

Our Impact in Plymouth – Nov 2022

1 PLYMOUTH

With a population of about 260,000 Plymouth faces different challenges – and has different strengths – to larger urban centres, such as London, Liverpool or Manchester. For example, there are few big corporations, rather the majority of businesses are small and medium enterprises (SME) which although they may lack resources can play a key role in creating multiplier effects in stagnant peripheral economies.

One of Plymouth's greatest strengths is, we believe, the enthusiasm and desire that we have witnessed to collaborate. For many this is a deviation from the 'normal' way of working and, as such, we are particularly proud of the willingness to collaborate we have seen from individuals within health and care organisations, Higher Education Institutes (HEI) and the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector. along with other collaborations between HEIs and industry.

Worryingly, public services are facing high financial deficits, with more cuts coming, which, inevitably, lead to fewer risks being taken in something 'innovative'.. Plymouth City Council faces a £13.6 million projected overspend from a total budget of £198 million.

With a population of 264,700. Plymouth is the 15th largest city in England and one of the largest south coast cities. Regarding community diversity, only Sunderland has a higher proportion of the population identifying as White British than Plymouth among cities with populations of over 150,000. Gateshead is essentially equal with Plymouth, but half the size. In 2011, 93% of Plymouth's population identify as White British. That compares to 84% across the country. Plymouth's economy is approximately £5.5 billion, and 35% of the working population are reliant on publicly funded jobs.

Deprivation in Plymouth remains higher than average in England. 1.4% of the population live in the 1% most deprived LSOA's in England and 17.6% of the population live in the 10% most deprived LSOA's of England, based on the 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation. Life expectancy is more than four years lower in the most deprived areas compared to the least deprived neighbourhoods.

Plymouth's promotional branding as 'Britain's Ocean City' has successfully articulated the city's continuing relationship with its coastal setting. The phrase reflects the city's pride in its maritime heritage, including key historical moments such as the advance of the Spanish Armada off Plymouth Hoe in 1588 and the passage of The Mayflower in 1620 to America. Plymouth's widespread embrace of 'Ocean City' branding captures the sense that Plymothians are still ambitious, outward facing people. Furthermore, its sense of 'place' and history is also feeding into an emerging conversation about the role that Plymouth has had regarding Britain's colonial past, and significantly, the slave trade.

2 PLYMOUTH OCTOPUS & THE GRASSROOTS (CITIZEN-LED ORGANISATIONS)

POP's purpose is to build strong grassroots organisations, charities and social enterprises by supporting them to work together and take a lead role in creating change.

The grassroots are a visible expression of the change people wish to see in society. POP defines grassroots as under £100,000 turnover. The number of community organisations and groups is very difficult to accurately assess because no register of these organisations exists. Instead, we have to rely on a study carried out in the early nineties by Konrad Elsdon¹. We know, through Konrad Elsdon's survey of local voluntary organisations, that there might be as many as 1,300,000 organisations with 12 million participants in England, roughly 20 organisations for every 1,000 citizens. A calculation based on Plymouth's population, would suggest 5,200 organisations with 48,000 participants.

Most recently, a report released in September 2021 commissioned by a consortium including West Yorkshire Combined Authority, West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership (WY&H HCP), the Humber, Coast and Vale Health and Care Partnership, Yorkshire Sport Foundation, and Community First Yorkshire, found that the VCSE sector in West Yorkshire included around 14,900 registered and unregistered groups employing approximately 29,700 full-time equivalent posts, with an estimated 121,000 regular volunteers². We think these grassroots organisations have the following characteristics:

- They are less likely to 'other' – the helped are often also the helper.
- They can be seeds of a bigger movement.
- From Elsdon's study, learning plays a keen role in the motivation to be involved.

POP's role is to nurture people as they form groups and to advocate for resources to be put into citizen action, a stage of work that precedes the formation of groups. We'd like to share with you the life stories of some of our staff & trustees as a way of bringing to life people who make up the grassroots.

Alan Butler – trustee

"I'm Alan Butler and I grew up in Southway, one of the city's largest council estates. My childhood was a balance of reconciling my life there with the ever-growing knowledge that I was a gay man. An early, somewhat naïve, conversation with my mother around this made it abundantly clear just how ashamed I was supposed to be of such an orientation, and I believed her suggestion that it was "just a phase". I was in my late twenties before I accepted the phase wasn't going away.

Attending a comprehensive school, which was known for being rough, had caused me to do my best to hide my orientation which failed miserably and led to me being the brunt of quite a bit of bullying.

In adulthood, I did my best to be unremarkable and so I'd remain unnoticed. This led to working in some very mundane jobs and deliberately striving for an unremarkable life.

Eventually, going back to a local university led to some uncomfortable conversations around who I was and the beginnings of "coming out". Then, around 12 years ago, links with a friend led to me becoming involved with an oral history project to create an archive of the Plymouth LGBTQ+ experience.

¹ Elsdon, K. T. with Reynolds, J. and Stewart, S. (1995) Voluntary Organizations. Citizenship, learning and change, Leicester: NIACE.168 + viii pages.

² <https://www.wypartnership.co.uk/our-priorities/harnessing-power-communities/research-and-reports/structure-dynamics-and-impact-of-vcse>

The project was, to not put too fine a point on it, life changing for me and led to a PhD in oral history. More importantly though, conversations with others cause me to feel part of a queer community for the first time. LGBTQ+ people live incredibly different lives, but we are all connected in the challenge of trying to make a way in a world that's still intrinsically heteronormative and cisgender. I learned to take pride in my place in a community that wasn't a community in the traditional sense. At the same time, encouraging individuals to share stories they hadn't shared before and making them part of the city's history began to bring a disparate community together in ways that hadn't happened in the past. It also provided me with the challenge of being at least as proud and brave as they had been. They have gifted me with their stories which I in turn have to share when appropriate and particularly with the next generation.

That work continues today using the archive for all manner of outreach, advocacy and to just simply celebrate a community of people and their place in the history of this city."

Karen Pilkington – team member & ex-trustee

"I moved from working mainly in the public sector to working for a local newspaper where I learnt about selling advertising and producing community newspapers. Selling ads led to writing articles which led to a growing interest in the people and communities of the city I call home. Through this, both my heart and head needed greater understanding of engagement and I grew to wish for systems that truly engaged the people that mattered, whether they were called citizens or customers. I had been part of a local business network in Stoke, but during the pandemic this widened into a group of people who took community action to a whole new level: during the pandemic we started a community centre in our neighbourhood."

Jo Bussell - trustee

"I arrived in Plymouth from Liverpool in July 1984, except for my partner who was in the Royal Navy, I knew no one in Plymouth. However, I soon found out that Plymouth was a friendly and welcoming place to live. Having always worked I was desperate to get back to the "people contact" type work I had done in Liverpool. I started by volunteering with a new Citizens Advice bureau in the then just newly refurbished Devonport Guildhall. I worked my 2 x 2hr sessions at the CAB bureaux each week for many months. I then moved on to another volunteer job as a part time sessional welfare advice worker. Then an opportunity came up for me to apply for a Community Development worker part time post and I was lucky enough to get the job. I was lucky enough to work alongside them for one of their very ambitious pieces of project work ever, the long promised huge Community Mural project by famous Plymouth artist Robert Lenkiewicz.

It was a massive piece of complicated Community Work with myself and a group of residents working with Lenkiewicz, the Local City Leaders, MPs, Councillors, City Council officers in the housing dept and of course all the residents that would eventually individually be painted onto the amazing Community Mural. Lenkiewicz and the residents designed a community flag which was made at a local Flag maker in the Devonport Dock yard and the flagpole was donated and brought to the site by the Royal Navy's Devonport Field Gun Crew organised by my husband."

POP reaches grassroots groups in ways many other funders and organisations cannot. We also ensure that these groups are represented across the city. For example, through our sector surveys;

use of 360Giving and the new data dashboard (to be launched imminently) we are able to show that - whilst these small organisations are more likely to employ local people from the community; better distribute wealth; more likely to connect better with the local community and respond more appropriately; more likely to collaborate with others and are more efficient in maintaining local community relationships and maximising community contributions³. We can show there is significant inequality in the way grants are distributed and that they benefit larger organisations more than they benefit smaller organisations. This is concentrating economic power into fewer organisations, and it is making it less inclusive.

For many individuals looking to return to paid employment; start up a business and/or launch a community organisation, community work can be a valuable stepping-stone. Without these opportunities, we believe, our society would become even more fragmented: with it, 'community work' helps to bring people and places together.

3 OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

Showing how the work of POP creates change in the community is a challenge. Our work exists in a complex environment, so we are seeking to describe our work in new ways. It is important to us that we understand the difference between complicated and complex.

- Complicated. Cause and effect still apply but the challenge is to find the root causes or else end up treating symptoms.
- Complex problems are entirely different in nature. Here, causes and effects are indistinguishable. Each action is simultaneously a reaction. Issues are connected in ways that mean problems are not open to being solved but instead need to be held in a dynamic equilibrium.⁴

An additional challenge for POP when looking at how we influence the positive outcomes at an individual citizen level is that the work of POP is a step removed from interacting directly with citizens and focussed on citizen-led organisations (grassroots).

Planning and being conscious of the change we wish to make is a vital exercise. POP works on the following theory of change (see below). It is only by doing this, that we are able to understand what happens and to learn from it.

³ <https://www.plymouthoctopus.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/The-Power-of-Local-Ecosystems-in-Plymouth.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.humanlearning.systems/overview/>

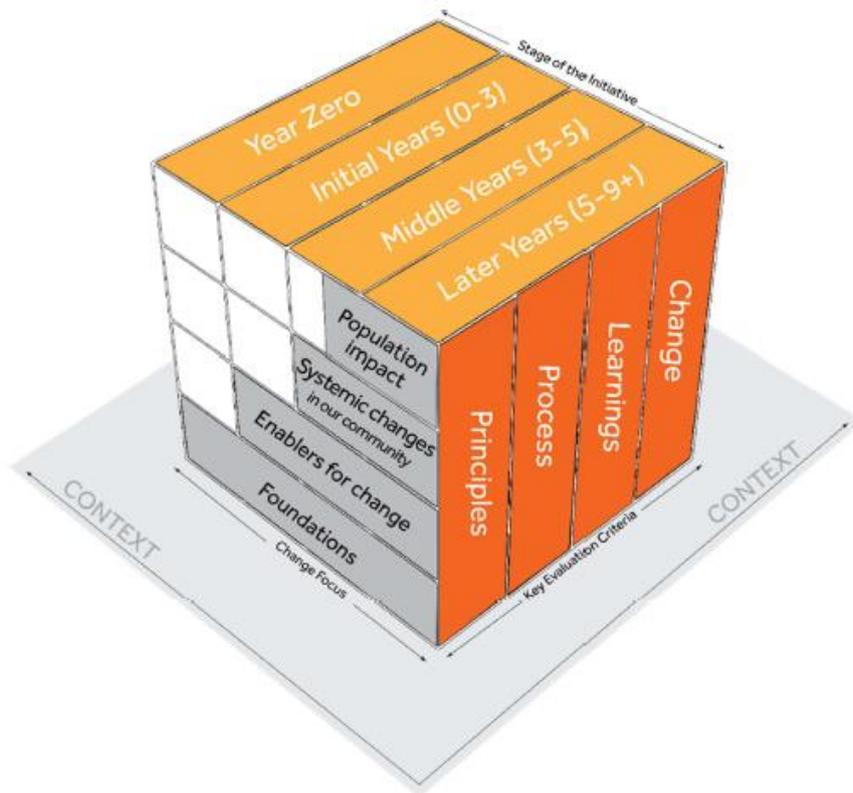
3.1.1 Theory of Change

Context	Activities	Outputs	Values & methodologies	Outcomes	Indicators
<p>In complex environments, healthy networks and collaboration at all levels are fundamental to achieving social change.</p> <p>POP's mission Our purpose is to build strong grassroots organisations, charities and social enterprises by supporting them to work together and take a lead role in creating change.</p>	Network Building	<p>Safe inclusive spaces where people and groups meet around and build common purpose.</p> <p>Positive relationships between grassroots organisations, improved information flow, new resources, new leadership, increased inclusion, collaboration, scale and impact.</p> <p>Public sector start collaborating sooner with the most appropriate partners.</p>	<p>Through our values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust and relationships • Collaboration and inclusive • Innovation and trying new things • Learning through doing <p>Using these methodologies & techniques</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency • Creativity • Participation • Inviting diversity • Listening 	<p>Stronger voices for people who are unheard.</p> <p>Citizens and citizen organisations (grassroots) can influence the understanding of real lives and have influence over decision making and more importantly the narratives we hold when explaining what's happening in society.</p> <p>Increased trust between public sector and VCSE organisations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of members of networks. • No. of networks. • No. of collaborations between the VCSE and public sector.
	Capacity building	<p>High quality support and advice.</p> <p>Stronger, more capable and skilled groups.</p>		<p>More effective and better resourced grassroots activity. Enables collaboration.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased funding into grassroots. • No. of grassroots organisations thriving. • No. of collaborations.
	Advocating for citizen led action	<p>Challenge and catalysing investment into community building and citizen led action.</p>		<p>Citizens have more opportunities to connect with groups and movements that inspire and interest them. More grassroots activity More activated citizens</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in capacity for community building. • No. of grassroots organisations. • Citizen-led movements campaigning for change.
	Working systematically: grassroots up and system down	<p>More positive relationships between the public sector and grassroots sector.</p>		<p>Decisions made are co-designed and produced with those they affect.</p> <p>More joint solutions with grassroots and public sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater use of co-design with decision making and commissioning. • Shifts in the narratives towards citizen led change.
	Grant making	<p>Grant making is made using IVARs open and trusting standards as a baseline and innovating with participation and collaboration on top of this.</p>		<p>To better support and achieve the outputs and outcomes AND create a feedback loop of learning into activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased collaboration. • Increased funding into grassroots organisations.

3.1.2 Place Based Evaluation Framework & Learning Cycles

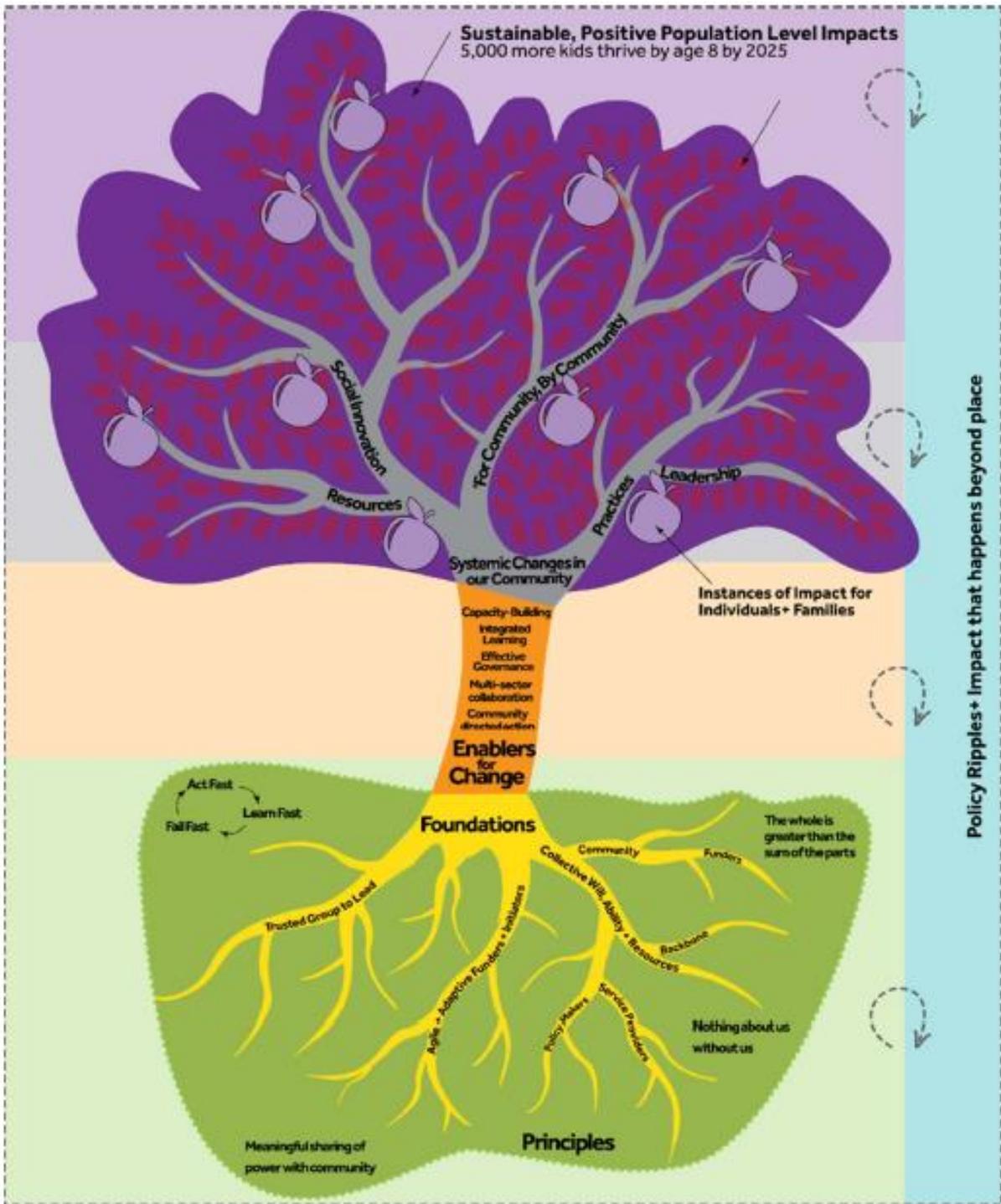
Alongside the theory of change we have searched for other ways to demonstrate how our work contributes to better outcomes for our communities. One of the frameworks that fits well is the Place Based Evaluation Framework⁵. This framework was introduced to POP via Renaisi, a UK specialist in evaluating place-based change. We find this a helpful resource because it frames POP's work in a timescale that stretches into a decade and suggests some of the ways we can work to evaluate the impact. As the authors describe:

“This simplified model shows the main ‘levels of change’ only. First, it recognises that each PBA has unique foundations, and that many PBAs arise from existing community movements or collaborative effort. Next, the theory of change says that if all parties (funders, community, service providers and government) collaborate toward the shared vision, and are guided by a sufficiently equipped facilitating partner, then enabling conditions for systemic changes can be created and realised. Over time, community and systems-level changes occur, and this will ultimately lead to sustainable and positive changes for people living in the area of the PBA. This is bound by context-specific principles that guide the way work is done.”



The guide shows the framework as a tree, which very much complements the analogy of POP as a gardener.

⁵ Prepared for the Queensland Government Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors (DCDSS), the Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS), and Logan Together https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/06_2019/place-based-evaluation-framework-final-accessible-version.pdf



Alongside this framework, we also use Learning as a Management Strategy as defined in the most recent publication⁶ for Human Learning Systems. This complements the Place Based Evaluation Frameworks focus on Act Fast, Fail Fast, Learn Fast. The two frameworks help shape how we work and learn.

⁶ <https://www.centreforpublicimpact.org/assets/pdfs/hls-practical-guide.pdf>

We recognise that one of the areas we do not do as well is resource the evaluation of the work. Largely due to prioritising funds into grant making or POP core costs we have not invested in this activity.

Network and participatory mapping are tools we wish to use to capture flows of money, power and connections but, as above. We have mapped some of our networks here <https://kumu.io/pop/pop-connections-30-11#pop-connections/mapped-connections-brokers> and are currently carrying out more in-depth work. Eventually we want to be able to use this to show how the network changes and grows.

3.2 USING THE PLACE BASED EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

We have used the Place Based Evaluation Framework to structure how we show our impact (below). We focus on the ‘Middle Years 3-5’ within both level 2 (enablers for change) and Level 3 (Systemic Changes), the tree trunk and branches. We have used their toolkit⁷ that suggests some description/dimensions of merit at different ratings, in terms of how effective they are.

3.2.1 Level 2 changes (Enablers for change)

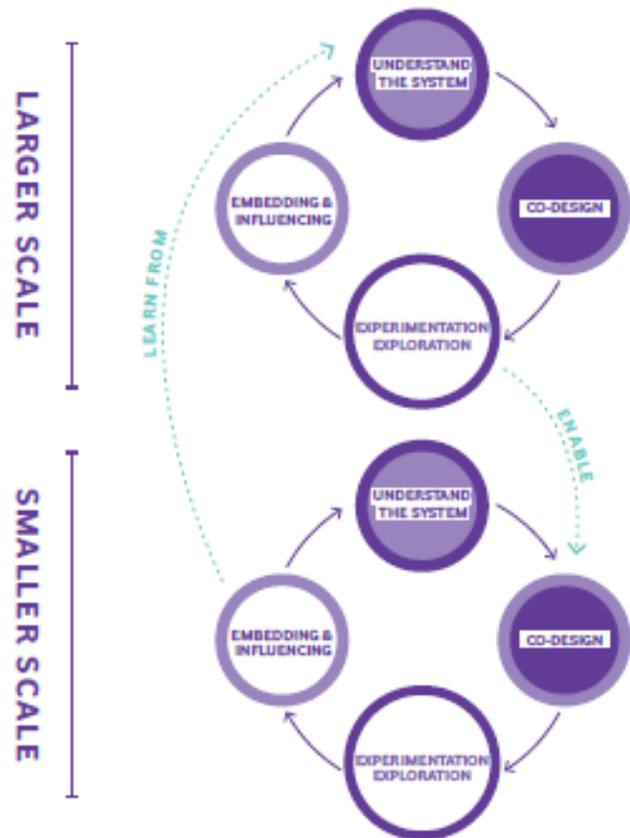
The enablers for change are the elements that need to be established in order to create systemic changes:

- Community priorities and aspiration direct activities and investment
- Capacity building to achieve sustainability and self-determination
- Transparent governance with a common agenda
- Multisector collaboration and joining-up services
- An integrated learning culture

Community priorities and aspirations direct activities and investment

Plymouth experiments with different funding models via POP; the City Council; Real Ideas and Nudge Community Builders. Funding schemes have been explicitly set up by these organisations to allow community priorities to inform investment, each method operates at a different level and uses different mechanisms to achieve this.

Real Ideas has tested community soups; the City Council continues to match fund Crowdfunding projects and POP has its models (described in the proposal section 4.4). Each of these funding experiments places the power into the hands of the recipient groups and organisations and/or



⁷ https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/06_2019/place-based-evaluation-evaluation-framework-toolkit-final-accessible-ve.pdf

community members. Whether these mechanisms are reaching as far into the community as possible is still in question. For example, we have a number of BAME and diversity led collaboratives, such as:

- Jabulani - a food enterprise skills development module for refugees in Plymouth and Devon wishing to venture into catering and hospitality business or convert their food-related talents into skills that will help them to be employed.
- PTown radio – a local and unique radio station reaching out to the BAME Community. Through its broadcasting the station embraces differences, and is helping to educate its listeners about, for example, culture, beliefs and ethnic groups. It is encouraging meditation and prayer; interviewing young entrepreneurs; promoting new businesses and helping to deliver local news.
- Queer District - this collective plan to harness queer and ally peoplepower to help with the development of Bretonside as Plymouth’s queer district.
- Plymouth REG - a group of mental health professionals and experts with lived experience of mental health difficulties, co-producing workshops designed to bring both sets of experts – professional staff and experts with mental health challenges; families and friends together to learn from each other and, in doing so, to bring about greater recovery rates across the city.
- Kintsugi Radio - tackling isolation, low self-esteem and creating a community where people with disabilities (and/or mental health issues) are full members of society and using their strengths.

It remains to be seen just how far these funding mechanisms reach into communities that currently struggle for confidence and a voice. For POP, this is in part down to the fact that we have been running the Collectives Fund for only two years. We know we have more work to do supporting communities that have previously been – or felt – marginalised. Hence, it is our commitment that - given future funding - POP will increase its efforts to include and better support these communities.

STREET-TO-SCALE GIVES YOUNG PEOPLE EVEN MORE OPPORTUNITY TO LEAD PROJECTS.

Set up in 2014 in Ernesettle by the charity Barefoot, the Diversity Project was created as a way of tackling racism by introducing young people to some of the many ‘different’ cultures and religions in Plymouth. It was a huge success and can be credited with changing perceptions, creating empathy and dispelling racist attitudes. In November 2019, a third Diversity Project began in November 2019 in nearby Whiteleigh, at the request of a group of 13- and 14-year-olds who, having seen what had happened.

At the end of the project the young people were rewarded with a trip to London – a result of an application to POP for £1000 from the Street-to-Scale fund. Unlike traditional funding applications which are often quite onerous, S2S is straight-forward. One of the youth group, fourteen-year-old Courtney Smalley, wrote the expression of interest, and was thrilled to hear that her application had been successful, and they would receive the money. The group of young people were now in charge! And they planned out a trip to London.

And what an experience it turned out to be. Hosted by the council-run youth club, Bollo Brook, in inner-city Acton – home to a lot of gang activity - the group of eight young people from Whiteleigh were able to experience one of the most diverse cities in the world.

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS GIVE MORE POWER TO PEOPLE USING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

The Plymouth REG collective, funded via POP Collectives, employs a method of learning around mental health recovery that is unique; radical and successful. It brings together - as co-producers - experts with lived experience with experts working in the profession to deliver a series of mental health and wellbeing workshops which are open to all and free-of-charge. The REG consists of several mental health organisations, including Livewell Southwest; Devon Mind and Colebrook Southwest along with several peer-led projects in Plymouth, such as Marbles Lost and Found; Hope in the HeART and Truwellbeing who, working collaboratively, aim to increase the level of 'learning' about mental health recovery and, in doing so, increase the rates of recovery across the city. Elina Baker, the clinical psychologist from Livewell leading the project, says it is a unique learning opportunity and an extremely powerful one:

“Not only does it give those who have experienced mental health problems the chance to lead others, but research shows that participating in a learning environment such as this, helps them in their own recovery.”

The work is proving so successful its informing city policy making concerning coproduction and research studies.

In this section we show some of the many examples of how citizens, sometimes directly, sometimes through grassroots organisations are influencing change in Plymouth.

One of the greatest strengths of the VCSE sector in in Plymouth is the wide use of networks. These structures allow relationships to flourish, relatively unstrained by existing power structures. June Holley is an internationally renowned expert in building effective networks. She has produced a list⁸ of why effective networks are more useful in our context than other forms of organisation:

- Improve information flow.
- Increase communication and awareness of relationships.
- Open new resources
- Expand and support leadership.
- Encourage collaboration, innovation, and learning for breakthroughs.
- Increase inclusion and bridge divides.
- Result in better outcomes
- Facilitate scale and impact
- Result in better outcomes, facilitate scale and impact.

In Plymouth there are many networks and a growing use of networked governance arrangements in the VCSE sector. This encourages more open and transparent communication, information sharing, learning transfer and relationship building. This emerging and growing practice of using open and transparent structures to conduct 'the business' means the space for new voices and others to be heard is growing. As shown in the examples below about the High Street Heritage Action Zone and Diversity Business Incubator, this can result in positive impact for members of the community.

⁸ <https://networkweaver.com/product/why-networks/>

ALLYSHIP SUPPORTS COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO STEP FORWARD AND VOICES TO BE AMPLIFIED.

The power of allyship is very important in the battle that DBI or on an individual level we are fighting for. As you are very aware, the economical, political and social tissues of Devon in general and Plymouth in particular have not improved in terms of representation or real inclusion. For 4 years now that DBI has been established, we are still finding ourselves out of the major economic decisions taken by the leaders of the city and yet these decisions affect the communities that we are coming from and voicing for. Every time there is a conversation on how funds and who gets the contracts to deliver paid services, even though the service is for the Minorities ethnics, we are always left out. So having Pop as a collaborator who has strong values and always advocating for equity, DBI has started seeing its name being reminded to participate in the decision-making process.

By us gaining that presence when the economic decision are made(although we are still far from real inclusion), this has created a strong confidence and trust in us as leaders in the city by our peers whom comes to us for guidance or support to try and influence decisions (particular economic decisions) that has been made against them. The latest example is the case of one of the largest and among the first Food retailers of ethnic minorities character(used to be called costless) who contacted us to appeal for them as his property and business was being repossessed by the city council for development. Although we tried to find how he could get a better compensation, (of course, the economic development team just ignored us) this demonstrates how the community members started to see our influence.

The last example I can give you is how with the collaboration of Pop we are working on how to get the health providers from our community to work in a collaborative way as well as bringing the commissioners on the table to be accountable and asking those hard questions by the providers themselves who feel they are being unfairly treated or appreciated.

There are so many examples that I can enumerate but the allyship is the most important part for us.



Jabo Butera Managing Director | Diversity Business Incubator

CREATIVE AND CULTURAL EXPRESSION CAN WEAVE PEOPLE TOGETHER

Wonderzoo is a local arts and culture organisation who are long term POP partners – they help us, and we help them. While gaining a city-wide reputation, Wonderzoo remain steadfastly rooted in the Stonehouse area with Union Street at its heart. They have a strong track record of producing vibrant and diverse spoken word and storytelling events. Rather than focus on building an entertainment brand, Wonderzoo have blossomed as a community resource. They have organised community local park fun days, worked with Nudge to support the Union Street Party, and curated social history projects around Stonehouse. They have worked with city Respect festival and supported the Plymouth and Devon Racial Equality Council. Wonderzoo are committed to supporting the growth of new and diverse voices in the city. This is typified by the newest POP Collective that Wonderzoo have been involved with, where they are providing support to a city charity that want to develop a performing arts space by running workshops and events that explore themes of violence against women and girls.

As well as this direct impact, POPs position in the city can give others space to grow. Recently we worked alongside Wonderzoo to submit a collaborative bid with the University and other partners for Community Research Networks to be built around giving citizens a voice in academic research through creative expression.

AND GIVE VOICE TO PERSONAL EXPRESSION

Hope in the Heart CIC uses art to help people express their experience of mental health services. Another long-time partner of POP they have recently worked with another newly formed CIC (The Intersection), supported through POP capacity building, to stage a series of events showcasing the artwork produced through their other work, and invite people in communities who might not otherwise engage with this reflection through events and workshops.

Funded via POP Collectives, POP is able to ensure commissioners and decision makers also connect with the work.

WORKING THROUGH NETWORKS MEANS CITIZENS CAN BETTER INFLUENCE DECISION MAKING

Based on our connections, engagement and reach into the community, Plymouth City Council approached POP, together with the Box (Plymouth's new museum, art gallery and cultural centre) to lead on the community engagement programme for the Highstreet Heritage Action Zone.

Working with members of the Heritage Network, the work is creating an infrastructure that supports communities to learn about the city centre's Plan for Plymouth and the wonderful buildings and squares that adorn the city centre and to support those communities to then design and develop their own responses to public realm spaces inspired by their learning. Running alongside we will connect communities to a consultation about the future uses of this extraordinary space.

It will work with communities and partners to animate spaces and places through a process of co-design and co-commissioning.

Throughout the process Plymouth City Council have deployed a traditional approach to contract management and community engagement practice. At times this was micro-managing and not trusting POP to deliver community engagement that aims to go beyond the usual forms of community consultation. POP has been challenging this practice and a relationship of trust is starting to develop which is having a positive impact on delivery and relationships. This in turn will impact on the outcomes of the programme, mainly the communities of Plymouth's engagement with the High Street Heritage Action Zone.

Capacity building to achieve sustainability, self-determination and collaboration

It is not POP's role to work at an individual citizen level, however we advocate strongly for more resources to be dedicated to catalysing community action. Plymouth has recently invested more into this, which can now sit in complement to Nudge Community Builders, Take a Part, The Village Hub and other community-based activities. Through NHS funding, this investment in community building will focus on communities of geography, but of identity too, such as LGBTQ+ and BAME. **POP played an important role in achieving this additional £300,000 per year funding. We supported the commissioner leading on the request, and we represented the request at the strategic board, the Local Care Partnership Delivery Board.** Alongside the investment in community building an additional £100,000 per year grant funding will be managed by POP and we will continue to further develop our work in collaborative forms of funding.

We hope that the result of the investment and the work above will mean Plymouth communities will grow in confidence. The trajectory we can expect to see is illustrated by the work carried out in Torbay over the last six years⁹ that shows how sustained investment in community-building increases a sense of belonging, community connectedness and participation in community led action.

Indirectly POP does see communities' expression through the citizen-led organisations we support and the funding we give out. We can see that cultural and creative processes are used by many Collectives to engage with communicates and citizens from, for example, 'radio', the spoken word and physical artworks. POP Collectives is unconstrained by any predetermined requirements and, subsequently, this pattern of **50% of collectives having a cultural or creative focus** is being determined by the citizens and the communities who are leading on this work.

FUNDING UNCONSTRAINED BY ORGANISATIONAL FORM CAN BE THE PERFECT FERTILISER FOR CITIZEN LED ACTION

Street to scale funding helped transform Luke Riggs' bedroom project into a respected city service. £1000 enabled Luke and his team to put collection bins for children's football boots around the city and establish better storage. The flexibility of Street to Scale empowered Luke to grow larger than he first anticipated. Local businesses saw what the Boot Bank was doing and provided sponsorship for the collection bins. While Street to Scale is short term funding, it boosted the boot bank's profile, which helped Luke to access more sustainable streams of funding. POP Ideas then provided capacity building advice to support the Boot Bank in getting charitable status, opening a bank account and looking for further sources of funding

POP'S LEADERSHIP HELPS OTHERS TAKE RISKS

The Village Hub was created out of existing community work in Stoke and Morice Town neighbourhoods in Plymouth. Only formed in Dec 2020, it has grown rapidly through the connections that POP has provided. Personal contacts can help a lot. As a result of working, learning and listening to POP the Village Hub has defined its values and is committed to inclusive asset-based community development in ways that empower citizens rather than build the community organisation. It feels supported in this (slightly scary) way of working, because that is exactly what POP has done - freely sharing information, advice and support to build something other than itself. This generosity within the network that POP exemplifies is a key part of why the Village Hub can pursue its aims as it aligns with our value that economic and social change is for everyone and can best be brought about by directly relating to the people who make up our community.

One headline figure is the number of citizen-led (grassroots) groups that POP supports. We have certainly seen a significant increase from 186 members in 2019 to 518 in 2022 with 76% having a turnover of £100,000 per year or less, making them very small groups or organisations that will be largely reliant on voluntary time, contributions and very small numbers, if any, of paid staff. Whether

⁹ <https://ageingwelltorbay.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Ageing-Well-Torbay-Technical-Report-2015-2020-Final.pdf>

this increase reflects an overall increase cannot be defined as many of these groups don't appear on any official registers. However, we have incubated and supported a number of new citizen led initiatives.

One of the actions POP has taken is to establish Neighbourhood Networks to create better links between hyper local groups and organisations connected around place. Currently numbering ten networks, as they establish themselves, these networks are starting to receive greater recognition for the invaluable and unique support they are in a position to provide to their fellow geographic citizens and community organisation. We have witnessed a genuine desire and need among residents to invest in their neighbourhoods and to do things to help others, and in doing so, improve and sustain their own areas of locality. POP has received investment through the Fair Shares funding (NHS) to continue this work. The networks will provide opportunities to create decision-making structures much closer to the community. With POPs support to maintain these as open and inclusive 'spaces', they will contribute to a much stronger voice directly into - and out of – the neighbourhood/community.

An early example of where this has happened already is via the Keyham Network which has influenced and continues to influence the response to the tragic shooting that took place in Keyham last year.

In addition, and in keeping with the wider benefits of using networks, having the Neighbourhood Networks has encouraged and enabled some new groups to set up. Through the networks, and POP, people have been able to find out where to go for advice and support. One recent example is a group of Eritreans living in the Efford area of the city who attended a meeting of the Efford Neighbourhood Network. POP is now helping them with advice on starting up; what other organisations might help to support them and where they might likely apply for funding. This is just one of example of many micro grassroots projects that are nurtured and subsequently able to flourish because of POP and the relationships gained via networks.

The sense is that Plymouth is good at taking risks, experimentation and bringing a focus on learning. Initially led by the City Council's work to establish a Complex Lives Alliance, followed by the use of Appreciative Enquiry to learn from citizens about how best to improve services, POP has joined and added weight to this movement, not least through the Belong in Plymouth initiative, where our co-design process is focussed on social isolation and loneliness.

Recent examples of how risk is seen as a natural requirement of learning has been evident when the City Council approached POP to lead on firstly, the Keyham Community Sparks Fund and, secondly, the wellbeing & suicide prevention funding. **Both took risks in testing – and wanting to test - new approaches firstly, through inviting residents to select successful projects and secondly, through a 'random' selection process. Subsequently, the confidence the City Council has shown in POP leading this cannot be underestimated.** It demonstrates the value of both our reputation and, of the relationships POP has built as a trusted partner, within and across Plymouth from the level of our grassroots colleagues to our strategic partners at the city council. We are as proud of our relationship with community 'leaders' from, for example, the refugee and the LGBTQ communities as we are to sit alongside, for example, our strategic partners at the council, with the Director of People, Craig McArdle and the Director of Public Health, Ruth Harrell. POP's input is sought, valued and respected.

POP CAN SUPPORT CITIZENS TO CREATE THEIR OWN PLATFORMS, HELP THEM FLOURISH AND ENABLE THEM TO CHALLENGE THE 'ESTABLISHMENT' THUS CREATING THEIR OWN 'CHANGE'.

Since December 2021 POP has provided a group of fishermen with capacity building support to set up Plymouth Fishing & Seafood Association CIC, with themselves as directors, in order to have a voice. They were supported through the minefield of legal structure options, governance models, policy drafting and financial management advice. The CIC has since grown in strength and this year were awarded a large contract from the Plymouth Sound National Marine Park Horizons Project to champion Plymouth seafood. They are also currently actively challenging the Environment Agency and Sutton Harbour Group on harbour plans that could negatively impact on the fishing vessels.

NEIGHBOURHOOD NETWORKS ALLOW 'OUTSIDE' ORGANISATIONS TO ACCESS AND CONNECT WITH THE COMMUNITY

Citizens Advice Plymouth started the ground-breaking Plymouth Community Debt Project. This unique project which began in Stoke was the first of its kind in the country to recruit and train "community debt advice volunteers". They worked through POP's Neighbourhood Networks to recruit people who were already part of the community, to deliver first responder style debt support to their fellow citizens.

Similarly in Keyham the local Neighbourhood Watch teamed up with The Therapy Collective, a local counselling project, to train 12 'community leaders' in the area so that they might be better-equipped to identify signs among individual who may be struggling with poor mental health.

Providing 'access' to potentially appropriate individuals for other organisations so that we might better-service fellow citizens in their own neighbourhoods has been a valuable evolution of the Neighbourhood Network and one we are keen to nurture.

WORKING WITH THE CITY COUNCIL AND PLYMOUTH SOCIAL ENTERPRISE NETWORK, POP ENSURES SUPPORT TO THE SMALLEST OF GROUPS.

Listening to the concerns and fears of more than eighty different organisations as they struggled to survive the impact of the pandemic, and working with the City Council, POP was in a unique position to support its members at a time when organisations, community groups and local businesses were genuinely fearful of their economic survival. Through our relationships we were able to bring about a change of policy and, working with the council, helped to direct critical funding to recipients through the 'Discretionary Business Grant', for example The Island Trust.

"We are really grateful for the work of POP+ and PSEN, raising awareness of organisations like ours who were falling through the net of the government's emergency funding schemes. While we are still fighting for our survival and looking for other support, this will help see us through the summer."

Emma, The Island Trust

"The only information we had about grants came from POP. Without this funding we might have had to put a temporary stop on our work at what has been a really pivotal time for us, and that would have set us back considerably."

Owen, Pollenize

Whilst POP does not have a direct role in building the capacity of citizens to engage with these structures (other than by working with citizen-led organisations) we have carried out a few pieces of work testing what is possible. For example, we developed a training course called Ideas into Action to help people think about those important first steps in starting something in their community. We continue to explore how POP can, within its role, directly support citizen action.

Transparent governance with a common agenda

Although, this is still an emerging area of practice in Plymouth. POP is leading the way in the sense our trustee board recruits directly from citizen led organisations and publishes a wide range of data for members:

- [Click for finance report](#)
- [Click for funding report](#)
- [Click for Activity Report](#)
- [Click for staffing diagram](#)

POPs funding processes, combined with our financial reporting, are fully transparent and open.

The abundance of networks and the collaborative approach taken in Plymouth means that even though traditional, more closed forms of governance predominate, networks help increase transparency.

The Belong in Plymouth initiative, in which POP leads, is taking this transparency forward (see below), but there is still some way to go before this is more widely adopted by other programmes of work and still further yet before citizens and community members benefit from this.

Transparency aids a great deal of socially beneficial outcomes. Inclusion is more possible if both information and connections are more available, challenges become more possible, and it is harder for power to remain behind closed doors. This in turn, allows better representation and a louder voice for those currently excluded by existing decision making.

Multisector collaboration and joining-up services

Across the city we see a lot of shifts in policies, practices, norms, and how service models might improve. Plymouth City Council leads the way in the use of Appreciative Enquiry and the Complex Lives Alliance is a nationally significant example of alliance commissioning. More recently the Changing Lives system change programme is continuing to widen out the Complex Lives work to include Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence and introduce a dedicated focus on peer-led delivery. POP contributes to the learning underway through stories and statistics from the peer-led programme, and respected, Positive People, which POP has been delivering in the city for four years. POPs support has been critical in maintaining momentum on work that will develop an explicit conversation about how individuals might empower themselves and help to bring about a shift in the 'power' and 'control' within organisations – critical to creating systemic change for those support through public services. Please check that last sentence as I may have unintentionally changed the nature of the sentence!

A national system change programme, the Community Mental Health Framework has resulted in a local Alliance of VCSE providers. **POP's role was to ensure the smallest organisations had a voice during the commissioning process. Our efforts meant that more than fifty organisations contributed to this project with each one having the opportunity to speak and be heard.**

Another example is the Plymouth and Partners Funders Forum that meets five to six times a year to exchange information around the state of the sector, funding, and commissioning activity. Out of this important forum has come the space to consider using

- The joint invitation to POP and the Heritage Network to deliver engagement for the Highstreet Heritage Action Zone, and
- A valuable opportunity for grassroots organisations to build relationships directly with funders through POP initiatives, such as, Pitch Your Project which, then enabled some projects to secure additional funding in due course. Who received extra money recently from the Tudor Trust.

An integrated learning culture

Our ‘learning’ culture drives our work. POP builds learning and reflection into all areas of our work, in particular, our own ‘culture’ and the way in which we work together. The reflective practice, openness and honesty we encourage throughout our work allows all voices and opinions to be shared, heard and explored which, in turn, enables our work to evolve. We are constantly seeking feedback from our members, our partners and our own staff. We are proud to be an organisation determined to change and willing to learn.

POP is trying to lead by example, and we strive to help others challenge their own assumptions and learn from their own work. Our efforts are supported by a larger movement in Plymouth that is using citizen and peer voices to inform learning about what works, for example, the hospital has purchased new mobile research units and the City Council uses Appreciative Enquiry within services.

Plymouth has recently won £4.7 million as one of ten Health Determinant Research Collaboration across the UK. We believe this is yet another sign that Plymouth’s desire to do things differently, collaboratively and with a focus to ‘learn’ is, being both recognised – nationally – and observed with interest. [See the press release here](#)

3.2.2 Level 3 changes (Systemic changes)

The examples set out in section 1.2.1 show there is a strong foundation as described in the Place Based Evaluation Framework. The Framework goes on to describe how we might observe systemic change “in terms of community leading change, flows of money and power, practices, policies and service models. These are examples of the sort of systemic changes that may be required to achieve your population level changes.” We believe there are tentative signs in Plymouth.

The Belong in Plymouth programme POP is leading on, is one example of this; a co-design process that begins to wrap all elements together into a more focussed programme of work. The example below tells the story of how timing and all of POPs work can come together around a specific issue.

BELONG IN PLYMOUTH

Since May 2019, POP had been convening conversations around citizen action and engagement. Intermittently working with The Alternative (national interest group) and Real Ideas, POP brought together a group of 25-30 organisations to explore what it might take to increase community action in Plymouth.

[continued]

[example continued]

At the same time the Director of Public Health at the City Council was advocating for more preventative measures to be taken with additional health funding (Fair Shares). Raising the awareness of POP's work was timely and it resulted with the Local Care Partnership agreeing to four priorities, one of which, we are delighted to report, included community/social connectedness.

In February 2020, the Healthy Communities Fund (The National Lottery Community Fund) launched with its focus on the partnership between VCSE & health. It thus made sense to combine the two conversations to maximise the opportunity for funding.

This collaborative engagement between organisations of all shapes and sizes was critical to us succeeding with the bid as was the experience and knowledge from previous work and Plymouth's track record in conducting co-design processes.

Two and a half years on, Plymouth is now one of just five projects funded, securing £450,000 for the city. Started in April 2022, we are developing a network called Belong in Plymouth; connecting individuals who aspire to make Plymouth a city where no one feels forgotten. The sheer scale and complexity of isolation and its effects on health mean we know solutions must be collaborative between the NHS, other public services, the VCSE and individual citizens.

The programme puts citizen stories and participation at the centre. Through the development of a network, and by working with public services, it aims to widen engagement and align action to look at how collaborative leadership can ensure voices are heard. This programme shows how, by building a solid foundation, POP can weave the critical practices of citizen engagement, listening, inclusive practices and open governance together into one programme of work:

- Citizen participation and voice is central
- Grassroots and VCSE networked form the basis for engagement and reaching out
- Networked governance structures – open to new members unrestricted by positional authority
- Collaborative leadership – direct acknowledgement culture is normally the main block to change and facilitates listening to diverse voices
- Focus on learning and reflection – the programme works on 3 monthly reflective cycles
- Supported by use of open digital platforms for full transparency

It is still early, but there are already signs of positive system change. Working with the NHS, Belong in Plymouth, is supporting Derriford Hospital's Emergency Department to try and understand, and ultimately reduce the demand on its resources. Belong in Plymouth has an explicit focus on learning and the governance structures have been set up to allow anyone that is interested to participate.

3.2.3 Level 4 – ripples beyond place

There are signs that the work of POP is having a national impact:

- The Alex Ferry Foundation has used POP to channel funding into grassroots initiatives,
- The Blgrave Trust took the decision to invest outside of its 'traditional' geographic area in the South East of England, so that it could support our work.
- The recognition received via The Healthy Communities Together programme has helped to ensure our work via The National Lottery Community Fund and The Kings Fund is better-connected to a national learning programme.
- We are part of the Human Learning System community and are regularly introduced to - and connected with – other people across the UK interested in what POP is doing here in Plymouth.

3.3 QUOTES

Gareth Hart, Plymouth Social Enterprise Network

“POP and PSEN work closely together in a number of ways to develop the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector in Plymouth. Collectively, we have made great strides towards building a greener, fairer, kinder, more social economy in the city. However, there is much more work to do if we really want a city where people and planet come first. We are keen to develop our partnerships and collaborations with POP and others to keep Plymouth growing as a beacon of the new economy. We are stronger together.”

Rachel Silcock, Commissioning Officer at Plymouth City Council:

“POP is an important partner in our community empowerment programme, in which a vibrant community sector is key to prevention of mental and physical ill-health. Here are some examples of where I have seen POPs impact:

- 1. Local Care Partnership – led by POP, the LCP now has significant input from the VCSE into both decision making and delivery. This is evidenced by the number of VCSE delegates to the Delivery Group as well as the link that Dave McAuley and yourself create between the LCP and the VCSE Planning and Response group.*
- 2. The successful NHS funded Fair Shares Wellbeing and Community Empowerment bid was a collaboration between PCC and POP and has led to increased community development capacity in the city, enabling us to work with citizens to tackle their own issues and improve wellbeing in communities. There will be a significant focus on currently ‘excluded’ groups through community builders working with BAME, LGBTQ+, young people, disabled people and people with mental ill-health, as well as in the most deprived neighbourhoods*
- 3. The Healthy Communities Together ‘Belong in Plymouth’ project – this is beginning to have a much bigger impact across the system in terms of joining up sectors than a one-off project of this kind would normally have. POP have convened some great conversations around how we listen to communities and individuals to understand social isolation and loneliness and use this to influence service design and delivery. This has led to further collaboration around ‘community research’/ appreciative enquiry type approaches with the NHS and City Council. This will help us to listen to people who are not currently ‘heard’ in the system. There are also further collaborations starting with UHP and the ICB around specific pieces of work.*
- 4. As an innovator in the use of funding, POP has helped to push the boundaries away from traditional approaches to funding (i.e., an ‘us and them’ approach), into more collaboration. An example of this was the Sparks funding in Keyham, with participation in funding decisions by local people and collaboration between community groups which led to a really vibrant range of activity across the neighbourhood. Again, I think this has led to the involvement of previously excluded groups in funding decisions*
- 5. The development of Neighbourhood Networks started by POP during the COVID emergency, linking with the Plymouth Good Neighbours scheme, has also had impact as*

a grassroots, bottom-up way of working that feeds into our Community Empowerment and 'self-help' or 'neighbours helping neighbours' approach

6. Generally I hear feedback from VCSE partners that they think POP shows great leadership and innovative thinking. There is much better collaboration and transparency around funding bids for example."

Michael Little, Ratio:

"Civil society is the cradle of social innovation. Votes for women. Civil rights. LGBT rights. The social work and nursing professions. These have all emerged as a result of small groups of citizens pushing forward unpopular ideas and changing the way the world works.

Plymouth Octopus is creating a context for local people to make the city everything it can be. That context is made up of connection, trust and belonging. It is helped along by small amounts of money, the oil in the cogs of social change.

Most of those involved in Street to Scale in Plymouth are not part of any formal organisation. People, young and old, are coming forward to do their bit.

- *Getting art from the people for the people by posting it around the city.*
- *Bringing back wildlife by putting up bird boxes and collecting data on which species move in.*
- *Saving the local cinema.*
- *Coming together after the pandemic to have some fun!*

These are among the dozens of activities sponsored by Plymouth Street to Scalars thanks to POP. They may or may not change the world. But they are meaningful to local people.

Plus, there is good reliable data on POP's impact on:

- *Connection: with citizens feeling they are stronger together.*
- *Trust: people recognising the value POP places in community by investing in social change.*
- *Belonging: With participants understanding this is my neighbourhood and I can do something with my neighbours to make it better."*

Darin Halifax, NHS Lead for the VCSE:

"As a newly developing ICS, we are aware more than ever of the need to hear the voices of people and communities in terms of future policy direction and service design. I think it is fair to say that across a county the size of Devon, this has been difficult. However, there are pockets of the county where the true community voice is heard loud and clear and the work that POP is doing in Plymouth is a great example. They have been working directly with us on the waiting well agenda where people are being supported and talked to by POP whilst they wait for their medical procedure – a vital means of communication at a time when people are at their most vulnerable, but more importantly, they are helping us to develop a culture of listening and inclusion based on emotional intelligence. There have been many occasions in the past where we have sought the opinions and views of people and it has been the same voices and opinions that always volunteer. The POP model has shown us that networks of communication

are vital to get a true voice and this model is being used now by the wider system to engage e.g. our Core 20 Plus 5 Connector Programme is based on talking to people in the places they want to be with a person they want to talk to (almost certainly not someone from a statutory service). POP has pioneered this approach in Plymouth and the rest of Devon is taking notice and following in its footsteps.”

3.4 SUMMARY IMPACT

The work that is happening in and across Plymouth that is directly connected to POP, along with the efforts that POP is indirectly involved with, demonstrates significant potential for transformative change. We see good progress in ‘enablers for change’ and strong signals for systemic change. POP is also proud to see that our efforts are being recognised nationally by academics and ‘experts’ working in and with communities. Furthermore, we are guiding other people who are seeking similar transformational change in their localities who have approached us for advice.

We believe that power and control in Plymouth are shifting. The outcomes of POP’s work, and the impact delivered, shows us time and again that the change is already underway. There are several significant projects being delivered ‘experimentally’ across the city – through POP – in all areas and sectors that indicate that our work is making a difference and that we are not only helping to change things ‘on the ground’ but are also influencing and shaping where – and how - we go next.

4 LEARNING & THE SHIFTS WE HAVE EXPERIENCED

Over the last four and a half years, POP has gone on quite a journey. At the start of the relationship with the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, POP expected that its response would include:

- Thematic networks - Running networks where organisations with shared interests could gather information, work collectively, share resources, campaign for change and co-design services. an organisation that primarily had a facilitating role
- Better use of technology – Valuing face to face relationships, but also wishing to use social media and digital technology to its fullest extent.
- A conduit for information – Delivering information for the sector e.g., via newsletters and social media.
- Community voice – Community Development and Community Engagement and making the decision making and delivery of services in Plymouth a responsibility of all its people.
- Building capacity in communities – Supporting smaller community organisations, and those active in geographic areas.

All these remain important themes, but the vision of our own role has shifted over the years, away from the idea of POP as ‘a conductor for the orchestra’ towards a much more distributed model of power and leadership that ‘cultivates the garden and tends the soil’.

We are increasingly certain that a 21st Century CVS is first and foremost concerned with fostering and facilitating the environment necessary for positive relationships, collective working, and collaboration – growing and strengthening the web of ideas, energy and commitment within Plymouth to drive effective action towards collective social goals.

4.1 LEARNING

We don't wish to repeat the lessons and reflections held within the report from last year:

<https://www.plymouthoctopus.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/POP-2021-Summary-Learning-Report-FINAL.pdf> only to confirm that over the last year we have continued to reflect upon it. .

Time and patience. Everyone is very busy, especially citizen led groups. Often tagged on to a busy day job, people can find it hard to engage. Getting people in the same room, encouraging individuals to foster new and strengthen existing relationships and help them so that they might be able to move on to the next steps is a long process. Practical constraints do not necessarily reflect a lack of commitment.

A voice is no good if no one is listening. We must work in both directions. POP needs to hold a position of high reputation, built out of strongly and articulately advocating our values, for citizen-led groups and inclusion. From this position of 'moral power' POP can create the space for new voices to be heard.

A voice is no good if people are arguing. Disagreement, conflict and exclusion (real or imagined) are destructive to citizen-led action and collaborations. POP's example as a champion for openness, transparency and collaboration reflects on others.

Relationships are complex, especially locally. For voices to be heard we must choose when to criticise and campaign, and when to work in solidarity and collaboration. This balance can be a difficult one to get right.

Networks take practice. As we have developed our understanding and skills in developing networks, it is becoming clearer that it is a skillset and requires practice and enhancement.

Collaboration takes many forms. Providing funding dedicated to collaboration is allowing us a greater insight into how organisations and people come together. It is showing us the many and varied forms of collaboration. Evidence increasingly shows that people are connected by their shared values: POP Collectives allows organisations to come together around the things they value, and the values they hold.

Grant making can be exciting. POP has taken a number of risks in grant making and from this we can see a much more exciting future of grant making that uses many different methods to deploy funds into the heart of community. We can see how collaboration can be a conscious output, not undermined by unnecessary process. We have seen how POPs relationship to our members; to our partners and to citizens can stimulate thinking and learning that can be shared across our partners locally – and nationally.

Internal consistency. How we work internally helps how we deliver externally. It's no good if we are espousing values of openness, transparency and collaboration if we cannot show these values in the way we work internally. Thus, POP has been explicitly focussed on our internal culture, one that is constantly seeking to divert from the more-traditional model of staff 'hierarchy' and one that is striving to nurture the health and wellbeing of each individual member of staff (and our associates), recognising that our 'people' truly are our assets. This allows each of us to share, to demonstrate and to show that our values are 'true'.

We've missed Esmée Fairbairn's input and expertise. Having an external perspective on our work is very helpful and to know how our work is informing the thinking with the Esmée Fairbairn

Foundation would help to guide POP on our 'journey': how, and where, we go from here (and what we take with us!).

4.2 REFLECTIONS

£1.3m is a relatively small investment to create systemic change in a population of 264,800 and an economy of £5.5 billion. Without a specific focus area, set out at the beginning,, whether geographically or thematically and with so many moving pieces it can often feel overwhelming.

However, as shown above, there has been movement and as far as can be assessed, there is a positive trajectory towards the indicators suggested in the Place Based Evaluation Framework. In relationship to the timescales stated in the framework, POP's journey, and that of our city, is perhaps halfway towards a place when systemic change can be properly assessed.

The challenge of working across such a wide agenda, with such limited resources, has both advantages and disadvantages. On one hand, it means POP has to work in a 'distributed' way and that, unable to control through resource, we must rely on being good role models. Doesn't make sense. On the other hand, the lack of direct control makes it very difficult to show clear impact relating to POPs work, at a scale that, we believe, is needed.