

locality

Powerful Communities, Strong Economies



Keep it Local for Economic Resilience




Fairer economy, better world

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Why Keep it Local?

Locality believes that we can harness the power of community to create a resilient local economy and a fair society through local public service commissioning.



This report summarises the findings of our Keep it Local for Economic Resilience action research project, supported by Friends Provident Foundation. The full final report can be found at www.locality.org.uk

At the present time, the scale of the social challenges we face can threaten to overwhelm our collective ability to tackle them. Deep inequalities, complex problems, continued austerity, declining faith in political institutions; these things and others have combined to create a daunting climate for those who are seeking to achieve positive social change.

But despite the brutal budget cuts and growing pressure on services, local areas have huge resources at their disposal to improve people's lives. By marrying up the billions of pounds that local government continues to spend each year on services, with the power and innovation that exists in our communities, we can create a fair society where every local community thrives.

However, the continuing trend towards outsourcing services to large multinational companies and big national charities is undermining this mission. Not only does this result in poor quality, tick box services, which fail local people, drive up demand and increase long-term costs. It also means public money leaks out the local area and leaves before it can be of broader benefit to the community.

At Locality, we believe there is a better way: to Keep it Local. By commissioning local community organisations to provide local services, councils can simultaneously create better, more responsive services and build a fairer, more resilient local economy.

We have been working in six places – Bradford, Bristol, Calderdale, Dorset, Hackney and Shropshire – to find out how we can make this happen in practice. We assembled a project team of councillors, local authority officers and community leaders in each area, to investigate the role community organisations play in the local economy, and how this can be harnessed through local commissioning.

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What we've learnt

Through our action research we've learnt that:

- **Cuts are both enabling and preventing change.**
Local authorities have a pressing need to reshape service delivery to achieve savings, and there is an increasing urgency behind the search for new solutions. However, continuing austerity makes achieving this change very difficult in practice, with council officers under huge pressure, and little time and capacity to trial new approaches.
- **There is an opportunity for community organisations – but also a challenge.**
Local authorities believe that their long-term financial sustainability requires close partnership working with local organisations, and instinctively recognise the social and economic benefits of Keep it Local commissioning. But at the same time, there are practical concerns about whether the community has the capacity and expertise to 'step up' and get more involved in local service delivery.
- **Local systems remain fragmented.**
Commissioning and procurement functions within local authorities are often disconnected and seen as two different disciplines: the former about innovation, solutions and outcomes; the latter about rules, processes and finance. This disconnect is making commissioning an increasingly frustrating experience for local organisations. There is also a lack of clear 'place leadership' across the wider local commissioning landscape, creating a fragmented system that is difficult to navigate.
- **Risk aversion and fear of 'letting go' are stubborn cultural barriers.**
Rather than creating a new climate of experimentation, the pressures of austerity seem to have embedded caution and risk aversion; in particular the perception of legal and technical barriers to procuring locally. Councils can also remain attached to their standing as the local 'authority', and struggle to cede power and work closely in partnership with the community.
- **Social value hasn't gone far enough – but it can go further.**
Social value policy has not driven fundamental change in commissioning practice. Even councils that have done detailed social value work have met with internal resistance to the adoption of policies, and issues persist about how to really embed it into contracts in a meaningful way. However, it is clear that social value is a concept that local authorities are thinking about and want to use more effectively, so its first five years should be seen as a useful start to be built on, rather than a failed experiment.

How to Keep it Local

It is clear from our research that there is a growing interest in maximising the value of resources through local commissioning – but that even an ‘in principle’ commitment will not automatically translate into Keep it Local practice. Our work has therefore identified four key things that need to happen in order to overcome this:

1.

We need top-level leadership.

A local authority needs to be committed at a very senior level to Keep it Local, and for this to be a key part of a council’s political and corporate identity. With strong leadership in place, Keep it Local practice can then flow downwards through the system, be realised in commissioning frameworks, and be properly monitored and scrutinised.

2.

We need to join up the system.

Our research has identified that commissioning remains fractured and disconnected, in particular the relationship between ‘innovative’ commissioners and ‘risk averse’ procurement officers. We need to join up the system – both within the local authority and across the local area - to embed a consistent place-based approach.

3.

We need to be more ambitious about social value.

Social value is not well embedded in commissioning; but it remains the most useful current framework, with potential to be more transformative. Local authorities can use social value more effectively and harness the contribution local organisations make to the local economy by focusing on the concept of economic resilience.

4.

We need to show community organisations can step up.

There is often scepticism among local authorities about the capacity of local organisations to take on commissioning opportunities. Overcoming this is, in part, about local authorities learning to let go, but it is also about community organisations showing they can step up: making a compelling case for the local economic impact they bring and the extra bang for buck they provide, and evidencing it more effectively.

In order to address these challenges, we have developed a Keep it Local: Economic Resilience Framework

The framework is intended to build a shared commitment between the council and community to place-based commissioning that develops local economic resilience and maximises the local benefit of public sector procurement spend.

The framework can be used by local authorities to assess to what extent current practice is promoting economic resilience and support them to commission locally and small-scale. Specifically it can be used as a framework for providing strategic leadership; delivering this through effective commissioning and procurement, which harnesses the potential of social value legislation.

It can also be used by community organisations as a framework for thinking about their own economic impact and how to evidence it most effectively.



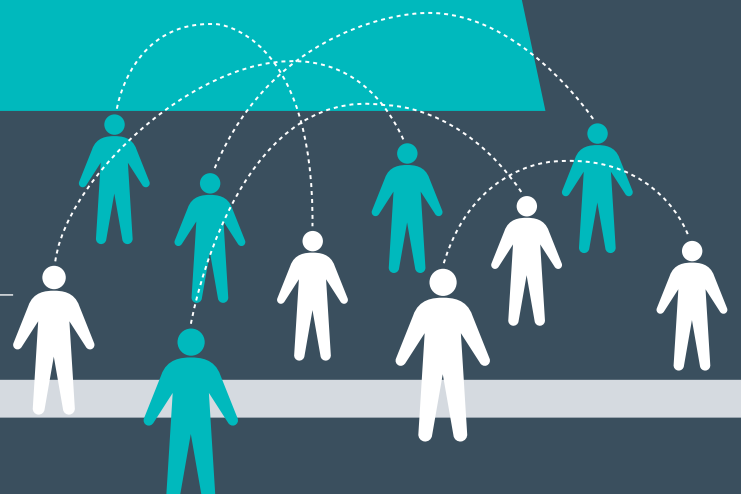
Community 'anchor' organisations and economic resilience

Community anchor organisations are place-based, multi-purpose organisations, which are locally-led and deeply rooted in their neighbourhoods. They respond flexibly to local need and therefore come in all different shapes and sizes. What unites them, however, is a sense of ambition for their places, an enterprising approach to finding local solutions to local problems, and a clear sense that this activity should be community-led and based on self-determination.

Community anchors perform a number of important functions. They provide joined up, person-centred services. They represent the neighbourhood and give local people an independent voice. They provide spaces where the whole community can come together and forge trusting relationships.

They are also powerful economic agents. Community anchors play a crucial role in the local economy, acting as local economic multipliers. They ensure the wealth they generate is re-distributed in their neighbourhoods, by employing local people in good quality jobs, using local supply chains, and investing in people to themselves become economically active.

This economic role is particularly significant as community anchor organisations mostly operate in deprived areas. 80 per cent of Locality's members work in the 50 per cent most deprived wards in the country.¹ These are areas where private sector activity is often weak, and in these places community anchors can be the neighbourhood's major employer and key economic actor.



¹ Locality (2016) 'Our Impact'. Available at: <http://locality.org.uk>

Economic resilience and why it matters

Economic resilience is 'the capacity of an economic system to adapt to both short-term shocks and long-term change, while supporting the community to thrive'.²

The concept of economic resilience grew in prominence in the wake of the financial crisis of 2007-08 and the recession that followed. This had revealed in stark terms the weakness of economies that are overly reliant on a few sectors, and where the proceeds of growth accrue narrowly. Its relevance has not diminished in the intervening years. The UK is again engaged in a major debate about how to rebalance the economy, this time focused on the need for 'inclusive growth' in the aftermath of the EU referendum and the recognition that globalisation has not benefited all communities equally.

Our work is based on a number of frameworks that have been developed which seek to define local economic resilience.³ There are two reasons why we believe it is a particularly important concept for local areas to consider at the present time.

The first is that a resilient local economy is one that has social justice at its heart. Resilience for us does not mean the simple ability to 'bounce back' and return to a pre-existing state, where the local economy may – for example – have been characterised by poverty, inequality or environmental degradation. Instead, resilience requires the ability to respond positively to change. It is an ambitious concept that makes tackling disadvantage and supporting environmental sustainability central to economic success.

The second is that it means we have to think about the economy on a more human scale. For over 30 years, our political economy has focused primarily on the global and how we can attract inward investment by lowering barriers to competition. However, after the EU referendum and the election of Donald Trump, many have come to recognise that there are downsides to only ever looking outwards; in particular, that globalisation has not necessarily been of similar benefit to every place.

If globalisation no longer provides satisfactory economic answers, then localisation provides us with a powerful counterweight. For some this might suggest protectionism – but localisation is not about preventing wealth from flowing in, it's about stopping it seeping out. So here economic strategy first looks inwards towards the assets that exist within a place and seeks to harness them for the maximum benefit of the local community. It sees local attachment as a strength rather than a sentimental indulgence; prioritises local business and social enterprise; and tries to keep wealth circulating around neighbourhoods. Crucially it regards economic growth as important to the extent that it enables local people to live fulfilled lives, rather than an end in itself.

At the heart of this is the idea of community economic development – the process of economic development within a specific area to benefit the local community – and how it can maximise neighbourhood-level economic opportunity and create dynamic local economies.

Yet while our economic policy is increasingly regional, it is still far from local. Indeed, the economic benefits of city region 'agglomeration' that have driven the development of the 'northern powerhouse' are likely to exacerbate inequalities within places, even as the differences between them are levelled out.

So by focusing on economic resilience, we have the opportunity to ensure that economic growth is truly and meaningfully 'inclusive': underpinned by local priorities and focused on neighbourhood renewal, tackling poverty, environmental sustainability, and community empowerment.

² Locality definition adapted from Greenham, T, Cox, E and Ryan-Collins, J (2013) 'Mapping Economic Resilience', NEF/Friends Provident Foundation. Available at: <http://www.friendsprovidentfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/nef-Mapping-Economic-Resilience-1-report.pdf>

³ Greenham, T, Cox, E and Ryan-Collins, J (2013) 'Mapping Economic Resilience', NEF/Friends Provident Foundation; McInroy, N, Longlands, S (2010) 'Productive local economies: creating resilient places', CLES; Cox, E, Broadbridge, A, Raikes, L (2014) 'Building Economic Resilience: An analysis of Local Enterprise Partnership's Plans', IPPR North

The Keep it Local: Economic Resilience Framework

Our framework defines seven characteristics of a resilient local economy. These characteristics are interconnected and work together in a dynamic fashion to create a local economy that meets our definition of economic resilience:

“ An economic system that adapts to both short-term shocks and long-term change, while supporting the community to thrive. ”

It is important to stress that this definition of economic resilience is not value neutral. Locality is committed to building a fair society where every community thrives and we see economic resilience explicitly in these terms, as a means of promoting social justice. It is an adaptive quality that can tackle disadvantage and support the creation of self-confident and successful neighbourhoods.

Our framework identifies the broad characteristics that we believe must be present if a local area and its economy is to be resilient. However, their particular form will vary from place to place and this framework needs to be considered and applied dependent on local context. Each characteristic can give rise to a bespoke set of outcomes and indicators developed in each area, reflecting the exact nature of the local economy and local circumstance. Each local authority will be able to review existing strategies against the framework to identify gaps and opportunities; or use the framework to shape the development of new policies.

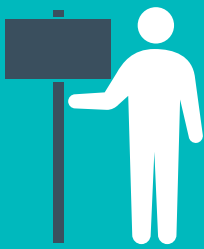
Economic resilience depends on the relationship between the different sectors of the local economy – private, public and social.⁴ So this framework has the interaction of these sectors at its core. The size and strength of each sector will differ from area to area. This framework provides a basis upon which the relative strengths and weaknesses of the local economy can first be assessed and mapped, with any particular opportunities identified alongside any particular gaps.

It also allows us to think about scale and how the different levels of the economic system interrelate and work together. Community organisations are neighbourhood-based, deeply embedded in their community and often operating at a hyper local level where concepts of place are at their most resonant. However, their economic relationships will of course be defined by the interactions between a range of different economic geographies – local authority, local enterprise partnerships (LEPs), functional economic areas, city regions – right up to the national and global. It is important, therefore, to identify what can be influenced at what level, and to understand the wider context that may shape local economic resilience.

Ultimately, the framework should be seen as the basis for a conversation between council and community, about how to maximise the value of scarce resources and about the role everyone can play in creating prosperous neighbourhoods. It is, in effect, a local charter for economic resilience, which enables people to come together around shared goals and collectively decide the most appropriate course of action to achieve them.

⁴ See McInroy, N and Longlands, S (2010) 'Productive Local Economies: Creating resilient places', CLES. Available at: <https://cles.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Resilience-for-web1.pdf>

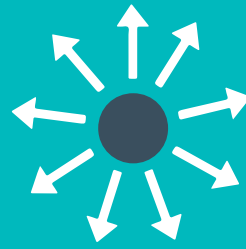
In this spirit, the framework is guided by four key principles which define its context:



It is citizen-centric
– a resilient economy is created by local people, for local people



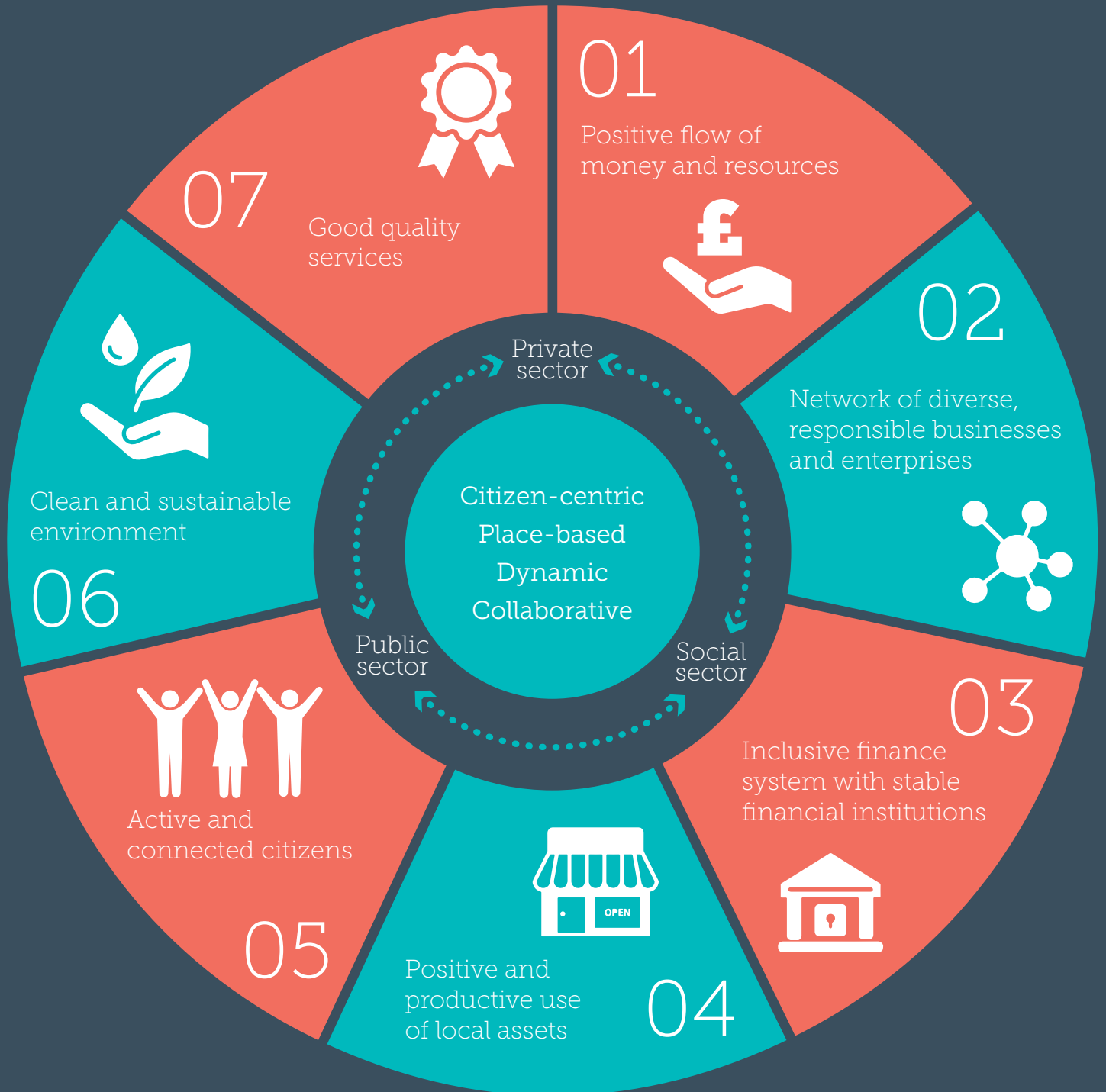
It is place-based
– a resilient economy maximises the value of local assets



It is dynamic
– a resilient economy adapts and changes



It is collaborative
– a resilient economy depends on strong relationships and sharing of power between sectors





The seven characteristics of a resilient local economy

Positive flow of money and resources, with long-term investment into the local area, a high local economic multiplier and public and private sector spending retained locally.



What this looks like locally: Public and private sector spending is retained in the area and the leakage of money is reduced. Wealth created locally is multiplied through the use of local supply chains and local labour. Underused resources - such as derelict land and people's skills and talents - are identified and used. Materials and products are reused, recycled and shared through refurbishment, libraries and the establishment of a sharing economy.

Example outcome: The public sector invests in neighbourhood-based community organisations which recycle the investment to create jobs and resilience

Example indicator: Percentage of public sector investment in the neighbourhood which goes to local organisations

Activities of community anchor organisations:

- Securing investment from outside the area
- Reinvesting profit from the organisation back into the organisation and/or community
- Buying locally from businesses and other social enterprises
- Supporting business start-ups to 'plug leaks' in the local economy
- Facilitating inter-trading between businesses and promoting local procurement and supply chains
- Advocating on behalf of local businesses
- Delivering local public services and reducing demand on public services through local intelligence
- Creating local employment and raising skill and wage levels
- Facilitating the sharing economy through tool libraries, bike libraries, book libraries
- Promoting corporate and individual volunteering
- Redevelopment of empty land/buildings, which improves the area and attracts higher wage business
- Improving digital infrastructure which attracts higher wage businesses
- Attracting tourists



Case Study:

The Local Multiplier Effect

LM3 (Local Multiplier 3) is a method that can be used by an organisation to measure how the money it spends impacts on the local area. It was developed by the New Economics Foundation (NEF), building on the idea of the 'leaky bucket'.⁵ If you imagine the local economy as a bucket full of water, every time you spend money that goes outside the local area, it leaks out the bucket. Generally, our energy is focused on trying to pour more money into an area so as to keep filling up the bucket; however, a better starting point for strengthening the local economy should be to try to prevent the money leaking out in the first place.

The LM3 was developed as a simple way of measuring this, and the extent to which money flows around a local area. As NEF explain: "The measuring process starts with a source of income and follows how it is spent and re-spent within a defined geographic area. A higher proportion of money re-spent in the local economy means a higher multiplier effect because more income is generated for local people."⁶

We have been conducting LM3 exercises across our project to track the local multiplier effect of community anchor organisations, using the LM3 online platform.⁷ Community anchors operate within a defined geographic area, usually a deprived neighbourhood, and tend to employ local people and use local suppliers.

This combination of local staff and local suppliers has meant strong LM3 scores across our project, suggesting that community anchor organisations do act as powerful economic multipliers, creating positive money flows in areas of significant economic disadvantage.⁸

Halifax Opportunities Trust measured the impact of their contract for the Jubilee Children's Centre on the local Calderdale Council area, and generated an LM3 score of 2.43 (the maximum score is 3).



Every £1 of income generated by Halifax Opportunities Trust at Jubilee Children's Centre **creates £2.43** for the local economy

Bradford Trident generated an LM3 score of 2.52, meaning every £1 creates £2.52.

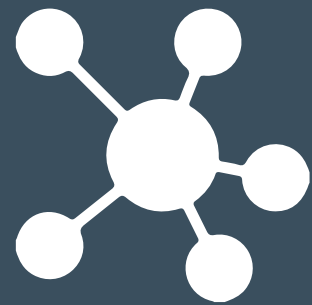
⁵ Ward, B and Lewis, J (2002) 'Plugging the Leaks: Making the most of every pound that enters your local economy', New Economics Foundation

⁶ NEF Consulting (2014) Local Multiplier 3 (LM3) Pilot Project for RWE. Available at: <https://www.nefconsulting.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Case-Study-LM3.pdf>

⁷ www.lm3online.com

⁸ For full details of our LM3 exercise, please see the full final project report at www.locality.org.uk

Network of diverse, responsible businesses and enterprises, committed to place, growing the local economy and providing good quality employment opportunities.



What this looks like locally: People are supported to set up and grow their businesses. Businesses trade with each other and share intelligence. People can shop locally and find what they need at reasonable prices. Businesses provide secure jobs and pay the living wage. There are cooperatively and community owned businesses and social enterprises in the mix. Large businesses reinvest into the community, provide training opportunities and recruit locally.

Example outcome: The neighbourhood has a diverse range of local business and enterprise which meet local need

Example indicator: People in the neighbourhood feel well-served by their local shops and don't need to travel out of the area for basic needs

Activities of community anchor organisations:

- Creating jobs and work placements
- Enterprise coaching, business incubation, business mentoring and networking
- Fostering local supply chains
- Providing workspace
- Providing childcare
- Fostering enterprise culture
- Engaging local businesses in community activity
- Retail activities



Case Study:

Enabled Contribution

One methodology that we have been using to help estimate the local economic impact of community anchor organisations is known as 'Enabled Contribution'. This methodology is a subset of the approach developed by NEF Consulting to measure the economic, social and environmental impact of an organisation across its full value chain, known as 'Total Contribution.'⁹

Enabled Contribution specifically measures the impact (social, economic or environmental) of a particular organisation or project by calculating the downstream activity in the value chain; in other words, the activity that an organisation enables through providing products or services to its customers.

For the Keep it Local project, these customers are the tenant organisations within each community anchor organisation. Locality commissioned NEF Consulting to estimate the enabled contribution of these tenant organisations, and the value of the "network of diverse, responsible businesses and enterprises" they foster. The scope was limited to their economic contribution, in line with our focus on local economic resilience.

Two dimensions of enabled economic contribution were analysed: employment and Gross Value Added (GVA). 'Enabled Employment' is defined as the number of people working for tenant organisations within each community anchor organisation, expressed as the number of fulltime-equivalent (FTE) employees. 'Enabled GVA' is defined as the measure of the economic value added by community anchors' tenant organisations.

Primary data was collected from ten community anchor organisations across the Keep it Local project. Community anchor organisations surveyed their tenant organisations to ascertain the following information: activity type; floor-space; turnover; and employee numbers. When tenant organisations provided data on turnover and number of employees, this was directly entered into the enabled economic contribution calculation. Where information was incomplete for either turnover and/or employee numbers, a value was estimated using activity type and floor-space data.

Approximately **1,400 jobs** and **£120m of gross value** added to the local economy



Overall, the ten Keep it Local community anchor organisations together were found to have enabled approximately 1,400 jobs and approximately £120m of gross value added to the local economy. This gives an indication of the wider economic contribution community anchors make to a local area beyond their own particular activities, through their tenant organisations.¹⁰

⁹ It originated from work conducted for The Crown Estate and the original methodology was published in 2013 on The Crown Estate's website.
¹⁰ For full details of our Enabled Contribution exercise, including methodology and full results, please see the full final project report at: www.locality.org.uk

Inclusive finance system with stable financial institutions providing appropriate opportunities to borrow, save and invest money, and which helps businesses, groups and individuals to survive and thrive.



What this looks like locally: Businesses and social enterprises can access the finance they need to grow. Residents are not discriminated against when it comes to accessing cash, bank accounts, loans or the living wage because of where they live. People are able to invest in local enterprises and there are ways to save and to borrow without being exploited. The social security system provides an adequate safety net which keeps people above the poverty line, and people have the skills, knowledge and support to manage their finances and avoid debt. Grants are available as well as loans and there are ways for people to donate to local charities and projects.

Example outcome: Money is invested into the neighbourhood to grow businesses and provide jobs

Example indicator: Level of loans taken up by businesses in the neighbourhood

Activities of community anchor organisations:

- Welfare and debt advice
- Working with credit unions or other financial institutions
- Financial literacy eg money buddies
- Providing or facilitating business loans
- Providing individual grants and loans
- Providing or facilitating grants to community groups
- Raising community shares and crowdfunding
- Raising investment into the organisation
- Informal support and signposting



Case Study:

BOOST Neighbourhood Finance

Work conducted by Demos for Friends Provident Foundation has highlighted that the UK's economy is unbalanced in two important ways: it relies too much on debt-driven consumption, leaving it vulnerable to shocks; and there are stark geographical imbalances, with SMEs more likely to be rejected for a loan in poorer regions of the country than elsewhere.¹¹

Community anchor organisations play a critical role in bridging this gap in deprived neighbourhoods, creating accessible local financial institutions to support small businesses, social enterprises and social entrepreneurs. They do this through peer-to-peer lending, affordable finance, local currencies, community shares, and community development finance institutions and credit unions.

Financial inclusion is also a critical element of this – ensuring local people have financial security and literacy, and access to financial information and affordable credit – to enable them to participate fully in the economy and build wealth locally. It also reduces the significant negative impacts which money worries have on health and wellbeing.

One example of this from our Keep it Local community anchors is BOOST Finance, led by Barton Hill Settlement. BOOST Finance is a project that offers the local community the opportunity to explore the benefits of having a range of financial advice and support services in one place. Individuals have an assessment of need, an 'income and expenditure' analysis, a review of current financial circumstances and identification of financial skill gaps (BOOST Personal Finance Plan) and discussion around their future aspirations (Boost Finance Aspiration Plan). Individuals then immediately access a combination of: debt advice, business support, housing advice and /or tailored employment services. There are also sessions which bring people together in workshops, peer support groups, initiative building opportunities and aspirational review sessions. Residents are supported to develop groups, set up community initiatives such as co-ops to pursue particular financial or employment related goals.

¹¹ O'Leary, D (2015) Community Chest, Demos. Available at: <https://www.demos.co.uk/project/community-chest/>

Positive and productive use of local assets, with ownership, access and control over productive resources in community hands or profits reinvested into the community.



What this looks like locally: Redundant buildings and spaces are brought back into use through a mix of volunteer effort, local investment and enterprise. Assets which the public sector can no longer afford to run are given to communities that can make use of them. People work together to find new uses for valued old buildings and support local businesses to bring them back into use. Empty homes are brought back into use. Communities raise investment to generate energy, provide infrastructure and run services cooperatively with the profits reinvested. Public land and resources are managed for the common good and not for private profit.

Example outcome: Physical assets in the neighbourhood are maximised for community benefit

Example indicator: Number/percentage of empty buildings in the neighbourhood brought back into use each year

Activities of community anchor organisations:

- Ownership of assets by a local democratic organisation with an asset lock with open membership and community accountability
- Generation and reinvestment of profit back into community
- Providing a space/place for local services – GP, health, employment, welfare, parks, shops, landmarks, sports
- Developing and managing housing
- Generating local pride through saving or developing iconic buildings
- Save and invest in heritage and operate museums and heritage centres
- Ownership and generation of energy
- Other co-ops/community enterprises supported with profits



Case Study:

Hebden Bridge Town Hall

Economic resilience is about the capacity of the local economic system to respond positively to external shocks and long-term change. There is perhaps no greater recent example of a shock to a local economy – and one which also signals a longer-term change – than when the River Calder burst its banks on Boxing Day 2015 and left Hebden Bridge 6ft under water.

After the floods hit, community-owned Hebden Bridge Town Hall opened its doors to become the flood support centre. Working with Calderdale Council, the Environment Agency and hundreds of volunteers, Hebden Bridge Town Hall became the heart of the flood relief operation.

As Amy Harbour, who was the Director of Hebden Bridge Community Association at the time, explained: “We opened the doors to the Town Hall on 27 December so that the local community could come somewhere dry and have a hot drink. And then it began. People came to help. The help was unconditional; they just needed to do something.

“Within four hours of opening we were a hub for cleaning items, a food bank, a place for people to fill out grant applications, a mobile phone charging point, free wifi provider and giving out free hot food and drinks.”

This incredible source of resilience at a time of crisis was made possible by Hebden Bridge Community Association, one of our Keep it Local community anchors, who after painstaking work, secured the transfer of the asset from the local authority to community ownership in 2010.

After two years of securing large capital investment and building works, they opened a new extension and revitalised the town hall itself, which saved a barely used building at risk of falling into disrepair. The ‘old town hall’ remains home to both the local authority and local town council as anchor tenants. The new state-of-the-art centre is home to vibrant community parties, events and festivals; a dynamic café with beautiful courtyard by the river; as well as conferencing and business units for creative enterprises. The town hall is now back at the centre of the town’s civic life.

Active and connected citizens, with high levels of agency and democratic participation, a strong sense of community and good links to other places.



What this looks like locally: People are well connected to others and to local institutions. There are good sources of local knowledge and intelligence. People work together to plan and take action to improve the area. People have a sense of agency. People participate in democracy and hold politicians to account. Local institutions are accountable to the community for their decisions. There are spaces and places where people can come together and which provide the opportunity to break down barriers between people and increase trust. People are cared for and supported by their families, friends and neighbours as well as local services. There are connections at an individual and organisation level with other places and regions.

Example outcome: Strong social cohesion and community connectedness in the neighbourhood

Example indicator: High levels of trust amongst residents, particularly amongst people who aren't 'like me'

Activities of community anchor organisations:

- Listening, understanding need and empowering people through community engagement, development and organising.
- Supporting local networks eg faiths forum, parish council, neighbourhood partnerships
- Promoting membership of local organisations
- Organising or supporting community and social events
- Supporting local/neighbourhood planning
- Hosting public sector workers
- Volunteer brokerage
- Running befriending schemes, buddying, peer mentoring
- Youth work and work in schools
- Democratic engagement eg voter registration, hosting polling stations and councillor surgeries
- Providing safe spaces eg community centres, library, cafes, parks
- Encouraging diversity and integration of different sections of the community
- Representing the area, influencing decision-making
- Providing opportunities for people to travel out of the area to have new experiences



Case Study:

Cleobury Country

Cleobury Mortimer sits on the borders of Shropshire and Worcestershire and is the 'gateway to the Shropshire Hills'. It is a small market town with a population of 3,036.

Cleobury Country Limited was established in 2006 and is a community organisation run by a volunteer board of directors. It aims to promote and support the rural heritage of the area, as well as provide new experiences and opportunities for local people. The organisation also works in partnership with other local organisations to enhance the sustainability of the environment and to develop a confident and well informed community 'which takes an active role in influencing decision-making and management of the area'.

One of the ways the organisation does that is by running the Cleobury Country Centre, offering services to the business and local community, and is a hub for local knowledge and information. The centre is home to:

- Cleobury Mortimer library
- Details of local events
- Training/meeting room
- Cleobury Country accredited training courses for business
- Business mentoring and networking
- Business support services, including secretarial, design and photocopying
- Local jobs board.

Rather than see the closure of the local library, Cleobury Country took over the management of it in 2016 and now opens the centre six days per week. The building also houses the parish council, which improves the access and relationship between the parish council and local community.

As part of their mission to work with the business community and build a confident community, the organisation runs entry-level courses such as food hygiene and first aid to support people into employment and to support the businesses to employ trained people. Cleobury Country also collects local business information and produces a local business 'Trade Card' which is sent out to local houses.

Their community work has a focus on promoting and supporting local rural heritage. One example of their activity is the running of the community allotments in partnership with Cleobury Mortimer Horticultural Society and this works to engage people in local and fresh produce as well as keeping people active.

Local people see the centre as a hub for information, often coming in for support with blue badge applications and housing issues (where they are signposted to local councillor surgeries). They also offer access to computers and support with digital skills.

Local knowledge and the ability to connect with lots of people is how they describe their key to success, 'We may not know the answers but will know someone who does and this helps to help people'.

Clean and sustainable environment, operating within environmental limits and with sustainable use of food, land and energy.



What this looks like locally: The local environment sustains health and wellbeing. There is clean air and water which supports people and sustains nature. Local infrastructure enables people to walk and cycle. Local green spaces are protected, enhanced and accessed by all. Food is produced without excessive use of pesticides and fertilisers and food supply chains are localised. Carbon release is minimised through production of renewable energy, reduced use of petrol and diesel for transport, energy efficiency in buildings and reduced transportation of goods. People have the skills and resources they need to live a sustainable life.

Example outcome: People in the neighbourhood spend time outdoors in a healthy environment

Example indicator: Growing usage of well-maintained and accessible green spaces

Activities of community anchor organisations:

- Litter picks
- Food growing, processing and distribution
- Keeping bees
- Nature activities and environmental education
- Looking after green space and water, parks, woodlands
- Conservation work and green gym
- Promoting walking and cycling
- Recycling of food, clothing, furniture, paper
- Buying and producing green energy
- Fuel buddies, winter warmth initiatives
- Tree planting, wildflower planting
- Eco-building and renovation
- Bike library, cycle repair, bikeability, bike networks
- Sourcing local food
- Flood resilience centres
- Long term nature of anchors and management of assets
- Providing local services which reduce travel/carbon



Case Study:

Manor House Development Trust

Public open spaces – like parks, woodlands and waterways – are crucial community sites where people can come together, meet their neighbours, build relationships, take exercise and connect with nature. The local environment we live in is crucial to our sense of identity and civic pride.

This understanding is central to the work of Manor House Development Trust, a charitable social enterprise in north east London. They see community-managed public spaces as a way to empower local people to take control of their environment and become more active in their communities. Environmental volunteering encourages active participation in the community, which also brings wider environmental benefits. Green spaces are also an untapped resource for training residents to make better use of their gardens; helping communities to access new economic opportunities through land management and conservation; encouraging healthier, more active lifestyles; and encouraging people to grow their own food.

Manor House Development Trust has been pursuing this through a range of local initiatives. They have built a community garden with raised beds and pallet planters on disused patio space. The garden provides a peaceful space for members of the community to access training on how to grow food, meet new neighbours and have a say over how the garden is run. Whatever is grown in the edible garden is then used to cook with at the Redmond Community Centre.

Manor House Development Trust have supported local residents to run the Woodbery Down Community Garden – a growbag space where residents can have their own micro plots to grow their own herbs and vegetables. The trust also organises regular clean ups of the New River and adjoining path, making this an accessible space for recreation and creating volunteering opportunities that connect people to each other and to the local environment. The Trust has found that people who attend one of their activities more than once are 70 per cent more likely to adopt 'greener behaviours'.¹²

¹² For more information see Manor House Development Trust Social Impact Report: <http://www.mhdt.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/MHDT-Social-Impact-Report-2009-2015.pdf>

Good quality services – housing, health and social care, and education – that are available to all and sustain health and wellbeing.



What this looks like locally: The local neighbourhood provides affordable homes, education, and health and social care which enables people to maintain their health and independence and to thrive as human beings. Children and young people are able to grow and develop, gain skills and qualifications and fulfil their potential. They can become independent from their parents and find jobs and homes they can afford. Older people are supported to remain at home with support and are not isolated. People are able to maintain their health so that they can work, care and take an active part in their community.

Example outcome: People in the neighbourhood have decent, affordable homes which support their health and mental wellbeing

Example indicator: Levels of homelessness and overcrowding

Activities of community anchor organisations:

- Sports and activity centres and classes
- Health centres and hosting of health services eg. GPs
- Peer health and social prescribing
- Sports for young people
- Campaigning for clean air
- House building, refurb, management
- Neighbourhood planning
- Services for older people eg lunch clubs, activity classes, home help
- Mental health services/disability services and welfare rights and employment support
- Ecotherapy and affordable counselling
- Alternative education and specialist schooling
- Sharing space with schools and hosting school visits
- Co-production of services and campaigning about services



Case Study:

Royds Community Association

Community anchors work with people in their communities – in places where they live, work, learn, raise families and age – and provide a holistic, ‘whole-person’ approach to supporting people. Through this approach and their expertise in community development, they draw on the strengths and capacities of communities, and support prevention.

In Bradford, Royds Community Association promote a ‘health buddy’ system to tackle health inequalities and direct people to appropriate services.¹³ Previously funded by the local clinical commissioning group (CCG), this work involves training volunteers, drawn mainly from patient engagement groups, to become ‘buddies’ for people in the community to help them address low level health problems and to provide support in accessing the right services.

For example, a health buddy would encourage and support someone to visit the pharmacy for some illnesses, rather than go to A&E because they are unable to get a GP appointment. As well as alleviating pressures on A&E services, the volunteers also benefit from training and skills development.

The idea behind the programme is that local people, who are known and trusted within communities, are able to get health messages out and engage with people who would normally avoid contact with services. The ‘trust element’ is the most powerful factor of the programme, as health buddies bridge the fear gap and help the community into the most appropriate health system. They also talk in plain English and simplify the clinical code health professionals often talk in. This approach can help to detect otherwise unknown health issues which can save the NHS significant amounts of money.

¹³ For more see Royds (2015) Our Place: Operational Plan. Available at: http://www.royds.org.uk/documents/Royds_Our_Place_Operational_Plan_final_16_03_2015_pdf550bef1c77623.pdf

Our local authorities and community organisations



Bradford Metropolitan District Council

Carlisle Business Centre is a social enterprise that provides support for new businesses, offering office accommodation, meeting/training rooms and space to host business and social events: www.carlislebusinesscentre.co.uk

Royds Community Association is a community-led social enterprise providing and promoting regeneration and renewal: www.royds.org.uk

Inspired Neighbourhoods is a regeneration and neighbourhood management organisation: www.incic.co.uk

Bradford Trident is a community-led company working to transform the local area: www.bradfordtrident.co.uk



Bristol City Council

Barton Hill Settlement is a community resource centre managed by a committee of mainly local people, providing a wide variety of services: www.bartonhillsettlement.org.uk

Southmead Development Trust is a charity run by, and working to support, residents of Southmead, Bristol. It runs the Greenway Centre, a business centre and a local community hub: www.southmead.org

Windmill Hill City Farm is a multi-purpose voluntary organisation that runs a working farm and gardens in the inner city with a café, farm shop, childcare nursery, adult social care and a sports facility: www.windmillhillcityfarm.org.uk

Knowle West Media Centre is an arts centre and charity, supporting social action using technology, community arts and education: kwmc.org.uk



Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council

Halifax Opportunities Trust is a community-based development trust established to help open up opportunities for people living in the area: www.regen.org.uk

Cornholme Old Library is a charity which brought Cornholme's former library back into community use. The library hosts a community café, a digital learning station and acts as a meeting space for diverse groups: www.oldlibrary.org.uk

Hebden Bridge Community Association is a member-controlled charitable organisation which completed the first town-hall asset transfer in the country in 2010 and built a modern extension which houses over 60 businesses: www.hebdenbridgetownhall.org.uk



Dorset County Council

Portland Community Partnership works with local authorities, voluntary and statutory authorities in a common effort to improve the physical and economic conditions of life on the island of Portland:

www.portlandcommunitypartnership.co.uk

Heatherlands Centre is a community centre with a sports hall, a hall, and a meeting room available to hire, as well as the Hopscotch Preschool:

www.heatherlands.co.uk

Dorset Youth Association is a young people's advice and information centre, improving the quality of life for children and young people in Dorset: www.dorsetyouth.com



London Borough of Hackney

Hackney Co-operative Developments (HCD) is a local community economic development agency which provides support to Hackney-based co-ops and social enterprises: www.hced.co.uk

Manor House Development Trust is a charitable social enterprise, which delivers and helps other organisations to deliver community services which are value for money and create lasting benefits: www.mhdt.org.uk

Shoreditch Trust is a registered charity based in Hackney, that works with residents to support them to improve their health, wellbeing, social networks and opportunities: www.shoreditchtrust.org.uk



Shropshire Council

Wem Town Hall is a centre for arts, learning, community and enterprise, with a café, bespoke catering and venue hire: www.wemtownhall.co.uk

Cleobury Country Centre is a hub for business and community information and resources: www.cleoburycountry.com

Severn Centre is a multi-purpose sports and community centre providing community, leisure, health and life-long learning facilities: www.severncentre.co.uk

We believe in the power of community to create a fairer society.

Locality supports community organisations to create resilient local economies through local public service commissioning.

We believe in the power of community.

We believe in Keep it Local.

Locality is grateful to the Friends Provident Foundation for supporting this work. Friends Provident Foundation is an independent grant-making charity working to support greater economic resilience through building knowledge and taking action at a systems level as well as supporting local economic resilience.

Find out more about the Keep it Local for Economic Resilience project and join the Keep it Local network

Visit: locality.org.uk



KEEP IT LOCAL

Locality central office,
33 Corsham Street, London N1 6DR
0345 458 8336  info@locality.org.uk

Find us on:   

Locality is the trading name of Locality (UK) a company limited by guarantee, registered in England no. 2787912 and a registered charity no. 1036460.
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