



Selecting tools and approaches for working through each phase of the work

We've used a variety of tools throughout our work with communities, including a new model developed by Brightpurpose called the System Maturity Model.

The tools are outlined below, and we've also shown which phases they were useful for.

The phases of the People and Communities work

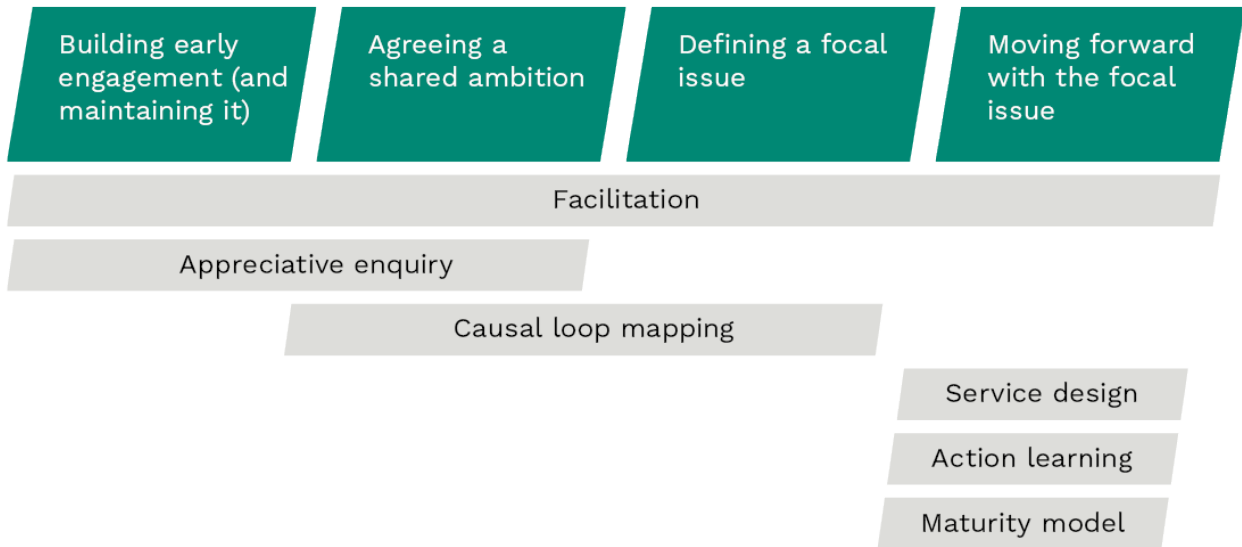
- Building early engagement (and maintaining it)
- Agreeing a shared ambition
- Defining a focal issue
- Moving forward with the focal issue

It started with gathering local stakeholders and organisations for workshops to build early engagement and explore what it might mean to truly change the system. Next was agreeing a shared ambition for the community, including working through issues that prevent progress.

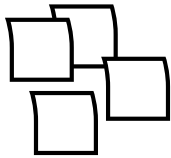
Once that was defined, they could identify a specific local issue to concentrate on. And moving forward with that focal issue communities went on to create leadership groups to steer the work, commissioned research and developed workplans to keep it all moving forward.

Before continuing to each stage, the team needed time to observe, analyse and consider the most appropriate methods to move the work forward. This 'balcony thinking' has been crucial, and will remain so.

For each phase, the team identified effective methods to support the work. This is illustrated in the figure below.



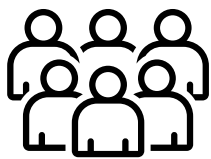
The tools



Advanced Facilitation

Design, organisation and facilitation of events and workshops that bring people together to agree their shared ambitions and explore the barriers to realising them.

The team at the Foundation and the Local Implementation Leads have all had Advanced Facilitation training to do this, and it has been the most used approach so far in building the conditions for relational change.



Action Learning Sets

Action learning sets are a structured model for group problem-solving and shared learning. It involves around six members coming together regularly to share and work through challenges.

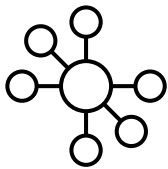
The Local Implementation Leads participate together in an action learning set to support their own work in communities, and some are now trained as Set facilitators, and can offer this model to others in their communities.



Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry is a way of looking at organisational or systems change, focusing on identifying and doing more of what is already working, rather than looking for problems and trying to fix them.

Focusing on core strengths can help make rapid strategic change possible and unlock new ideas and creativity. The Team and Local Implementation Leads have frequently used appreciative inquiry methods to frame workshops and events. It has encouraged a different way of looking at local needs and strengths as a platform for making positive change.



Causal Loop Mapping

A visual methodology for identifying the underlying causes of complex issues, which maps the causal relationships between different elements in a system.

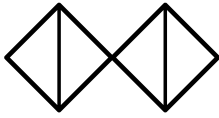
We have funded a Causal Loop Mapping specialist to work with two of the communities, to help them agree a focal issue after their initial issue proved too large or abstract to enable practical action.



Above: Poster showing causal loop mapping exercise in Telford and Wrekin. It shows the interconnected nature of the issues in the local community.



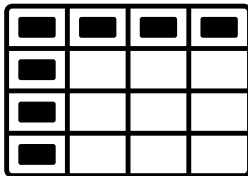
Service Design



A structured methodology for exploring and designing new or improved services. It's done with extensive involvement of the people who would use the service.

We funded a service design specialist to work with one of the communities. They helped us develop a peer-led research programme that will inform local partners about the needs and experiences of people with lived experience of homelessness.

System Maturity Model



The model is used to take a group self-assessment at periodic intervals so the local community can chart how they are doing. There are nine categories which stakeholders score against to assess the local system.

The assessments go on to inform priorities for improving how the community works together.

Brightpurpose worked with us to identify the nine factors that contribute to a mature system, and created descriptions of what each factor would look like on a range from one to five – where one is ‘just getting started’ and five is ‘really doing well’. The categories we scored against are:

- 1 Vision
- 2 Collaboration
- 3 Accountability
- 4 Involvement
- 5 Planning / strategy / programming
- 6 Finance
- 7 Service delivery
- 8 Workforce development
- 9 Learning, evaluation and continuous improvement



Category	5	4	3	2	1
1. Vision	The shared vision is embedded in everything that people do. It flows from top to bottom and all organisations articulate it in similar ways, allowing for their differing cultural norms.	The shared vision sets a clear direction and articulates where organisations and people fit in to achieving it.	The shared vision is well formed and commonly understood but is articulated in different ways by different organisations.	There is a shared vision, but it is loosely formed, which leads to different organisations/people interpreting it in different ways.	There is no clear shared vision for the future, or there are competing visions.
2. Collaboration	Partner organisations work collaboratively. This sometimes involves compromising their individual organisational priorities, in the interest of achieving the shared vision.	Roles, responsibilities and incentives reflect the need to collaborate, leading to new ways of working.	Many decisions are made across boundaries. Shared outcomes are starting to be developed.	There is some mutual understanding between local partners. Collaborative behaviour is not yet commonplace.	Collaboration across boundaries is limited.
3. Accountability	Partners are accountable to each other and to the community for achievement of the shared vision, and hold each other to account on an ongoing basis.	Partner organisations have agreed their respective accountability to each other and the community, and have begun to change their internal systems to support this.	There is broadly the right partnership structure to enable shared accountability and decision-making.	There is a recognition that shared accountability will be needed between partners to achieve the shared vision.	Responsibilities and accountabilities are limited to within individual organisational boundaries. There is no shared accountability between partners.

4. Involvement	Local people are partners in the shared vision, and are active in shaping, overseeing and delivering.	The partners understand the range of different ways local people want to be involved in local services and system change, and provide appropriate opportunities to do so.	Local people are involved in generating ideas and exploring different ways to run local services.	Most or all partner organisations engage with people with lived experience as part of designing and managing services.	Local services are designed and delivered with limited consultation with people with lived experience.
5. Planning/ Strategy/ Programming	All programmes and services are fully aligned with the shared vision, and well-integrated with each other.	Some shared programmes / services are being developed across organisational boundaries. Existing services and programmes are being redesigned to ensure alignment to the shared vision.	Planning for new services and programmes is beginning to be joined up. Partners are exploring ways to integrate services and join up across organisational boundaries.	Teams from some services and programmes connect with each other informally, to share information and referrals.	Programmes and services are distinct and independent of each other.



<p>6. Finance</p>	<p>Services are funded on a long term, sustainable basis, with contracts that enable delivery organisations to focus on services and plan ahead.</p>	<p>Services are funded on a longer term timeframe where possible, or are underpinned by agreements of intent to fund over the longer term.</p>	<p>Local commissioners and funders are actively exploring how to procure and fund services over the longer term, and in ways that do not exclude smaller charities.</p>	<p>Local commissioners and funders recognise the need to create a longer term funding model that sustains services and enables small charities to be a viable part of the delivery ecosystem.</p>	<p>Services and programmes are funded annually, with uncertainty of funding from year to year. Some services shrink or disappear when local funding is unavailable, despite being needed and well-used.</p>
<p>7. Service delivery</p>	<p>Services are delivered by the local organisations with the right mix of expertise and experience to meet the needs of people facing complex social issues. This is a mix of smaller and larger organisations from statutory and voluntary sector.</p>	<p>The partners recognise the importance of a mixed service delivery landscape, with all organisations playing to their strengths. They are actively developing service design and commissioning approaches that make this possible.</p>	<p>Smaller charities are recognised as an important part of the local service delivery landscape, for their unique insights and skills to support people facing complex issues. They may still find it difficult to navigate local funding structures.</p>	<p>Smaller charities are sometimes involved in service delivery, engaged as subcontractors by larger organisations or funded for small scale delivery.</p>	<p>Service delivery is mainly by statutory and larger voluntary sector organisations. Smaller charities tend to provide unfunded services through volunteers and fundraising.</p>



<p>8. Workforce development</p>	<p>New ways of working are adopted. Shared workforce planning is in place.</p>	<p>Plans to develop new skills and ways of working are being realised, and people are engaged.</p>	<p>Plans are in place to facilitate the necessary changes to culture, people's roles, skills and ways of working.</p>	<p>Organisations recognise that new ways of working, skills and culture will be needed to change how services are delivered.</p>	<p>Organisations have their own ways of working, culture and skillsets, which suit their individual objectives.</p>
<p>9. Learning, evaluation and continuous improvement</p>	<p>The partners are committed to learning from their shared approach to delivering services. There is a culture of shared reflection and learning for continuous improvement.</p>	<p>All partners are committed to understanding the impact of services and learning for continuous improvement. Partners also recognise the need to reflect together on new ways of working.</p>	<p>Partner organisations recognise the importance of reviewing and reflecting on service delivery, and sharing that learning to inform everyone's thinking about design and delivery of local services.</p>	<p>Some organisations review the effectiveness and impact of their services and programmes, mainly driven by accountability requirements.</p>	<p>Organisations rarely review the effectiveness and impact of services and programmes, or reflect on how to learn from experience and improve services.</p>