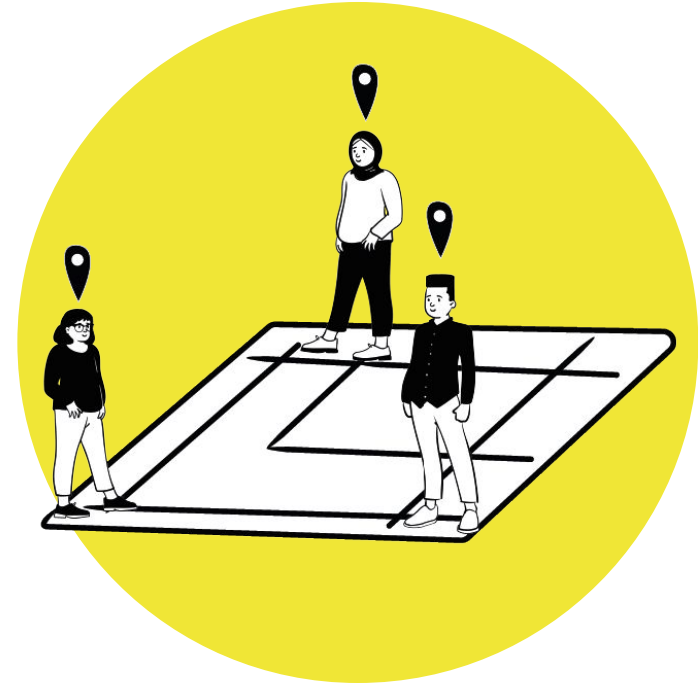
Continuing the learning (tools and methodology)

Process

Mapping out of what is happening

Contacting key members of the local community

Connecting with other members of the local community

Listening to local members of the local community

Community Centres

Church/faith organisations

Stakeholders in major community events

Youth Groups

Voluntary Groups

Cultural Institutions

Community Organisations

Civil Society

School Networks   Teachers Associations   Governers Networks   Leaders Associations

Influential schools   Nursery groups

Schools   MATs   State/private schools

Universities   Student unions   Departments

Further education   Apprenticeship providers   Colleges

Education charities/providers   Guides/Scouts   Sports Groups

Parents groups   School PTAs

After/outer school institutions/groups

Education

Stakeholders and institutions

Health   Police   Libraries

Residential Homes   Prisons

Public Services

Elected Representatives   Departments   Local Authority

MP and Teams   Revelant Departments   National Government

Local Mayors   Regional Mayors   Mayors Teams   Mayors

State

Key Employers

Business Associations

Growth Industries

Business Parks

Unions

Private

Sector Map Exercise - useful for identify gaps in your network
(State example)

Institutions/ groups	Examples	What are these in your community?	Who do you know in these?	Who do you need to know?
Local authority	Relevant departments/ Heads of departments Council Chief Exec			
National government	MP and team Relevant departments			
Public services	Health Police Libraries Residential homes Prisons			
Elected representatives	Local mayors Council leaders Cabinets Regional mayors			

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Community map - useful for understanding how people define their own community

Name:

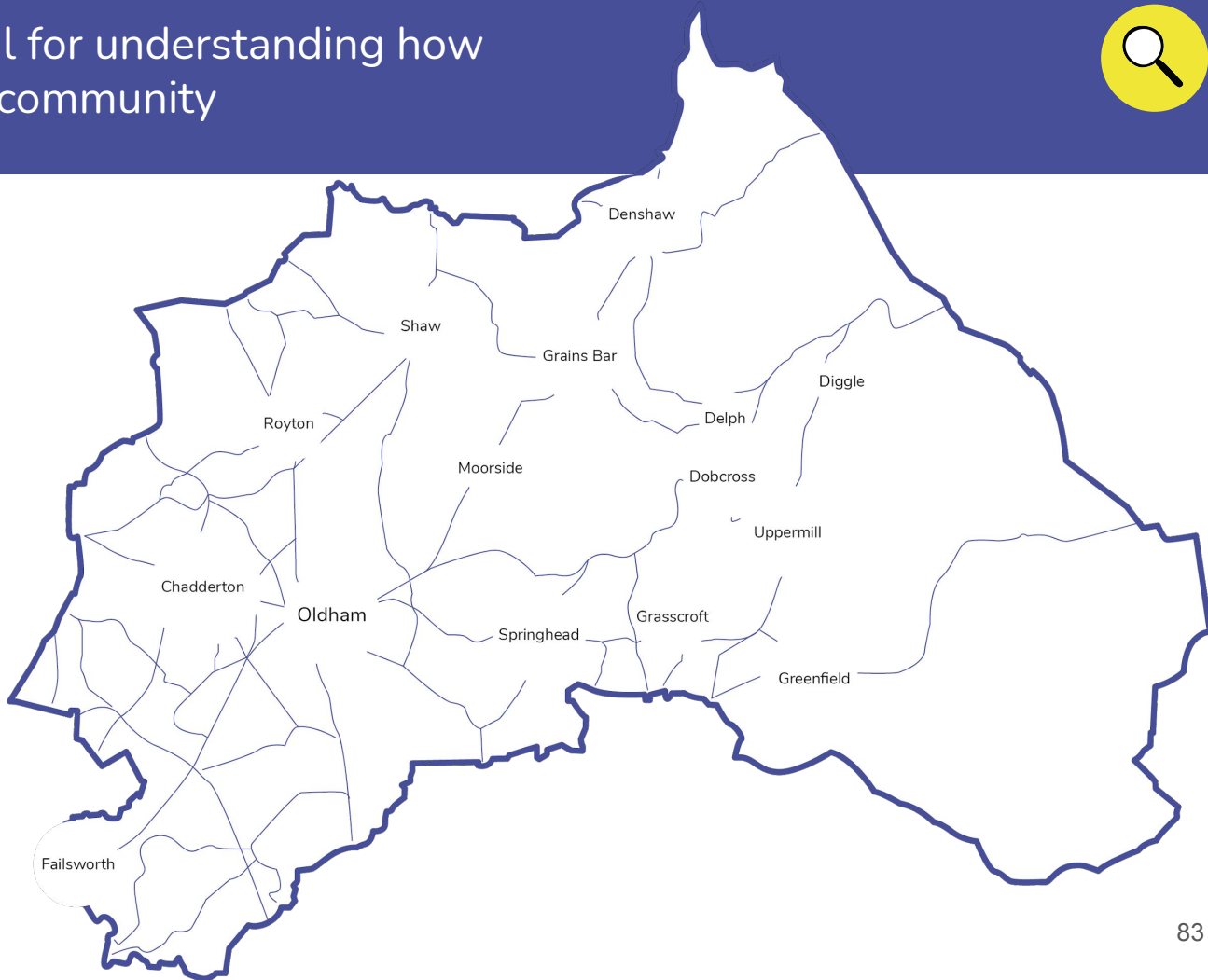..

Activities in the community

....

....

....

....

....

Please colour the area on the map that you consider to be your community

Denshaw

Shaw

Grains Bar

Diggle

Royton

Delph

Moorside

Dobcross

Uppermill

Chadderton

Oldham

Grasscroft

Springhead

Greenfield

Failsworth

Community map - useful for understanding how people define their own community

Community Champions / Informal Leaders Name 1

Community Champions / Informal Leaders Name 2

Community Champions / Informal Leaders Name 3

Community Champions / Informal Leaders Name 4

Denshaw

Shaw

Grains Bar

Diggle

Delph

Royton

Moorside

Dobcross

Uppermill

Chadderton

Oldham

Springhead

Grasscroft

Greenfield

Failsworth

84
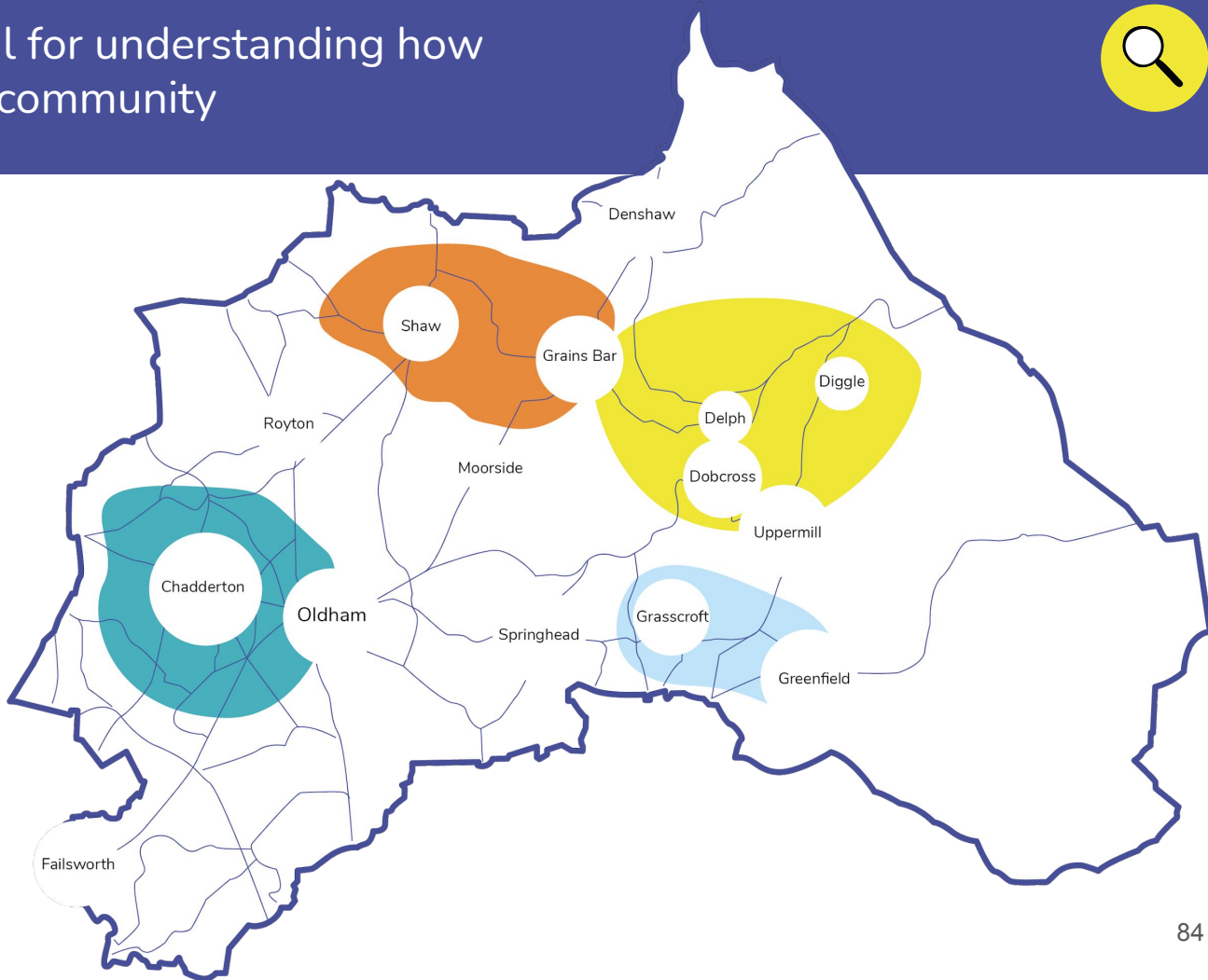
Conversation guide - useful for building a two-way, relational, process

A short script to get started as you're contacting people:

"Hi, my name is Seb. Salima recommended I get I touch with you about the work you're doing in Oldham."

"Oh yes, I know Salima. How can I help?"

"Could we book a time to have a chat and so I can find out more what you're interested in and share what I'm doing?"

"Sure. And who do you work for?"

"I am part of a team at the council and we're interested in hearing from local leaders and groups about the great work they're doing to see if there are ways we could support each other."

"Sounds good. How about next Tuesday?"

A short guide to get started as you're connecting with people:

It starts with what you care about, the things that drive your work. It focuses on connecting your interests to those of others. It focuses a lot on the 'why': why do you do what you do? Why do others do what they do? What drives us?

Relationships are important: lasting partnerships don't happen over email. They happen face-to-face and they focus what motivates people, not just tasks and processes. We cannot take shortcuts. It means taking the time to speak to people, even when we feel there is so much to do. It is an investment and it is rooted in human interaction.

It's not an expert process. It is simply about being human and wanting to connect.

It's a two-way process called a 'one-to-one'.

A one-to-one is good for:

- Building strong public relationships that will endure.

- Understanding what really drives people and what they care about.

- Sharing what's important to you, finding areas of common interest, and planning collective action.

- Identifying talent, leadership, and useful networks.

- Finding ways to get people to act around the things they care about, and about challenging yourself.
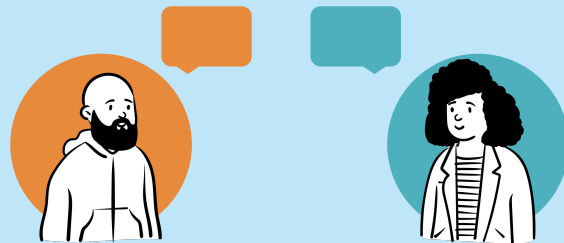
Conversation guide - useful for building a two-way, relational, process

Dos	Don'ts
Go into it intentionally - because you think there's some common interest, talent, knowledge, or network of values.	Pick random people and chat aimlessly.
Ask the person what they care about, their stories, values, interests, aims.	Sell your issue.
Be prepared to share about yourself: your story, why you do what you do, what motivates you in your area of work, what your hopes and aspirations are.	Interview the other person.
Have a 50:50 balance in who is speaking and who is listening	Dominate the conversation.
See it as a way to find and connect with the right people and to create ongoing, productive, relationships.	See it as a one-off and then go back to the emails and the same old task-oriented meetings.

Conversation guide - useful for building a two-way, relational, process

Engaging people - creating an ecosystem of involved stakeholders:

[Be clear in your mind about what you want to do next. Remember, this is not an interview. Rather, you're aiming to find ways to move into a collaborative space.]

Dos	Don'ts
Draw out the potential overlaps between their work and yours. Positively comment on the contributions local leaders are making to support local communities.	Close the conversation without acknowledging the work local leaders are doing to support local communities.
Suggest next steps and mention other people you think they may be interested in talking to. Ask if they may be able to suggest names of other leaders doing great things.	Don't suggest next steps that you don't believe in and that aren't relevant to the co-construction of local partnerships.
Suggest a 'house meeting', with 5 or so people from the local community working on similar projects to discuss issues further.	

Personas - useful for communicating community needs

Jim, 78

"I'm lonely and scared but I don't want to be a burden to anyone"

Jim's network

Jim has two sons.

Both live over 200 miles away and are busy working and looking after their children. He doesn't want to worry them.
They bought him a smart phone but he doesn't like using it so they call him on the house phone twice a week.

Most of his friends are males of a similar age.

Since the pubs and parks shut he hasn't seen them. They don't text or call each other.

About Jim

Jim is 78.

He lives alone in a small terrace house on the outskirts of Oldham. He has a small pension that meets all his basic needs but he does have to be careful with his money

He lost his wife to cancer 3 years ago and has 2 sons.

Jim is struggling with:

Jim hasn't been driving since his car accident last year and is nervous about leaving the house and catching the virus.

He has tried doing an online shop but couldn't remember or reset his email password so was unable to register a new account.

Struggles with arthritis.

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Personas - useful for communicating community needs

Mo, 23

"Protecting my health isolates me. Being cut off from my community and culture has been extremely distressing."

About Mo

Mo is 23. He came to the UK from Algeria one year ago. His initial asylum claim was rejected and now he's appealing. He is unable to work so is dependant on charities to feed and house him.

He has been told to shield as he has a long term health condition and needs frequent health care to manage this condition.

Mo's network

Mo is estranged from his family for moving away from his original faith.

A local faith-based charity is paying for a room at a hostel but it means he has to live away from Oldham's French-speaking African community.

Mo is struggling with

Mo has been learning English through an app but has only mastered the basics so can't have a conversation over the phone or read text heavy documents.

The food parcels he receives don't allow him to eat the food he has grown up eating. He's started risking his health by leaving the hostel to buy food from an African supermarket.