



A Toolkit for Co-Production in Community Planning

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Introduction

This Toolkit is for practitioners in Community Planning. It has been developed as part of Carnegie UK “Embedding Wellbeing in NI” Project which provided financial and in-kind support to three Community Planning Partnerships to implement a wellbeing approach in their practice.¹

The Project worked in-depth in three local authority areas: Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council; Derry City and Strabane District Council; and Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council. It provided the Community Planning Partnerships with support on co-production and shared leadership, which were identified as ways of working that are key to the success of the Community Planning process, improving wellbeing outcomes, and strengthening the ‘golden thread’ between the tiers of government.

Community Places provided a Programme of support on co-production to the three Partnerships and drew on the learning gained from delivering the Programme to develop the Toolkit. Readers may also find it helpful to refer to the Community Places Community Planning Toolkit².

The Programme of support was provided during 2019-2021- a period which coincided with the COVID crisis. The response of communities, volunteers and community organisations across

the region and the responsiveness of local and central government demonstrated the potential and power of co-production:

- The **assets** of people and communities came to the fore;
- Professional and community services worked hand-in-hand; **trust** was **built**, and **power shared**; and
- Partnerships were strengthened and new **networks** developed and resourced.

The projects supported in each of the three areas learned from and built on the lived experiences of people and communities during the COVID crisis. Community responses to the pandemic have been captured by Carnegie UK and others and have generated learning for Community Planning and co-production for the longer term³.

1 Carnegie UK (2019) *Embedding Wellbeing in Northern Ireland* Available online at <https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/publications/embedding-wellbeing-in-northern-ireland/>

2 Community Places (online) Community Planning Toolkit Available online at <http://www.communityplanningtoolkit.org/>

3 Carnegie UK, 2020, COVID-19 and Communities Available online at <https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/publications/covid-19-and-communities-listening-project-a-shared-response/>

Toolkit Structure



The toolkit is based on the experience of delivering the co-production support Programme with the three Community Planning Partnerships, a review of global practice and consultations with key stakeholders from all of the region's Community Planning Partnerships in a Symposium on co-production.

The results of this work are drawn together in the full report of the project, available on the Carnegie UK website. The findings highlight the need:

- To more clearly define, agree across partners and put into work the principles of co-production;
- To operationalise co-production and, in particular, moving from conventional forms of community consultation to meaningful engagement with people and communities;
- To embed co-production techniques in Community Planning structures and delivery; and
- To ensure that service users form an integral part of the co-production of Community Plans and how they are implemented and evaluated.

Co-production for wellbeing outcomes entails an integrated approach by and between public service providers, service users and the wider public and community groups. To support this the toolkit is organised around four priorities:

1. Definition and Principles
2. Community Engagement and Empowerment for Co-Production
3. Co-Producing in Community Planning Partnerships
4. Co-Producing with Service Users.

Each of the four sections outlines the issues involved and provides advice and guidance supported where appropriate by details of further  resources and  case studies.

1. Definition and Principles

Co-production is increasingly recognised as an effective means of developing partnership, inter-sectoral and social innovation approaches in order to deliver wellbeing outcomes for citizens and communities.

Carnegie UK sees societal wellbeing as comprising Social, Economic, Environmental, and Democratic (SEED) outcomes that contribute to the development of an inclusive society in which communities have the capacity to make choices about their lives⁴. Wellbeing outcomes are also linked to an increasing concern for community wealth, building back better after Covid and ensuring that wellbeing is seen as more than the economic performance of a particular place⁵.

While there is a range of definitions of co-production and associated principles there are many commonalities, with any differences in emphasis tending to reflect its application to a particular sector. The core common principles in the context of Community Planning are:

- **An asset-based approach** which recognises and values the abilities and resources people and communities have
- **Equal inclusion** of the contributions of professionals and people/communities

- An emphasis on **building capacities and networks of mutual support** for people and communities
- **Building trust and sharing power** in both service delivery and planning.

The delivery of the support Programme incorporated a symposium on co-production in 2019. It included an overview of definitions and principles promoted by the Department of Health and organisations in Wales, Scotland, England and the Republic of Ireland. Representatives of partners from all the 11 Community Planning Partnerships and of community and voluntary sector networks shared and discussed their experiences and learned from co-production in Scotland and other jurisdictions⁶.

The following definition draws on the symposium materials and discussion and reflects the specific role of Community Planning Partnerships:

4 Carnegie UK (online) <https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk>

5 Centre for Local Economic Strategies (online) *What is Community Wealth Building* <https://cles.org.uk/community-wealth-building/what-is-community-wealth-building/>

6 Community Places, 2019. *Embedding Wellbeing in Northern Ireland Report of Co-production Symposium* Available at <https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/>



“Co-production means building on the assets of communities of place and interest to deliver better wellbeing outcomes for all by sharing responsibilities and power equally between service users and those who advocate on their behalf, and service providers across all sectors.”

As demonstrated throughout the delivery of the Programme of support, co-production can be applied by Community Planning practitioners:

- In local communities (through for example Participatory Budgeting)
- In both strategic and local area Community Planning Partnerships
- Through locality planning at DEA (District Electoral Area) level.

Resources

Coalition for Personalised Care, 2020, *A Co-production Model* Available online <https://coalitionforpersonalisedcare.org.uk/resources/a-co-production-model/>

Community Places (online)
<https://www.communityplaces.info>

Department of Health, 2018, *Co-production Guide: Connecting and Realising Value Through People* Available at <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk>

NESTA, 2012, *People Powered Health Co-production Catalogue* Available online at https://media.nesta.org.uk/documents/co-production_catalogue.pdf

New Economics Foundation/NESTA, 2009, *The Challenge of Co-production* Available online at https://neweconomics.org/uploads/files/312ac8ce93a00d5973_3im6i6toe.pdf

Tempo Time Credits, online, *Coproduction* (video) Available at <https://youtu.be/vugLEaEcBR0>

2. Community Engagement and Empowerment for Co-Production

2.1 Introduction

The delivery of the Programme of support drew attention to the fundamental need to identify an agreed approach to the engagement of people, service users and community groups who seek to promote and address the needs of their communities.

2.2 Engagement for Co-Production

The Partnerships supported by the Programme utilised a variety of methods to engage citizens and communities in the preparation of their Community Plans. At the stage of implementing these Community Plans the Partnerships identified the need to embed a strategic approach to engagement across their partnership structures and to begin to develop a community empowerment dimension to engagement. The support Programme identified five foundational principles for achieving community empowerment:

Community control – which enables and supports communities to take more control of both decisions and assets

Effective relationships – between communities and Community Planning partners

Accountability – to those in communities most impacted by policies and decisions

Leadership commitment to empowerment – from the top and throughout Community Planning partners' structures

Improved outcomes – better wellbeing for disadvantaged and excluded communities in particular.

Engagement is best understood as a continuum of involvement – with the type of engagement being determined by what is needed in each particular case and what can realistically be achieved. Empowerment is the most developed and effective level of community engagement. The Spectrum of Public Participation developed by IAP2 (International Association for Public Participation) is in use around the world. It sets out a continuum of five types or levels of engagement:

Inform – the provision of information which assists people in understanding the issues and possible solutions

Consult – seek feedback on needs analysis and possible solutions or services

Involve – working with people in both identifying and understanding needs and issues

Collaborate – working alongside people to identify and consider possible solutions to identified needs and issues

Empower – decisions made by people with implementation by them or others.

Two of the Projects drew on support from Community Places to develop *Engagement Strategies* which were endorsed by the respective Community Planning Partnerships. Both strategies adopt the IAP2 Spectrum⁷:

and the Scottish National Standards for Community Engagement which are good practice principles designed to enhance and guide the process of community engagement⁸:



7 International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) (online) *Core Values, Ethics, Spectrum – The 3 Pillars of Public Participation* <https://www.iap2.org/page/pillars>

8 Scottish Government/Scottish Centre for Community Development (2016) *National Standards for Community Engagement* Available online at <http://www.voicescotland.org.uk/>



Case study

Following the ABC Community Planning Partnership's adoption of an Engagement Strategy it identified the need for a 'How to' guide for officers to apply the strategy across the partner organisations.⁹

The guide was developed in collaboration with the Community Planning Team and co-designed and tested at a workshop with partners. Taking as its starting point the IAP2 Community Engagement Framework and the Scottish National Standards (both of which are central to the ABC Engagement Strategy) the Guide presents four resources:

- Materials to aid the planning and designing of an engagement process and determining the process objectives;
- An Engagement Plan Template which those planning a process complete;
- Critical details of 19 methods of engagement and guidance on how to select the most appropriate methods to achieve the process objectives; and
- A self-evaluation framework for reflection on the process and outcomes.

The Place Standard¹⁰ tool provides a simple framework to structure conversations about place. It allows people to think about the physical elements of a place (for example its buildings, spaces, and transport links) as well as the social aspects (for example whether people feel they have a say in decision-making).

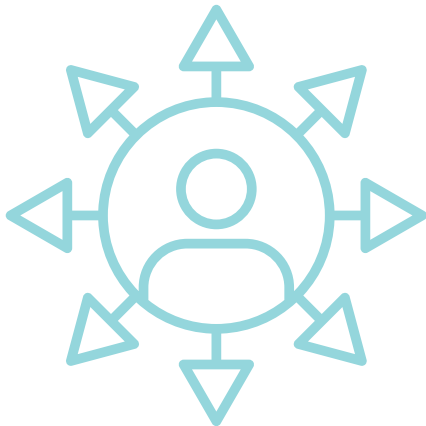
The tool provides prompts for discussions, allowing people to consider all the elements of a place in a methodical way, and pinpoints the assets of a place as well as areas for improvement. It can be completed online or in face-to-face workshops and was used during the Programme delivery to support the development of Locality Plans for the Lisburn Castlereagh Partnership (see next section).

⁹ Community Places (2019) *Planning and Designing Effective Engagement* Available online at <https://www.communityplaces.info/publications/co-production-publications>

¹⁰ The Place Standard (Online) *How Good is Our Place?* Available online at <https://www.placestandard.scot/>

Citizens' Assemblies, Panels and Mini Publics

are deliberative methods of engagement which bring together a representative, often randomly selected, sample of citizens through a process of sortition¹¹. Citizens consider policy and other issues, examine expert evidence and deliberate and make recommendations for Government to consider, action and deliver on. There has been a surge of Citizens' Assemblies in recent years across the UK and Ireland examining issues such as abortion, ageing populations, equal marriage, climate change, air pollution and social care. They are effective methods for co-production in that they value the lived experience of citizens and their ability to engage with complex and challenging issues and professional expertise to generate solutions and recommendations for action. Interestingly, the Executive's New Decade New Approach document has set out commitments to deliberative democracy including proposals for structured civic engagement and an annual Citizens' Assembly¹².




Resources

The resources below detail a number of recent Citizens' Assemblies:

Within Northern Ireland a Citizen Assembly on Reforming Social Care for Older People was held in 2017. <https://citizensassemblyni.org/>

Ireland has held a number of Citizens Assembly's including:

- *The Eight Amendment of the Constitution* (2017)
- *How we respond to the challenges and opportunities of an ageing population* (2017)
<https://www.citizensassembly.ie/en/>

More recently Scotland has also experimented with Citizens' Assembly's including

- *The Future of Scotland* (2020)
<https://www.citizensassembly.scot/>
- *Scotland's Climate Assembly* (2021)
<https://www.climateassembly.scot/>

Involve, who were commissioned to deliver many of these Assemblies has produced a guide on running a Citizen's Assembly and detailed information on how to combine digital methods with traditional engagement.

<https://www.involve.org.uk/resources/methods/citizens-assembly>

11 Community Foundation NI (2019) *Civil Innovation Tools Directory* Available online at <http://civicinnovationni.org/tools-directory>

12 UK Government/Irish Government (2020) *New Decade, New Approach* Available online at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/856998/2020-01-08_a_new_decade__a_new_approach.pdf



Case study

In the Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Community Planning Partnership area a Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS) Panel was established in 2018 to:

- ensure the Community, Voluntary and Social Enterprise sectors are represented on the Community Planning Partnership
- promote ongoing community engagement
- articulate a voice for the sectors
- support the development of cross-sectoral relationships and partnership working.

The Panel forms part of the Community Planning structure:



What Works Scotland has conducted an evidence review 'Hard to Reach or Easy to Ignore' exploring the intersection between community engagement and inequality. It examines evidence, from Scotland and the UK, on what is being done to overcome inequality in community engagement¹³.

Community Planning Partnerships here and in other jurisdictions have developed a range of models for community and voluntary sector collaboration through formal representation in the Partnership structures. A Community Places report details these models and reports on workshop discussions on learning from the implementation of some of these models across the region¹⁴.

Two of the projects supported by the Programme developed and tested **Participatory Budgeting** (PB) as a means of reaching out to people who may not normally respond to traditional approaches. PB **empowers** people to propose ideas, deliberate, make decisions and prioritise the allocation of resources. Online approaches were piloted with considerable success in reaching out to communities and young people.

Resources

The PB Works project facilitated by Community Places promotes Participatory Budgeting with its PB Works website hosting resources, guidance and case studies.

www.participatorybudgetingworks.org/

It also supports a PB Works Network which promotes good practice and presents the case to Government for the mainstreaming of PB across all policy areas.

www.participatorybudgetingworks.org/register

- 13 What Works Scotland (2017) *Hard to Reach or Easy to Ignore* Available online at <http://whatworksscotland.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/WWSHardToReachOrEasyToIgnoreEvidenceReview.pdf>
- 14 Community Places (2020) *Representation of Community and Voluntary Sector in Community Planning* Available online at <https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/publications/representation-of-community-and-voluntary-sector-in-community-planning/>



Case study

YOUth Making it Happen! is the first youth-led Participatory Budgeting project in Northern Ireland.

The Youth Co-Design Panel participated in a series of planning and design workshops to develop the PB process. They made key decisions on themes, eligibility criteria, timeframes, budget allocation, branding and marketing, and evaluation and learning. Dedicated YOUth Making It Happen! web pages¹⁵ on the Grow Derry Strabane Community Planning site and an engaging video were developed with input from the co-design panel¹⁶.



The PB initiative launched on 08 September 2020 and young people were invited to submit ideas to decide how the £20,000 PB Fund should be allocated. Ideas were submitted through a short initial application, followed by a second stage video submission. The Co-Design Panel agreed that ideas should focus on supporting young people related to six themes: Arts and Culture; Community and Environment; Education and Skills; Equality and Inclusion; Safety; and Sport, Health and Wellbeing.

46 applications and **33** Stage 2 videos were received. Videos were uploaded to the Consultation Hub for the online vote, with young people aged between 12 and 25 years asked to vote for the three projects they wanted to see delivered in their local growth area. The online vote was open for a week from 30 November to 06 December 2020. In total, **842** young people voted for their priorities across the council area.

The winning projects represented a range of themes including drama, culture and arts; improvements to green spaces and rivers; fitness, health and wellbeing; gifting and intergenerational activities; and education and skills.

15 Derry City and Strabane District Council (2020) *YOUth Making It Happen?* Available online at <https://growderrystrabane.com/youthpb/>

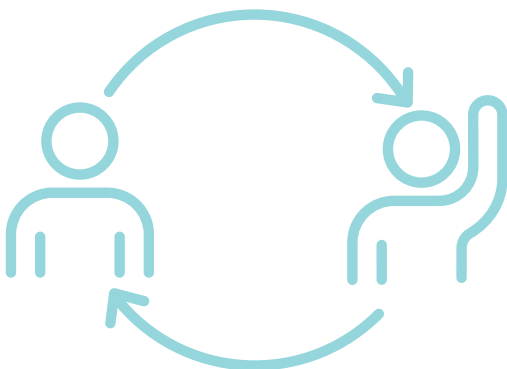
16 Derry City and Strabane District Council (2020) *YOUth Making It Happen – Why Get Involved* (video) Available online at https://youtu.be/WpZucFv_B_k

3. Co-Producing in Community Planning Partnership Structures

3.1 Introduction

The projects supported by the Programme have, or are developing, locality and thematic partnership groups as integral mechanisms for delivering their community plan outcomes. These and similar groups along with the Community Planning Partnership Boards should embody and model co-production, and are the focal points for providing leadership to co-produce wellbeing outcomes.

The practicalities of applying the co-production definition and principles set out in section One of this Toolkit were identified as a support need. In response Community Places developed a guide to applying co-production in partnership structures. The guide and this section of the Toolkit focuses on the linkages between co-production and effective partnerships, and provides support on applying co-production to the operation of partnership structures.



3.2 Co-Production and Effective Partnerships

The Northern Ireland Audit Office Making Partnerships Work_2019 report sets out a number of recommendations designed to improve the effectiveness of partnership bodies¹⁷. On communication it recommends:

*“Effective communication arrangements should be established at the beginning of the partnership. Identifying the target audiences, developing clear messages and communicating them effectively will increase the likelihood of initiatives and their outcomes being accepted and successful. **Good communication not only keeps people informed about what is going on, it promotes trust and a friendlier and satisfying working relationship; creates a more productive environment; helps to avoid conflict and helps partners achieve their objectives.**”*

The Audit Office report also presents “Tips on Managing Conflicts”:

- Create a sense of **interdependency** among partnership members.
- Provide regular **information** to all partners to create a sense of being well informed.
- Work continuously to maintain a high degree of **trust** among partners.
- Create a process of decision-making that is perceived as **fair and open** by all partners.

¹⁷ Northern Ireland Audit Office (2019) *Making Partnership Work* Available online at <https://www.niauditoffice.gov.uk/publications/making-partnerships-work>



Resources

The challenges of developing workable partnerships along with guidance and tools for the community and voluntary sector are contained within the 'Working Together' theme of the Community Places Community Planning Toolkit. www.communityplanningtoolkit.org/working-together

3.3 A Charter of Co-Production Commitments

A Guide to applying co-production principles was developed as part of the programme of support.¹⁸ It includes a charter of commitments to assist the application of co-production within partnership structures and by partner organisations:

Teamwork when developing options and taking decisions

Openness to all ideas and discussion

Genuine communication across all partners

Equitable opportunities to participate within context of imbalances in capacity and resources

Trust building across sectors pro-actively facilitated

Honesty in sharing information and views

Engagement of people impacted by issues under consideration

Respect for all views

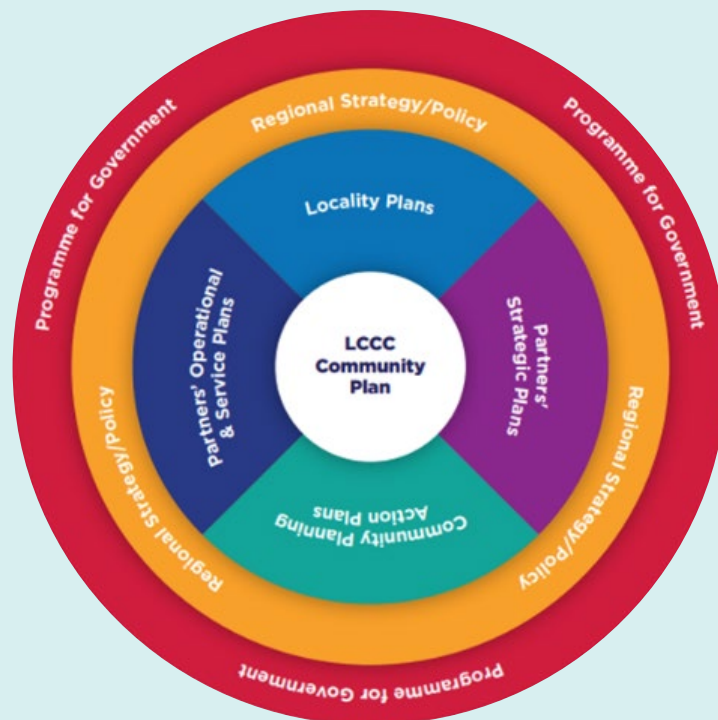
All the partners represented on a Community Planning Partnership board should be asked to adopt and work to these commitments, follow the 12 steps set out in section 3.4 of this report and participate in the ongoing assessment process (section 3.5).

18 Community Places (2021) <https://www.communityplaces.info/publications/co-production-publications>



Case study

Locality Planning is seen as an integral part of the Lisburn and Castlereagh Community Planning framework and requires localised collaboration by statutory partners and with the community:



The Community Planning Partnership requested support for the development of two pilot DEA (District Electoral Area) Plans. In providing this support Community Places emphasised the need for localised collaboration by statutory partners and with the community. The partners were asked to detail their services, programmes and plans for each DEA to inform the plan development¹⁹.

Using the 'Place Standard'²⁰ tool for community engagement Community Places prepared a Plan for each of the DEAs with each setting out:

- The vision and outcomes of the council-wide strategic Community Plan and how it links with DEA Locality Plans;
- The engagement process used to develop the Plan;
- The assets of the area identified during the engagement process;
- The areas and issues for improvement and suggested actions from the engagement; and
- Next steps for wider community consultation and final adoption by the Partnership Board.

19 Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council (2019) *Locality Plan for Lisburn South and Castlereagh East* Available online at <https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/resident/community-planning/locality-plans>

20 The Place Standard (Online) *How Good is Our Place?* Available online at <https://www.placestandard.scot/>

3.4 Applying the Charter – 12 Steps

Meetings are (almost inevitably) the focal point of partnership bodies and their success is core to the progress of co-production (though by no means the only indicator). The Guide to applying co-production principles developed for the Derry City and Strabane Community Planning Partnership sets out practical steps which all partners can take in applying co-production before, during and after such gatherings.

1. Come to meetings prepared to participate, having read and considered papers in advance.
2. Present information in readily accessible ways and avoid overuse of jargon.
3. Focus on discussing agenda issues within the time agreed for each item.
4. Actively contribute to all discussions – including on issues outside of the partner body's direct responsibilities.
5. Encourage others to contribute and be respectful of different views.
6. Contribute to ensuring decisions made are clear with responsibility for action identified.
7. Respect confidentiality where agreed to allow sharing of information and views.
8. Seek consensus where possible while not avoiding differences of opinion being acknowledged.
9. Value both community knowledge and professional expertise.
10. Be represented by people who have the authority to contribute fully and reach agreements.
11. Work collectively to secure the resources (people and finance) needed to implement decisions.
12. Contribute to discussions and evaluations on improving the meetings and the overall work of the Partnership.

3.5 Assessing Progress in Partnership Structures

Partnerships need to have a variety of ways of self-assessing their progress.

Given the significance of meetings it will be helpful for members of the organisation to complete the feedback table below and for the minute-taker to prepare a collated table of scores for the following meeting. The collated table should be discussed briefly at the next meeting, with suggestions for improvements shared and considered.

Annually, Partnerships could hold a workshop to assess progress and plan ahead. It will often be best to have this workshop independently facilitated and informed by the collated results from the feedback tables.

Resources

Quality Indicators have been developed by Contact (a charity that supports families with disabled children) to support Partnerships in identifying and developing good practice in how they work together in co-production. The resource sets out a simple action planning and evaluation framework. <https://modgov.sefton.gov.uk/documents/sg0018/SEND%20Co-production%20Quality%20Indicators.pdf>

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) presents a reflective tool to examine the process and practicalities of co-produced research. The resource details a series of reflective questions to support co-production through sharing power and building more equal relationships. <https://arc-w.nihr.ac.uk/Wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Reflective-questions-to-support-co-produced-research-FINAL.pdf>

IRISS has produced a Co-Production Project Planner²¹ and Springboard²² which contains useful guidance, facilitation tools²³ and workbooks. <https://www.iriss.org.uk/resources/tools/co-production-project-planner>

21 Iriss (2018) *Co-Production Project Planner* Available online at <https://www.iriss.org.uk/resources/tools/co-production-project-planner>

22 Iriss (2019) *Project Springboard* Available online at https://www.iriss.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-03/project_spring_board.pdf

23 Iriss (2018) *Co-production Project Planner Tools* Available online at <https://www.iriss.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-05/iriss-coproduction-project-planner-tools.pdf>

Assessing Progress:

Date of meeting

Scoring: Yes – 3 Points Needs Improvement – 2 Points No – 1 Point	
Please give your feedback by writing Yes (Y), Needs Improvement (NI) or No (N) beside each of the following:	
We are working well together.	
We are sticking to our agenda.	
People are being respectful of one another.	
We take and implement decisions.	
We are being frank and open about issues.	
We are gradually achieving what we set out to do.	
Overall, we are implementing our TOGETHER Charter.	
TOTAL SCORE	
Please add any comments or suggestions for improvements here:	

4. Co-Producing with Service Users

4.1 Introduction

Co-production in service and project delivery has been progressing but remains a challenge – particularly for partnership structures. The three projects supported by the Programme piloted partnership co-production initiatives. Simultaneously they and all the other Community Planning Partnerships collaborated with the CVS during the COVID pandemic in providing responses at community levels where the reach and responsiveness of the CVS came to the fore and proved to be vital.

The challenge is to ensure these initiatives and examples become mainstream practice. For this to happen, co-production needs to be applied in four fields of service delivery practice, and a systematic approach needs to be in place.

The fields of practice each involve citizens playing an active role and are:

Co-design – with service providers and users working together to redesign services to improve outcomes for the public

Co-commissioning – where providers, users and local communities jointly prioritise needs identification and service planning and determine the most appropriate vehicle for delivery, which may be the CVS

Co-delivery – service users and providers coming together to improve delivery and identify preventative action which will improve outcomes for communities

Co-assessment – joint evaluation by providers and users to identify progress on outcomes for wellbeing and the effectiveness of the process.

Resources

Governance International provides support for transforming public services through co-production and promotes the use of its Co-Production Star Framework which incorporates these fields of practice²⁴.

Homeless Link highlights the value of co-design and co-delivery at the Booth Centre. Hear directly from service users through this powerful video which highlights how those with lived experience of being homeless are involved in both designing and delivering services at the Booth Centre in Manchester²⁵.

Homeless Link and Inspiring Change Manchester embed lived experience in their service delivery through the GROW programme²⁶.

This report from NESTA highlights 'real stories of reform' from people who deliver and use services. The stories draw on practical experiences which have recognised that services need to be founded on new partnerships and ways of working which bring service providers and service users together²⁷.

24 Governance International (online) <http://www.govint.org/>

25 Homeless Link (2018) *The Importance of Co-production of Services* <https://youtu.be/UOj3bZDtGWc>

26 Inspiring Change Manchester (2019) *Co-Production – employing lived experience* Available online at [https://www.homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/site-attachments/Co-Production Toolkit – Employing Lived Experience.pdf](https://www.homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/site-attachments/Co-Production%20Toolkit%20-%20Employing%20Lived%20Experience.pdf)

27 New Economics / NESTA (2010) *Public Services Inside Out: Putting co-production into practice* Available online at https://neweconomics.org/uploads/files/public_services_inside_out.pdf



Case study

Representatives of the CVS in the Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon area described the community responses to COVID and the results of a community survey undertaken to capture these²⁸.

Co-operation within the CVS was strengthened and mobilised a large voluntary effort to deliver on people's doorsteps. They stressed that this experience evidenced needs in communities (which must inform Community Planning) and that it also showed that decisions taken at a regional level really need input by the CVS because there is a disconnect between these regional decision-making processes and delivery of support on the ground.

²⁸ Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council (2020) *ABC Community and Voluntary Panel Reveal Results of Food Survey* Available online at <https://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/abc-community-and-voluntary-panel-reveal-results-of-food-survey/>

4.2 Co-Production during COVID Pandemic

Developments in the health sector and more broadly before and during the COVID crisis support progress towards co-production. For example, pre COVID, social prescribing was initiated and resourced in recognition of the valuable role social and community networks and projects play in health and wellbeing. At a regional strategic level, the policy shift towards transforming the health service provides a context for co-production to flourish. During the COVID crisis the assets of people and communities were widely and rapidly recognised as central to the social response. Resources, and more importantly, trust was invested in community organisations to deliver local and person-centred support.

Resources

The challenges of co-producing online during the COVID-19 pandemic are explored by Lab4Living and partners Sheffield Hallam University, the University of South Australia and the University of York through a [collection of projects](#) which draw on different activities and techniques to support remote co-production and co-design during the COVID-19 pandemic. <https://lab4living.org.uk/projects/co-design-during-covid/>

The Embedding Wellbeing Programme in Northern Ireland created a space for learning and reflection at a peer-peer [webinar](#) on working with communities post COVID-19 through Community Planning. <https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/publications/embedding-wellbeing-in-northern-ireland-peer-to-peer-learning-webinar-on-working-with-communities-post-covid-19/>



4.3 Steps Towards Progress

Experience and learning from delivery of the support programme indicates that there are 10 steps to effective co-production in service and project delivery. These are:

10 steps to effective co-production in service and project delivery

- 1** Leadership and consistent commitment from the top – including time and permission for staff to experiment and pilot
- 2** Identification of service areas where co-production can have a meaningful impact and where change ideas will be welcome
- 3** Inclusive recruitment of a broad network of service users, communities and key service delivery staff including decision-makers
- 4** Capacity building in this network and with service delivery staff and facilitation to build the joint co-production project team
- 5** Agree the outcomes within the context of the Community Plan, to be achieved by the team and its decision-making processes
- 6** Allocate time and resources to the team for mapping assets, needs and people's lived experiences of using and providing services
- 7** Joint work by the team to design new interventions, solutions and approaches to address these needs and respond to these experiences
- 8** Team agrees how to monitor, report progress and evaluate the need for new interventions and ways of working
- 9** Deliver the agreed solutions with whole team involvement in any procurement or restructuring process
- 10** Team evaluation of the delivery of the new solution or approach against the outcomes set, and a constant focus on evaluation and continuous improvement.





Case study

The Community Planning Officer at Fermanagh and Omagh District Council in this blog on CVS involvement in Community Planning reflects that “building awareness of resources and capacity in the CVS, as well as connecting organisations, was fundamental in the beginning to help ensure the right foundations were laid to enable good working relationships moving forward.

We now have awareness of the key players needed and available in the sector to progress change on priorities identified in the Community Plan. It's no longer about 'everyone' but ensuring the right CVS organisations are engaged at the right time. We need to move beyond a 'static' CVS Forum and begin to move towards an approach that is agile and flexible.”²⁹

²⁹ Weir, K. (2020) *Community and Voluntary Sector involvement in Community Planning – An agile and flexible approach needed* Available online at <https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/blog/community-and-voluntary-sector-involvement-in-community-planning-an-agile-and-flexible-approach-needed/>

Other Useful Resources

Co-Production Networks

Co-Production Network Scotland
<http://coproductionscotland.org.uk/>

Co-Production Network Wales
<https://copronet.wales/>

Co-Production Collective, UCL
coproduction@ucl.ac.uk

Case Studies

Co-Production Wales and Public Health Wales (2015) *Seeing is believing Catalogue of Co-Production Case Studies from Wales* Available online at <https://info.copronet.wales/co-production-catalogue-from-wales-seeing-is-believing>

Co-Production Collective (2020) *Co-Pro Stories – Exploring Lived Experiences of co-production* Available online at <https://cpb-eu-w2.wpmucdn.com/blogs.ucl.ac.uk/dist/c/605/files/2021/02/Co-Pro-Stories-Short-Final.pdf> and <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1vtHOjD7gNozv69hASCuk6wfgHC4yrSq>

CLES and Preston City Council (2021) *The definitive guide to the 'Preston Model'* Available online at <https://www.preston.gov.uk/article/1791/The-definitive-guide-to-the-Preston-model->

CLES and Preston City Council (2019) *How we built community wealth in Preston Achievements and Lessons* Available online at <https://cles.org.uk/publications/how-we-built-community-wealth-in-preston-achievements-and-lessons/>

Nesta (2020) *East Brighton Causwayed, a community owned social movement that challenges health inequalities in East Brighton* Available online at <https://www.nesta.org.uk/feature/health-design/helping-create-space-where-community-power-can-take-root/>

New Economics Foundation (NEF) (2011) *Stories of Co-production (video)* Available online at <https://youtu.be/aKATrzUV2YI>

Scottish Co-Production Network (2021) *100 Stories of Co-Production* (video reference library) Available online at <http://coproductionscotland.org.uk/learning/section/100-stories/>

Scottish Co-Production Network (online) *Co-Production in Action Case Studies from Scotland* Available online at <https://www.coproductionscotland.org.uk/examples>

Jessica Russel (2020) *Co-Production Champion Southend-on-Sea Borough Council A Better Start Southend* Available online at <https://abetterstartsouthend.co.uk/blog/stepping-up-to-co-production-in-southend-on-sea-during-covid-19>

What Works Scotland (2016) *Operation Modulus: putting Christie into practice in Gorbals* Available online at <http://whatworksscotland.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Operation-Modulus-Case-Study-Report.pdf>

The Constitution Unit (2017) *Citizens' Assembly on Brexit* Available online at <https://citizensassembly.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Citizens-Assembly-on-Brexit-Report.pdf>

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