



TIME FOR CHANGE

Developing an Anti-Racism Strategy for Weston



HM Government

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through the UK Community Renewal Fund*

RENS
Race Equality North Somerset

Race Equality North Somerset (RENS) is a volunteer-run charity promoting the rights, interests, welfare and wellbeing of minoritised ethnic communities in North Somerset. This region has approximately 15% of its population born outside the UK, with over 80 languages being spoken.

RENS is the leading organisation exclusively dedicated to serving the growing demand for the identification, co-ordination and delivery of targeted strategies and services for this region's ethnically diverse communities.

'Time For Change: Developing An Anti-Racism Strategy for Weston' is a project white paper.

It was developed as part of the Weston Community Hubs project that was led by RENS on behalf of North Somerset Council, funded by the UK Government Community Renewal Fund and managed by Redport Ltd.

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With increasing levels of challenge to existing systems, globally and nationally, there is a growing focus on the need to use a Complex Systems approach to address 'Wicked' problems (complex social problems).

In May 2022 the UK Government issued advice to Civil Servants on systems thinking and complex systems¹, and it is anticipated that this approach will increasingly become the standard in many areas.

Using a methodology derived from Complex Systems theory, 'Time for Change: Developing an Anti-Racism Strategy for Weston', proposes a way that Councils and Communities might work more effectively together to deliver positive change

Wicked Lab's Tool for Systemic Change formed the basis of explorations. This encourages the development of an ecosystem that includes all initiatives seeking to deliver a desired change.

The ecosystem approach encourages collaborative working, and the Tool provides ways for individual initiatives to be developed independently while still being mapped within the overall system.

It offers a framework for initiative design that increases the likelihood of sustainable change, and the visual approach makes identifying gaps in actions being taken a natural part of the process.

The overview can be easily shared and, if desired, embedded in a webpage, providing transparency, clarity and accountability on initiatives in progress and organisations involved. This helps to build trust and the understanding of wider context also generates a greater desire to act. This is particularly important for Wicked problems, which, of necessity, require Councils and Communities to work together.

Following experimentation through the CRF project, RENS is recommending that the Wicked Lab Tool be used at a strategic level in Weston and be used to map Anti-Racist initiatives across all sectors, to help deliver the much needed change.

¹ Introduction to Systems Thinking for Civil Servants - www.gov.uk/government/publications/systems-thinking-for-civil-servants/introduction

Systems thinking: An Introductory Toolkit for Civil Servants - assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1079384/GO-Science_Systems_Thinking_Toolkit_2022_v1.0.pdf

Systems Thinking Blog - systemsthinking.blog.gov.uk

The need for more inclusive and equitable community development was identified in the original Community Renewal Fund (CRF) proposal. It was acknowledged that these key issues cannot be addressed through top-down initiatives with embedded power imbalances, and community-led action and sustained community outreach programmes were identified as an essential part of North Somerset Council's plans.

The need for more inclusive bridging networks was also identified, with pilot community hubs creating equitable entry points for members of frequently marginalised communities, to enable all communities to engage with initiatives delivering strategic plans across North Somerset.

Without such networks, it was considered that any ambitions to build thriving and resilient communities would be seriously undermined. However, changing patterns of exclusion and inequality is a significant challenge. This is contended and contentious territory.

When differences are amplified by power relationships to create divides, and when those divides demonstrably map significant differences in life experiences, opportunities and wellbeing, community conversations about inclusion and equity will be difficult. Equally, when issues need to be addressed at a systemic level, and existing ways of working cannot be maintained if real change is to be made, disruption to established practices will be uncomfortable and likely to be resisted.

The Time for Change Innovation Plan focuses on a new way of navigating the space between policy and lived experience to help build more inclusive bridging networks. While there is a specific focus on anti-racism, it is intended that the ways of working explored in the innovation plan will also be relevant to other areas where those with particular lived experiences are under represented amongst policy makers.

The initial Weston Community Hubs CRF proposal and approach was informed by Complex Systems Theory and underpinned by work with Wicked Lab².

Wicked Lab is an internationally recognised company whose Tool for Systemic Change was recently selected as a World Summit Award Winner. This award recognises the way in which digital solutions decisively support societal challenges and assist in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

As part of the wider WCH programme of activities, a cross-sector team was invited to participate in Wicked Lab's Ecosystem Transition programme. Participants included Council Officers from Weston Town Council (WTC) and North Somerset Council (NSC), Voluntary and Health Organisations, street level workers and a local business.

The aim was to foreground process over outcome driven approaches and to explore new ways of working together, to help break down some of the existing barriers to effective and inclusive Council/Community collaboration.

The initial training course and subsequent support highlighted key aspects of academic theory underpinning the design of the Tool for Systemic Change and trained course participants in the use of the tool.

Following the initial training, course participants identified a number of areas where a complex systems approach to change would be appropriate.

Initially the team identified a desired transition that provided an overarching theme, to build a more connected, adaptable, resilient and equitable community in Weston (CARE), but the time required for joint working made this approach difficult to progress.

It was felt that the team might find it easier to work on themes that matched their specific areas of responsibility, and work was begun on a number of new themes including: Partnership Working to support residents of Weston Worle and the Villages, Climate Action, Food Equality, and Understanding how our Community connects with our Organisations.

During the process, both anti-racism and wellbeing in migrant communities were also identified as appropriate areas for consideration. This innovation plan, 'Time for Change' focusses on the first area.

² Further information about Wicked Lab is available at www.wickedlab.co

The Time for Change Innovation Plan is framed by actions currently being taken to support an anti-racist agenda in Weston, by Councillors, Council Officers, and community-led initiatives.

This offers an opportunity to focus directly on the Council/Community interface, particularly as this is a new policy area for the Councils involved and both groups are actively seeking to engage with the community so that lived experience can directly impact policy.

Council

Anti-Racism pledges were made by Weston Town Council³ and North Somerset Council⁴ in 2020 and 2022 respectively.

These were both set within the context of the Black Lives Matter movement, and both Councils acknowledged that 'Racism in all forms, both structural and in individuals, continues to be a serious and often denied or unseen problem in the UK'.

Both Councils pledged to establish further initiatives to ensure Weston-super-Mare is actively inclusive and anti-racist (see pp30-31, point 3).

Community

The title of the plan comes from the 2022 theme for Black History Month (BHM), 'Time for Change: Action not Words', which challenged all citizens to find ways to tackle the damaging and pervasive impacts of racism.

It has also been influenced by the 2022 theme for Islamophobia Awareness Month, #TacklingDenial and the theme for Race Equality Week 2023, #ItsEveryonesBusiness.

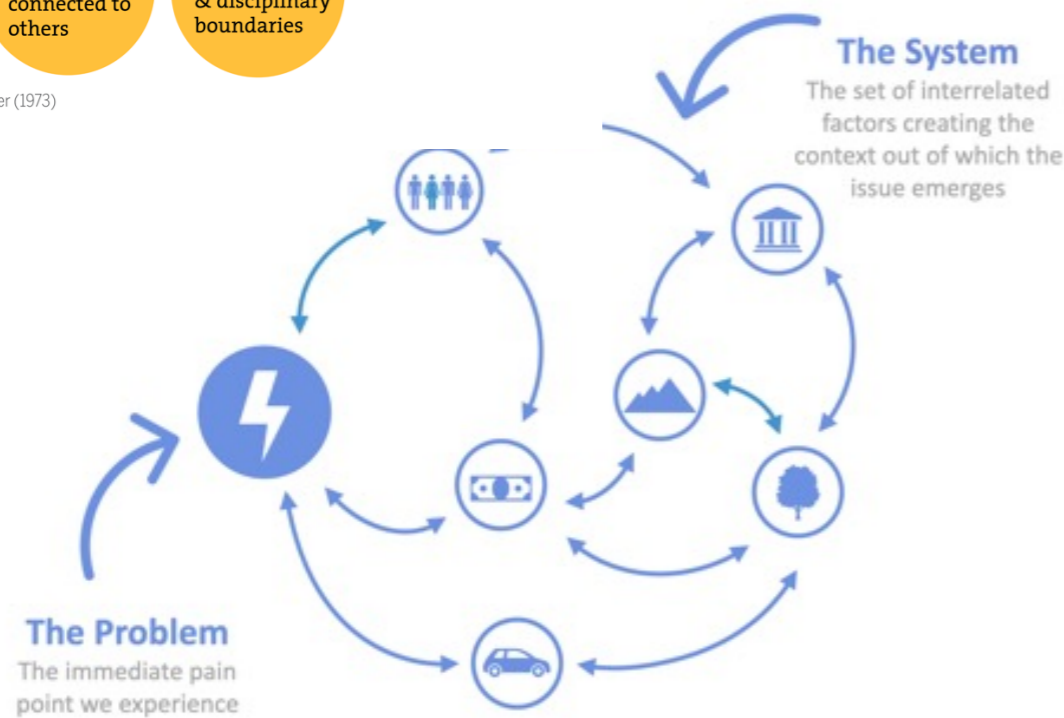
³ Weston Town Council Pledge: wsm-tc.gov.uk/our-pledges/our-anti-racism-commitment/

⁴ North Somerset Town Council Pledge: n-somerset.moderngov.co.uk

A Wicked Problem is a complex social problem with many interdependent factors. These make it difficult or even impossible to solve, and actions to address specific issues can have unexpected and unintended consequences.



Based upon Rittel and Webber (1973)



Racism can reasonably be identified as a 'Wicked' problem.

As such a systemic approach is required to effect change.

Systemic change relies on multiple, connected, points of intervention and the Wicked Lab Tool for Systemic Change offers a very straightforward way of mapping and measuring interventions within a complex system.

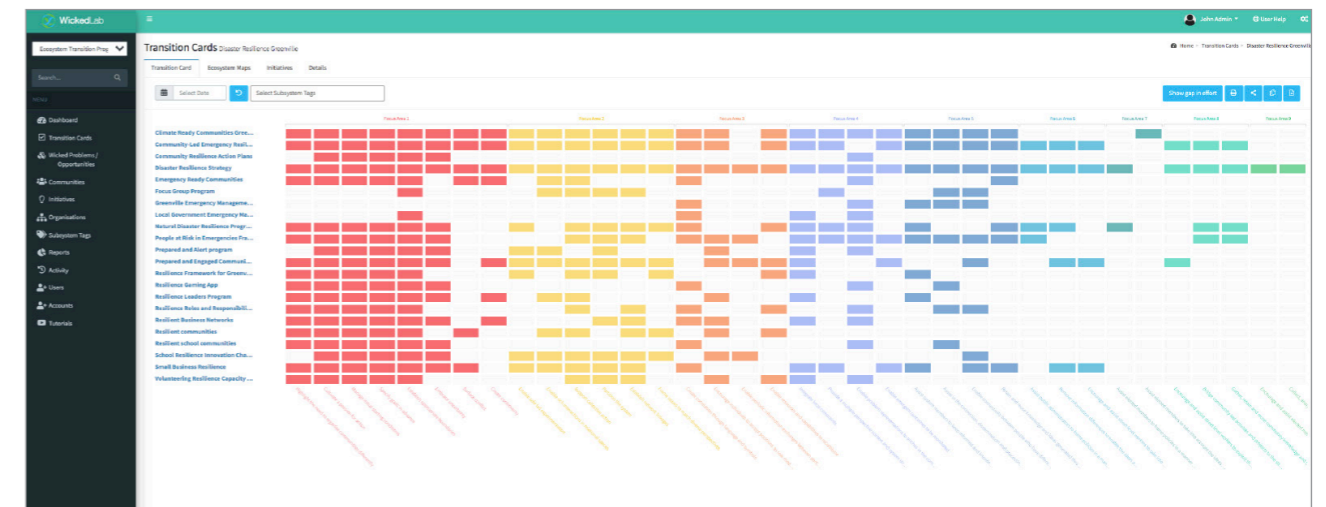
In the Wicked Lab Tool, the first step is to set up a 'Transition card' that identifies the desired change from current, established practice to a new way of working. The aim is to establish this new way of working as the accepted norm.

Time for Change seeks to make anti-racist thinking, behaviours and practices the accepted norm within all aspects of Council and Community culture.

The second step is to identify initiatives that seek to drive and deliver the desired change.

Each initiative is then mapped against intervention characteristics. Grounded in rigorous academic complex systems theory, there are 36 characteristics grouped within 3 categories and 9 focus areas.

When the Tool is used to map the characteristics of each initiative, a picture emerges of the whole ecosystem.



While each initiative does not need to contain every characteristic, all characteristics need to be satisfied for the desired transition to become the accepted way of working and the Tool provides a quick visual analysis of areas of weakness that need further attention.

If the initiatives in the transition ecosystem do not contain sufficient intervention characteristics, it is likely that the system transition will fail.

In the Wicked Lab Tool for Systemic Change, the three categories and nine focus areas are as follows:

Adaptive Community

The first category seeks to enable communities to become adaptive by unlocking their complex adaptive system dynamics. It has five focus areas:

- Focus Area 1: Create a disequilibrium state
- Focus Area 2: Amplify action
- Focus Area 3: Encourage self-organisation
- Focus Area 4: Stabilise feedback
- Focus Area 5: Enable information flows

Unplanned Exploration of Solutions with Communities

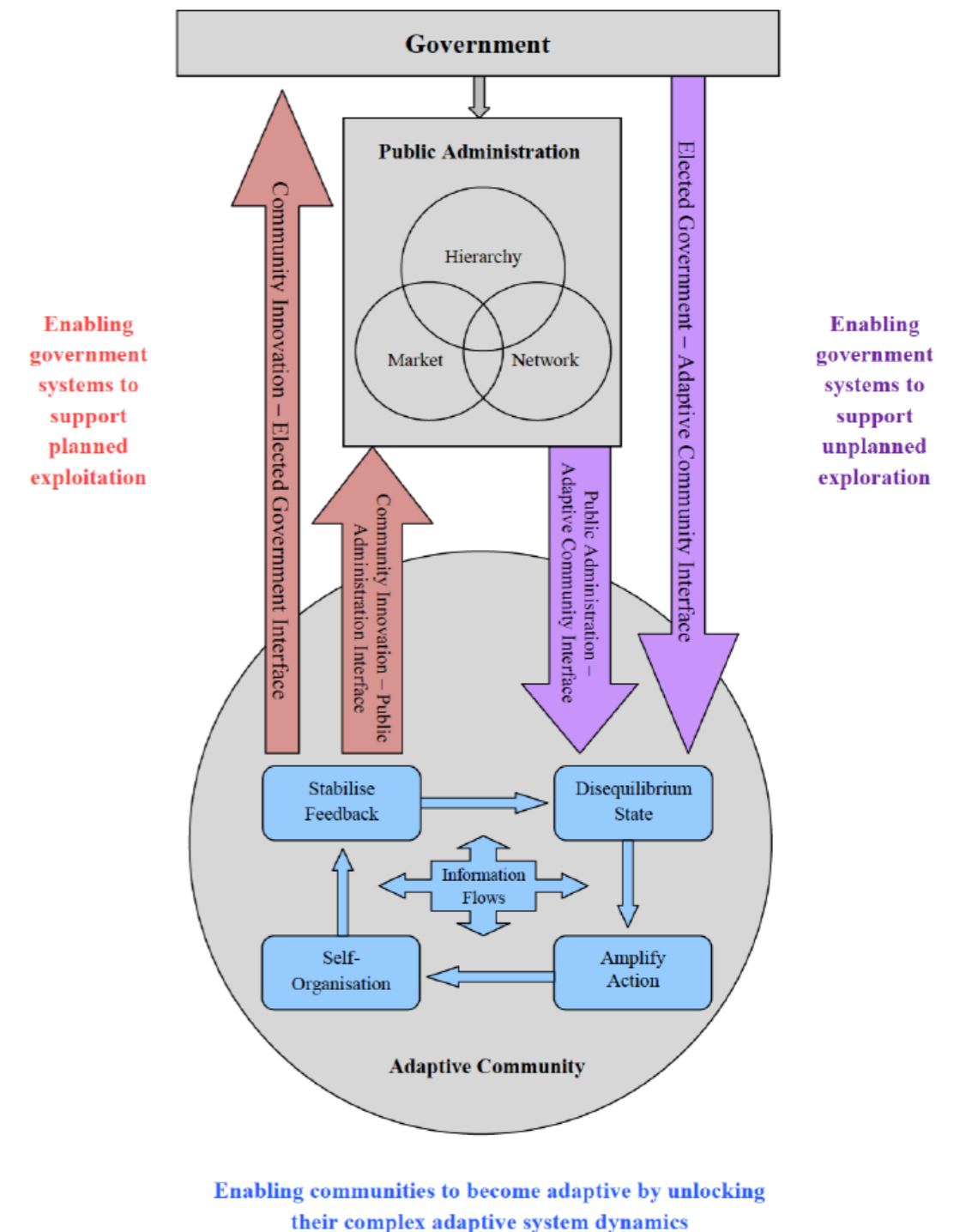
The second category focuses on enabling government systems to support unplanned exploration. It has two focus areas:

- Focus Area 6: Public administration – adaptive community interface
- Focus Area 7: Elected government – adaptive community interface

Planned Exploitation of Community Knowledge, Ideas and Innovations

The third category focuses on enabling government systems to support planned exploitation. It has two focus areas:

- Focus Area 8: Community innovation – public administration interface
- Focus Area 9: Community innovation – elected government interface



Zivkovic, 2014

Graphic courtesy of Wicked Lab

Identifying initiatives

Early discussions identified a lack of (or a lack of awareness of) specific initiatives designed to deliver the desired transition and highlighted a number of misperceptions and misalignments.

In making anti-racism pledges, Councillors had stood in solidarity with those experiencing racism.

From the community perspective there was then a general assumption, held by many, that both Councils would be instrumental in leading change across the whole community in Weston. During early workshops, there was also an assumption that Council-led initiatives to deliver this community change were in progress, but not yet visible and that the work with Wicked Labs would help bring to these to the fore.

However, our current understanding is that while both Councils have undertaken initiatives to make the Council itself anti-racist, there is a shared belief that the Council cannot lead on community change and needs to rely on input from minoritised ethnic community members to do so.

Given the lack of diversity within both Councils, this is an understandable position. However, it has resulted in a slowness to deliver actions that address point 3 in both pledges: 'To establish further initiatives to ensure Weston-super-Mare/North Somerset is actively inclusive and anti-racist'.

It is perhaps reasonable to suggest that there is confusion around who should be the main actors and agents of change, and where responsibility for widespread change lies. This is leading to frustration on both sides, and is an area that needs open discussion and clear lines of communication within an agreed framework so that all feel able to act appropriately.

In itself, this highlighted the challenges associated with Community/Council communications.

Community/Council Interface

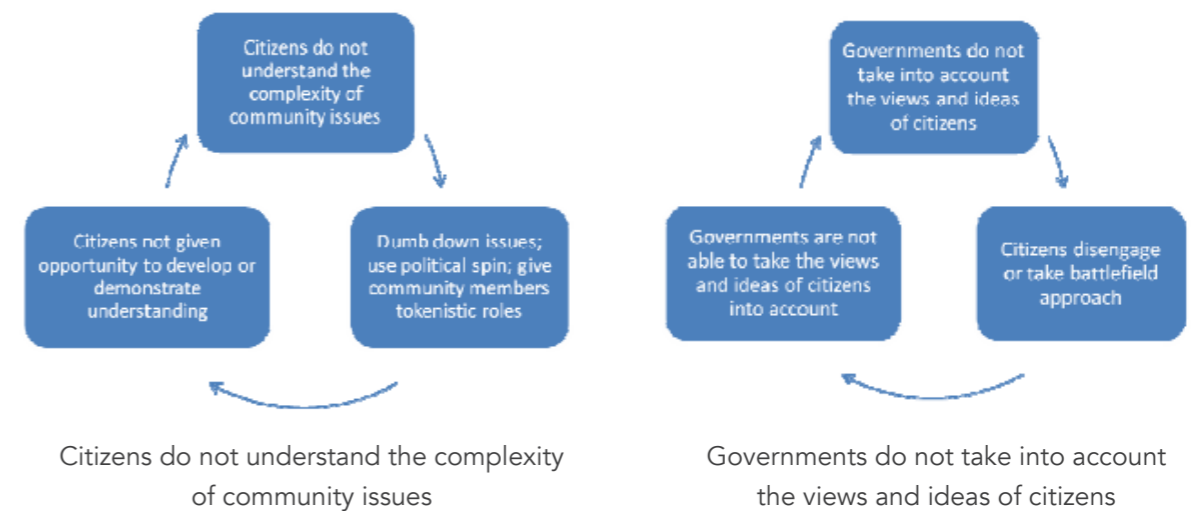
Working with a cross-sector, cross-disciplinary team on the Wicked Labs programme had undeniable challenges. While there were some alignments within the team in terms of day to day working, there was no single shared sectoral approach and the focus on process rather than a specific goal in itself disrupted familiar interaction patterns and created uncertainty. While this slowed progress in terms of entering data into the system, the search for shared ground led to a series of very interesting and helpful conversations.

Sharing the Time for Change approach and the Wicked Lab software with community members, organisations, Council Officers and Councillors who had not attended the course also highlighted differences in perspective. It was notable that it was community members who were the most immediately enthusiastic about the approach, rather than those working on the issues within established systems. One community member commented:

'Thank you for your very clear explanation of the Wicked Labs tool. Personally I believe that this would be a great tool to use, and would capture and identify overlaps and gaps in current community initiatives. I really hope that this gets implemented.'

The cross-sector conversations also exposed some of our embedded assumptions about work taking place in other sectors and highlighted gaps in understanding. During the development of this Innovation Plan, it was the areas of discomfort that proved most valuable in shaping direction.

Sharon Zivkovic, one of the co-founders of Wicked Lab, has highlighted self-fulfilling prophecy cycles that trap communities into using out-dated problem solving approaches that are not appropriate for addressing 21st century complex social policy problems.



*'The expectation citizens do not understand the complexity of community issues results in the dumbing down of issues, governments using 'spin', and paid workers giving citizen leaders tokenistic roles... The perception governments do not take into account the views and ideas of citizens often results in citizens disengaging from democracy (Power Inquiry, 2006) or citizens taking a battlefield approach because they believe this is the only way to influence public decision making (Dobson, 2003). These actions confirm the original perception as disengagement results in governments not being able to hear the views and ideas of citizens, and a battlefield approach sees citizens holding onto fixed positions rather than expressing views and ideas.'*⁵

The Wicked Lab Tool for systemic change is designed to help communities and policy makers address these and other issues that act as barriers to system change.

⁵ Sharon Zivkovic, Addressing Society's Most Pressing Problems by Combing the Heroic and Collective Forms of Social Entrepreneurship, Emes Conference Selected Papers Series, Roskilde (Denmark), July 4-7, 2011.

To help develop the Time for Change innovation plan, the project was shared with community members, community groups, the Anti-Racist Working Group set up by Weston Town Council after their Anti-Racism Pledge, and an invited working group that consisted of:

- Race Equality North Somerset (RENS)
- Voluntary Action North Somerset (VANS)
- Officers and a Councillors from Weston Town Council and North Somerset Council.

Discussions progressed organically and iteratively, with two formal meetings with the invited working group, both held at The Other Place:

- 24 October 2022, with 5 attendees
- 17 November 2022, with 8 attendees.

Following the meetings, a meeting note was agreed with attendees and then circulated to all invitees.

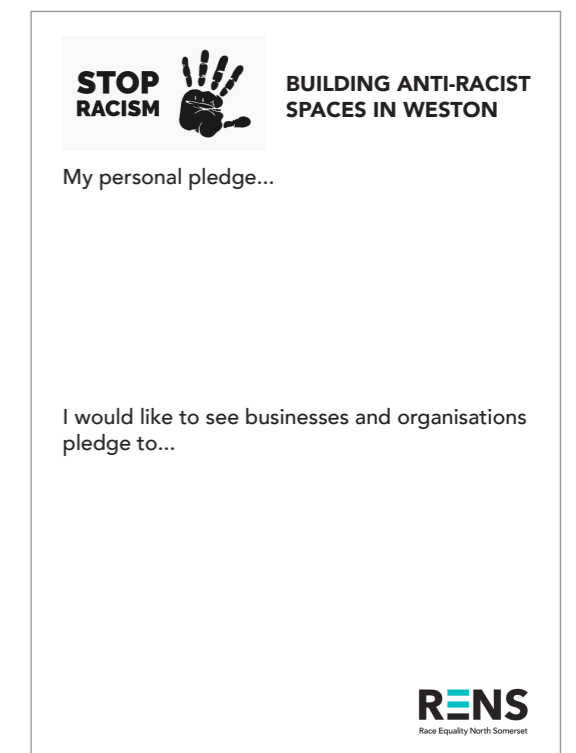
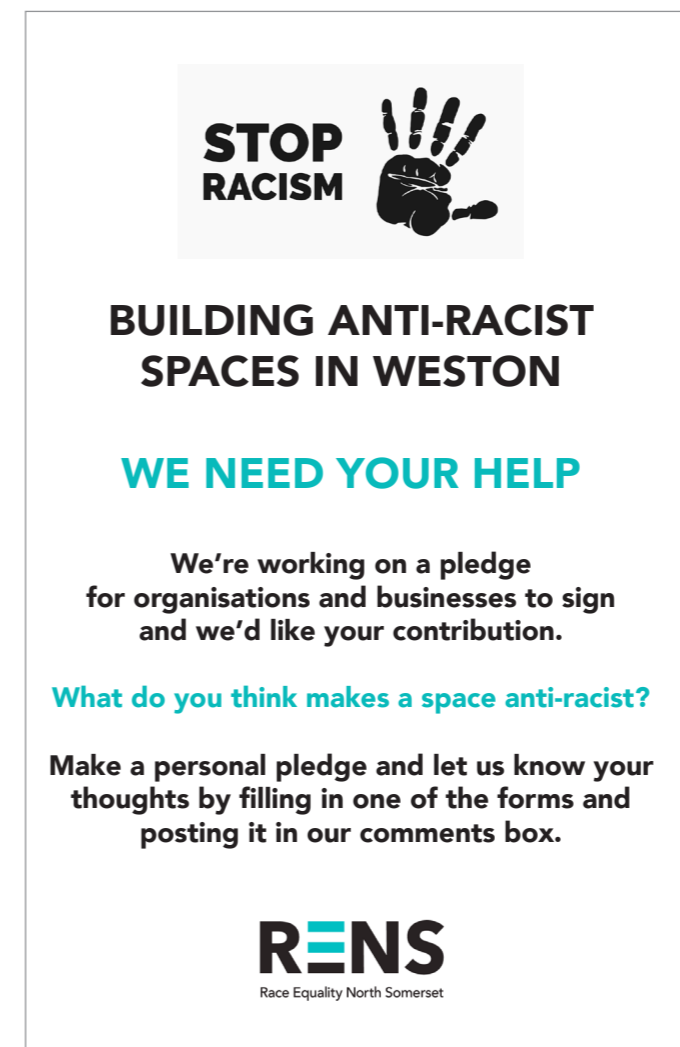
Three initiatives were easily identified from the outset:

- **Black History Month (October):** RENS coordinated the first widespread celebration of BHM in Weston in 2021. In 2022, the programme was developed and coordinated by Ago Ame, a newly formed African and Caribbean group supported by RENS.
- **The Anti-Racist Working Group:** This was initiated by Weston Town Council as way of delivering actions that would help to deliver their pledge.
- **Hate Crime Awareness Week:** This is a national campaign, with a history of events arranged locally to highlight the issues. This year two events were run in Weston, the first organised by the North Somerset Bangladeshi Association, the second by the Multicultural Friendship Association. SARI (Stand Against Racism and Inequality) supported both sessions.

Further initiatives were then identified through work at The Other Place and ongoing discussions with community members, organisations, Council Officers and Councillors.

During early informal discussions with VANS, the national Kick it Out football campaign was identified. It was noted that this would involve the local leagues. However a subsequent online search failed to find any evidence on local league websites or social media that this was the case.

Based on absence of wider initiatives, RENS began work on an initiative titled 'Building Anti-Racist Spaces in Weston'. This was discussed at a number of Black History Month events, including the closing event of Black History Month and presented to the invited working group during the meeting on 24 October.

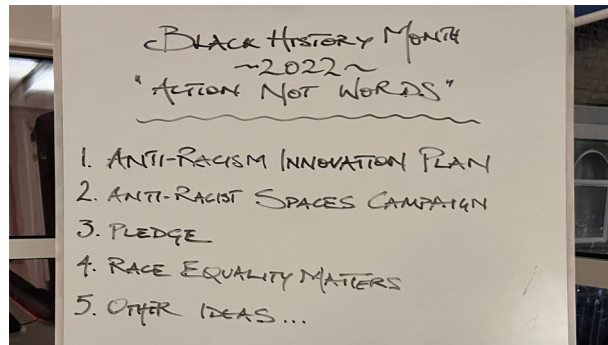


The Poster was displayed in The Other Place, posted on social media, and pledges were available for everyone to complete.

Based on the lack of visibility locally of the Kick it Out campaign and the lack of community awareness of the anti-racist pledges made, Building Anti-Racist Spaces became part of a wider initiative, Making Anti-Racism Visible.

Initiative Development

During the BHM Watch Together event (Racial equality and inclusion and its role in the strategy of the Coop⁶) an attendee suggested the compilation of a register of all organisations and businesses with an anti-racist policy. This was further discussed at Ago Ame's BHM closing event.

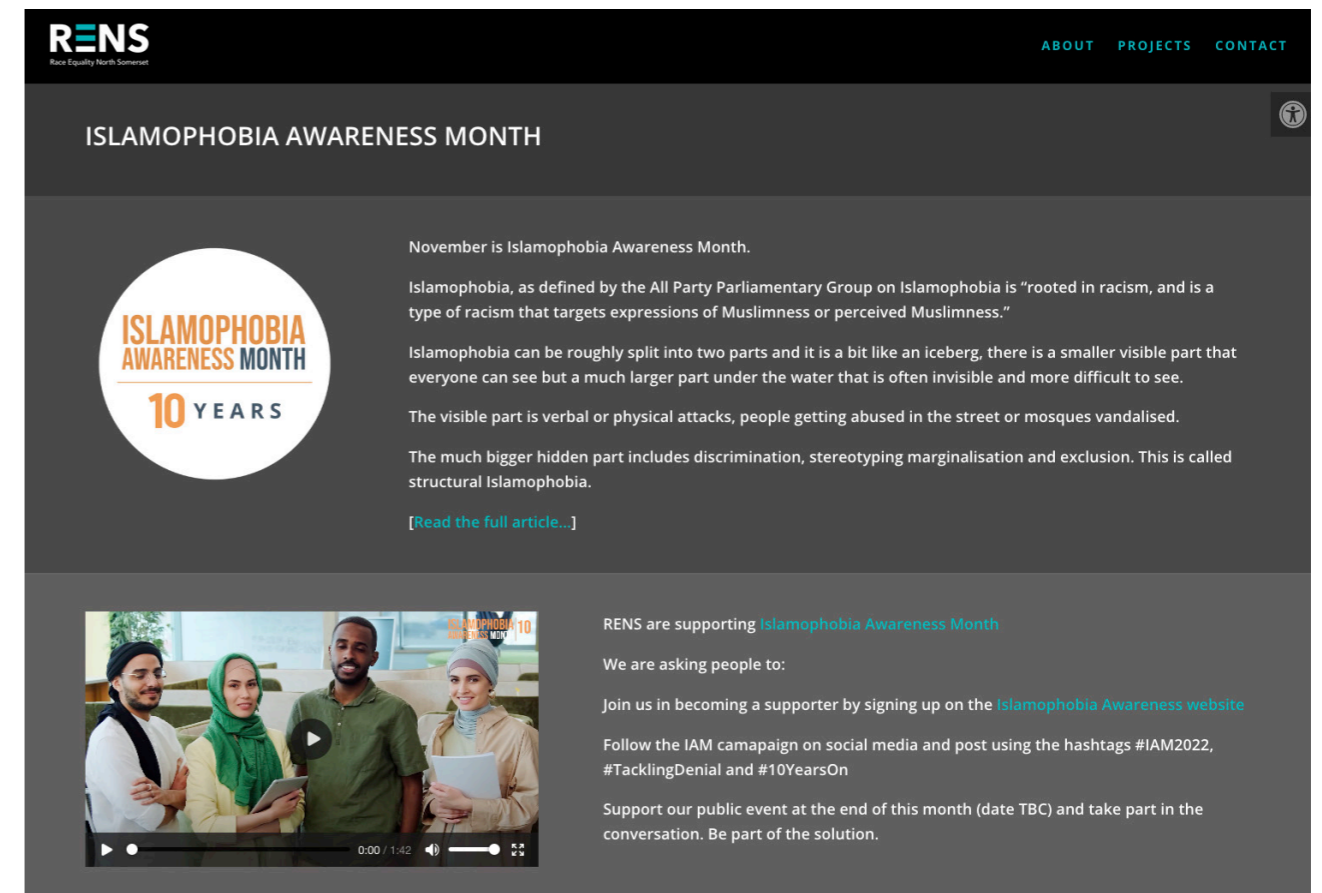


November is Islamophobia Awareness Month (IAM) and RENS worked with the North Somerset Bangladeshi Association to create an exhibition at The Other Place and consultation events with the Muslim community.



⁶ Eventbrite: Racial equality and inclusion and its role in the strategy of the Coop

Initiative Development



RENS also supported IAM through distribution of the exhibition posters, and promotion of the National Campaign⁷ on the RENS website and social media.

Activities at The Other Place and awareness of incidents in the local refugee and asylum seeking community have led to discussions about Integration Strategies, and ways to create a more welcoming and supportive environment.

The impact of racism is felt across our communities and it manifests in hate crimes and incidents which result in long term trauma and division. None of us can underestimate the societal challenges involved, both local and global, including the need for attitudinal and behavioural change towards all newcomers. Tackling racism will require a whole society and whole of government approach.⁸

The intention is to also explore this area in conjunction with the second transition card identified by RENS, 'Wellbeing in Migrant Communities'.

⁷ Islamophobia Awareness Month www.islamophobia-awareness.org

⁸ The Executive Office, Draft Refugee Integration Strategy for Northern Ireland 2022-2027, www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

To help frame discussions, in collaboration with Race Equality Matters, RENS has begun planning for Race Equality Week 2023. This will help to provide a focus point for the wider making Anti-Racism Visible campaign.

MAKING ANTI-RACISM VISIBLE

As part of RENS commitment to anti-racism, we are working with local organisations to make anti-racism commitments visible, both online and in public spaces.

In 2020 Weston Town Council made a pledge followed by North Somerset Council in 2022 and we want to celebrate all those in Weston who have made similar commitments.

There are currently three main areas of focus:

DO YOU HAVE AN ANTI-RACISM POLICY?

We're asking all organisations with an anti-racism policy to send a link to their policy and their logo so we can promote them on our website.

CAN YOU HELP US DEVELOP AN ANTI-RACISM PLEDGE?

We're working with the local community to develop an anti-racism pledge to be signed by local businesses and organisations.

WILL YOU DISPLAY AN ANTI-RACISM STICKER?

Organisations, shops and businesses that sign the pledge will be offered anti-racism stickers to display in their windows, on their websites and on social media.

RACE EQUALITY WEEK (06-12 FEBRUARY 2023): IT'S EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

Race Equality Week is an annual UK-wide movement uniting thousands of organisations and individuals to address the barriers to race equality in the workplace.

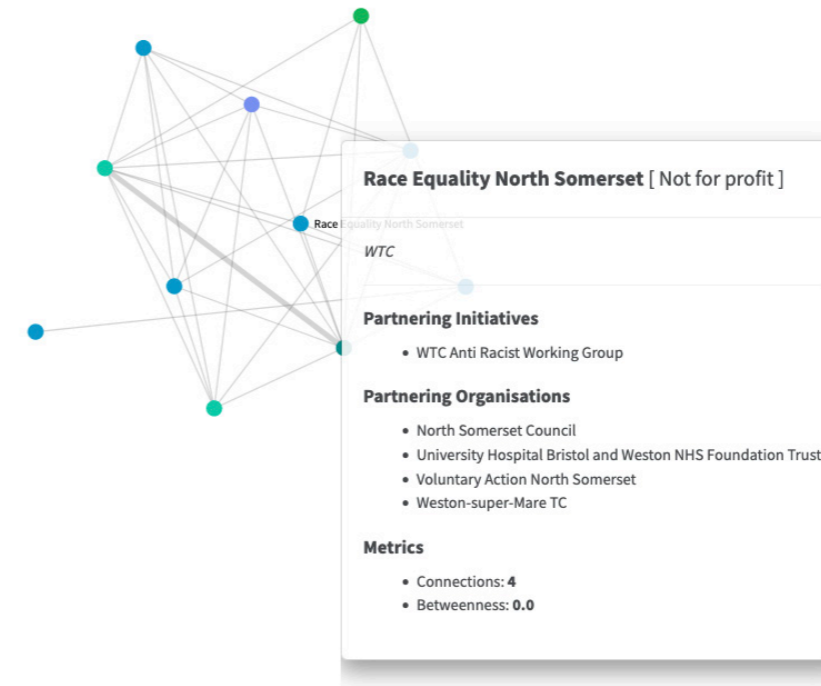
During 2022, we supported Race Equality Week and the theme of #ActionNotWords, with a number of successful events held at [The Other Place](#). The theme for 2023 is 'IT'S EVERYONE'S BUSINESS'.

RENS are working with [Race Equality Matters](#) to promote their campaign initiatives across North Somerset and we will be offering a programme of events during [Race Equality Week](#).

Can you help us prepare?

It is acknowledged that work that has been carried out to date is just a start. Conversations are continuing with groups associated with RENS and the wider community to help understand more about the challenges involved.

A solution ecosystem not only contains initiatives, but also all of the organisations working together to effect change. The Wicked Lab Tool displays the connections between organisations on an Ecosystem Map.



By the end of the development process, eight initiatives had been identified:

- Black History Month
- Anti-Racist Working Group
- Hate Crime Awareness Week
- Kick it Out Campaign
- Making Anti-Racism Visible
- Islamophobia Awareness
- Race Equality Week
- Integration Strategy

The next step is to map organisations who currently partnering on specific initiatives and who are interested in working on newly identified initiatives.

As only three of the Time to Change team had participated in the Ecosystem Transition Programme, ways had to be found to communicate the characteristics to a range of participants.

For the first invited Working Group session and subsequent circulation, Wicked Lab's Crosswalk was adapted to include space for a project name and an additional column for comments (see Appendix).

For the second invited Working Group session, each characteristic was printed on a single page, together with the example of how the characteristic might be demonstrated (see Appendix).

Given the newness of the ecosystem, and the need for further discussions with potential partners to develop proposed initiatives collaboratively, the remainder of this document reflects on ways that work in progress might be used as a foundation and starting point to address focus areas and characteristics. Where reference to a specific initiative is helpful, Making Racism Visible has been used as the primary example.

Focus Area 1: Creating a Disequilibrium State

Creating a disequilibrium state could also be called 'shaking up the current way of working'. There are eight characteristics within this focus area.

- 1. Highlight the need to organise communities differently:** The Council pledges highlighted the need for a new approach, but is the wider community aware of the pledges that have been made? Do they highlight the complex nature of the problem and how this is going to be tackled? How can we highlight the need to make anti-racist behaviours and practices the default way of working?
- 2. Cultivate a passion for action:** It is clear that many communities feel marginalised and disenfranchised and, over recent months, The Other Place has provided a space for people from diverse groups to come together. As people connect through shared activities, the passion for action is growing and there is already community support for the Making Anti-Racism Visible initiative.
- 3. Manage initial starting conditions:** Clarity in this area would help to address the confusion around who should be the main actors and agents of change. Can we establish a consensus on how this initiative should be delivered that addresses the power relations involved and improves levels of trust?
- 4. Specify goals in advance:** The overarching goal of the Making Anti-Racism Visible initiative is to see evidence of an anti-racist stance on the websites and social media of all major organisations and at street level in all public buildings and shops. We would also hope to confirm that major organisations have internal anti-racist policies that are visible to staff and service users and that are monitored appropriately.
- 5. Establish appropriate boundaries:** As part of the Time for Change Innovation Plan, Making Anti-Racism Visible is currently focussed on Weston.
- 6. Embrace uncertainty:** High levels of uncertainty have been present throughout the development of the Time for Change plan. However, the misunderstandings and false assumptions generated by operating in unfamiliar territory have resulted in valuable insights and have led directly to the development of the Making Anti-Racism Visible initiative. Ongoing community-led discussions at The Other Place are continuing the process and will help provide a basis for co-creating future action.
- 7. Surface conflict:** The Making Anti-Racism Visible campaign will undoubtedly highlight different understandings of racism and anti-racism. Facilitating access to information and national level

initiatives that provide thorough explanations of the issues involved will provide a starting point. Creating the conditions for productive discussion between people with different perspectives will need to be carefully managed, potentially by experienced facilitators, as this is often a very volatile subject.

- 8. Create controversy:** The discomfort caused by absence of visible support for anti-racism needs to be communicated, including the stress placed on those who speak up without knowing if they will be supported or ostracised.

Focus Area 2: Amplify Action

Amplifying Action could also be called 'moving to a new and better way of working'. There are six characteristics within this focus area.

- 1. Enable safe fail experimentation:** Making Anti-Racism Visible will be experimental at its core. There is no clear path for a small voluntary charity to work with major organisations across sectors and institutional hierarchies. Ways will need to be found to align interests to encourage buy-in from key players.
- 2. Enable rich interactions in relational spaces:** The Anti-Racism Working Party initiated by Weston Town Council is planning focus groups, RENS is developing community consultations and The Other Place provides a space for ongoing informal discussions and more formal discussions at events, including Watch Together events.
- 3. Support collective action:** Collective action is necessarily at the heart of the Making Anti-Racism Visible initiative. An appropriate, flexible and responsive structure to support action will need to be developed in collaboration with key partners.
- 4. Partition the system:** It is anticipated that partitions will emerge naturally as different sectors become involved. For example, leisure facilities, shops and customer facing businesses, etc.
- 5. Establish network linkages:** The Wicked Lab Tool will be used to maintain a project registry and an ecosystem map. To encourage organisations working independently to participate in the wider initiative, networking events will be organised.
- 6. Frame issues to match diverse perspectives:** Reporting on activities in progress and the conversations that develop will help demonstrate the ways in which diverse perspectives are being taken into account.

Focus Area 3: Encourage self-organisation

Encouraging self-organisation could also be called 'organisations working in new and more effective ways with one another'. There are four characteristics within this focus area.

1. **Create correlation through language and symbols:** Discussions are in progress about campaign materials, such as symbols for display in public places and online. The use of social media hashtags will also be explored.
2. **Encourage individuals to accept positions as role models for the change effort:** Discussions are in progress about the possibility of Diversity Awards in Weston to recognise organisations and businesses that are leading the way. Each organisation could then be asked to nominate individuals internally who are responsible for leading the change effort.
3. **Enable periodic information exchanges between partitioned subsystems:** Networking events that share work being carried out in different sectors would be helpful. National initiatives, such as Race Equality Week also provide an important focus that helps to highlight and coordinate activity across sectors.
4. **Enable resources and capabilities to recombine:** At present disconnections in the system are significant, but possibilities will emerge as work proceeds. Discussions around the Time for Change Innovation Plan have already highlighted possibilities, for example an information session at The Other Place to encourage people from minoritised communities to stand as Councillors.

Focus Area 4: Stabilise feedback

Stabilising feedback could also be called 'the new way of working becomes the dominant way of working among the organisations in the system'. There are four characteristics within this focus area.

1. Integrate local constraints
2. Provide a multiple perspective context and system structure
3. Enable problem representations to anchor in the community
4. Enable emergent outcomes to be monitored

However, it is too early in the process to usefully suggest examples for the Making Anti-Racism Visible initiative. Examples of ways to Stabilise feedback can be seen in the Initiatives Characteristics Overview in the Appendix.

Focus Area 5: Enable information flows

Enabling information flows could also be called 'helping to get information spread throughout the system'. There are four characteristics within this focus area.

1. Assist system members to keep informed and knowledgeable of forces influencing their community system
2. Assist in the connection, dissemination and processing of information
3. Enable connectivity between people who have different perspectives on community issues
4. Retain and reuse knowledge and ideas generated through interactions.

However, information flow and knowledge equity is an area that needs significant consideration in its own right, particularly in terms of information flows to and from frequently marginalised communities.

RENS' second Weston Community Hubs Innovation Plan, Talking Towns, considers some of the challenges involved. It suggests that if people do not feel heard, they are less likely to be open to receiving information, and highlights the importance of working from positions of trust to build bridging networks.

Ways to enable information flows, will need to be addressed collaboratively, in discussion, from the outset and monitored regularly to consider what works and what doesn't. Finding ways to build more inclusive communications networks will need to be maintained as a key focus area throughout.

The full category title is: Unplanned Exploration of Solutions with Communities.

Focus Area 6: Public administration - adaptive community interface

Public administration - adaptive community interface could also be called 'Helping the work undertaken by community organisations to align with government priorities'. There are three characteristics within this focus area.

1. Assist public administrators to frame policies in a manner which enables community adaptation of policies
2. Remove information differences to enable the ideas and views of citizens to align to the challenges being addressed by governments
3. Encourage and assist street level workers to take into account the ideas and views of citizens

Time for Change working group members have begun to discuss ways of unlocking new ways of working in general terms, but this is an area that presents significant challenges. Creating opportunities for unplanned exploration requires an increase in levels of trust on both sides as frustrations already exist.

Post pledge, oppositional positions are emerging. The Council is not seen to be delivering in ways that meet community expectations and the community is not seen to be supporting the Council in making change by providing the advice that is needed.

It is hoped that a focus on the Making Anti-Racism Visible initiative will provide opportunities to start to unpick expectations and help to provide the conditions for productive dialogue. Discussions around managing initial starting conditions (1.3), and supporting collective action (2.3) are likely to be particularly helpful.

Focus Area 7: Elected government - adaptive community interface

Elected government - adaptive community interface could also be called 'Creating policies that are shaped by community organisations'. There are two characteristics within this focus area.

1. Assist elected members to frame policies in a manner which enables community adaptation of policies
2. Assist elected members to take into account the ideas and views of citizens

Discussions with invited Time for Change working group members highlighted widespread community disconnect from the democratic process and ways of beginning to bridge this gap were explored. Ideas included:

- Holding 'Watch Together' sessions at The Other Place when key Council meetings are held
- Sharing Council meeting schedules and agendas through community networks
- Encouraging community members to ask questions at Council meetings (or asking a Councillor to ask questions on the communities behalf)
- Holding pre-election hustings at The Other Place and asking candidates about their position on anti-racism.

The majority of these ideas go beyond any single innovation plan and rather speak to the more general need to engage and empower citizens, particularly those from more marginalised communities.

The full category title is: Planned Exploitation of Community Knowledge, Ideas and Innovations.

Focus Area 8: Community innovation - public administration interface

Community innovation – public administration interface could also be called ‘Council using community knowledge and ideas’. There are three characteristics within this focus area.

1. Encourage and assist street level workers to exploit the knowledge, ideas and innovations of citizens
2. Bridge community-led activities and projects to the strategic plans of governments
3. Gather, retain and reuse community knowledge and ideas in other contexts

Discussions with invited Time for Change working group members identified the need to set engagement within a formal structure.

For example, if citizens are to provide input that aligns with strategic plans then they need to know the ways in which strategic plans are being developed and the timeframe for action (e.g. when an Officer report will go to Committee).

The potential for communities to be asked to provide input on specific issues under consideration was explored, although this clearly has resourcing implications.

Could community groups be commissioned to provide input and their work be recognised with a financial contribution? This is perhaps a particularly important question when people from minoritised ethnic communities are being asked to provide advice to a predominantly white Council on a voluntary basis.

Focus Area 9: Community innovation - elected government interface

Community innovation – elected government interface could also be called ‘The Council sharing information about community initiatives operating in their area’. There are two characteristics within this focus area.

1. Encourage and assist elected members to exploit the knowledge, ideas and innovations of citizens
2. Collect, analyse, synthesise, reconfigure, manage and represent community information that is relevant to the electorate or area of portfolio responsibility of elected members

This area was not discussed in any detail, but finding more integrated ways of working, to break down divides between Councillors, Council Officers and community members underpins many of the discussions taking place at The Other Place.

Knowledge equity is an important area for consideration, and sharing knowledge on an open and equal basis offers opportunities to break down some of the divides and tensions that exist.

This does not negate the likelihood that significant differences of opinion will remain, but it does offer a way of generating a more healthy and inclusive solution ecosystem, with better understanding about the positions taken and higher levels of trust.

Using Wicked Lab's Tool for Systemic Change as a framework to inform cross-sector and community discussions has highlighted a number of critically important areas, particularly in terms of the Community/Council interface.

- Discussions have identified blockage points that, if left unaddressed, will be likely to impede desired progress
- The Intervention Characteristics have supported nuanced and detailed consideration of the ways that individual actions can be developed to make a much greater contribution to the solution ecosystem
- Specific initiatives have been designed using the Tool and the issues surfaced in discussion. In particular, Making Anti-Racism Visible is generating community interest and support.
- The focus provided by the Tool is increasing community confidence that there is a solid framework to manage discussions and monitor progress
- The visibility of the solution ecosystem provided by the Tool is helping to increase trust and provide accountability.

Overall, the positive effects of using the Tool, even over a relatively short period of time, have proved so significant that RENS is committed to continuing to use the Tool to structure ongoing work.

Going forward, it is hoped that Weston Town Council, North Somerset Council and other key organisations will be willing to engage formally with the process at a strategic level to help deliver much needed change.

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Weston Town Council Anti-Racism Pledge⁹

In November 2020, Cllr Catherine Gibbons asked Weston Town Councillors to pledge to become an anti-racist Council. The wording of the pledge had been developed in consultation with community members including Black Lives Matter Weston.

Following some debate about the wording of the pledge, the motion was carried forward unanimously; "That the Council (Weston Town Council) resolves as follows:

1. To stand together unreservedly with black people in Weston-super-Mare
2. To work to eradicate racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, Antisemitism and discrimination which impact the entire community and blight our society.
3. To establish further initiatives to ensure Weston-super-Mare is actively inclusive and anti-racist.
4. To initiate a review involving Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic members of our community of our processes, policies and organisational attitudes, hold listening and engagement events seeking the views of people of colour on the issues rising from recent protests, and work with and support Community groups, youth groups, and places of worship in engaging with these issues.
5. To update our Equalities Policy and produce a plan addressing matters identified by these reviews and consultations.
6. To invite appropriate speakers on these issues to deliver training which will be mandatory for staff and expected for all councillors.

The council is committed to implementing this, and working with black and ethnic minority members of our communities will begin to develop an action plan.

North Somerset Council Anti-Racism Pledge¹⁰

In April 2022, Cllr Catherine Gibbons asked North Somerset Councillors to pledge to become an anti-racist Council. As with the Weston Town Council pledge, the wording had been discussed and agreed in consultation with community members, including Black Lives Matter Weston and RENS.

⁹ Weston Town Council Pledge: wsm-tc.gov.uk/our-pledges/our-anti-racism-commitment/

¹⁰ North Somerset Town Council Pledge: n-somerset.moderngov.co.uk

Seven members signified their support for further debate on the motion.

During the debate reference was made to the increase in hate crime, and in particular race crime, over the last two years and the importance of showing leadership in promoting equality and stamping out racial hatred.

Following debate, it was resolved that the motion be approved and adopted.

"This (North Somerset Council) resolves as follows:

1. To stand together unreservedly with Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic people in North Somerset.
2. To work to eradicate racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, Antisemitism, and discrimination which impact the entire community and blight our society.
3. To establish further initiatives to ensure North Somerset is actively inclusive and anti-racist.
4. To ensure Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic members of our community are involved in any reviews of our processes, policies and organisational attitudes, hold listening and engagement events seeking their views on the issues they face in North Somerset, and work with and support Community groups, youth groups, and places of worship in engaging with these issues.
5. To evaluate our progress against the Equality Framework for Local Government, ensuring race equality is at the heart of the review and produce an action plan addressing improvements identified, and the matters raised through our engagement with the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities in North Somerset.
6. To provide training on race equality and what it means to be anti-racist, which will be mandatory for staff and expected for all councillors.
7. To recognise the rich cultural diversity of our employees and positively support their engagement in activity to address systemic racism wherever it occurs, and to make a commitment to work with organisations from the wider ethnic minority communities in North Somerset. (The recent Listening Event, was an example of a potential step in this direction.)

The council recognises that racial inequality exists, and we recognise our role in actively challenging it wherever it occurs in North Somerset. We make the commitment to implement these actions, through working with Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic members of our communities, and with organisations from the wider ethnic minority communities in North Somerset to effect meaningful change."

INITIATIVE NAME:

Partner organisations:

Building the Adaptive Capacity of Communities

Focus Area 1: Create a disequilibrium state (shaking up the current way of working)

Initiative Characteristics	Question	Why is it important	Example	Current/Planned Activity
1.1 Highlight the need to organise communities differently	Does the initiative highlight that the problem it is addressing is a complex social policy (wicked) problem and needs to be addressed differently? Does the initiative highlight the need to take a solution ecosystem and systemic innovation approach to address the problem?	Wicked problems have many interconnected and multi-causal factors. This means they can't be addressed by individual projects and programs. To address wicked problems communities need to take a coherent approach - by bringing all the initiatives together (a solution ecosystem) and creating an interconnected set of initiatives to address the problem (systemic innovation approach).	An example might be a Newsletter for a community visioning project that discussed the need for the community to work differently.	
1.2 Cultivate a passion for action	Does your initiative create a passion for the community to take action around "the problem"?	Community passion is important to inspire people to take action on the problem. It also encourages people to work together with a shared focus and take collective action to address the wicked problem.	An example could be creating a shared vision for a community playground, which encourages people to come together to take action.	
1.3 Manage initial starting conditions	Does your initiative clearly articulate the starting conditions? Starting conditions can include: who is involved, the type of leadership approach (collaborative, facilitative), diversity of who is involved, the willingness of community and government to work together as equals and transparency of information?	Initial conditions can have great subsequent effect when taking an adaptive community approach - so it's important to get off to a good start. In wicked problems it is important to manage initiative starting conditions, because predetermined results can not be achieved. By setting the starting conditions (through policy, community visioning project) an environment for positive outcomes to emerge is created.	For example, a management committee of an initiative is diverse and works collaboratively with other stakeholders	

1.4 Specify goals in advance	Does the initiative specify goals in advance? For example, does it have broad goals or is it part of an umbrella strategy?	Broad goals need to be set in advance so that people and other resources are aligned to the general direction without dictating "how" these goals will be achieved. The goals need to be broad as predetermined results should not be dictated when addressing wicked problems.	For example a strategic plan having a goal such as food secure, prosperous economy, sustainable environment or thriving families.	
1.5 Establish appropriate boundaries	Does your initiative operate within appropriate boundaries?	Boundaries are important as they help focus efforts, and ensures the collective energy of initiatives and stakeholders are channeled to the wicked problem. These boundaries could be geographical such as a neighbourhood, local government area or electorate. Or they could be problem focused: focusing on part of the wicked problem.	For example an initiative that addresses part of the problem of food security such as food waste, food availability or access to food.	
1.6 Embrace uncertainty	Does your initiative embrace uncertainty? Does the initiative highlight that there is no predetermined plan or outcome that it is trying to achieve?	Embracing uncertainty fosters creativity, innovation and promotes learning. It can help communities shift current perceptions and beliefs. It can circumvent people wanting to create predetermined outcomes.	For example an initiative that supports people to come together and collaboratively co-create future action.	
1.7 Surface conflict	Does your initiative surface conflict? Does your initiative highlight that there are informational differences in the community? Or that there are a range of perspectives in the community about how to address the problem?	Surfacing conflict is important as it assists existing community systems to be disrupted. By surfacing conflict, communities can put spotlights on the informational differences, the diversity of perspectives within the community, and or showcase other ways to address the wicked problem.	For example a discussion paper that highlights different ways of thinking about an issue and different approaches to tackling the issue.	
1.8 Create controversy	Does your initiative create controversy? Does your initiative make people feel uncomfortable about the current status quo of the problem?	Creating controversy helps to disrupt systems. Controversy creates discomfort which challenges the current way of working and highlights the need to take action on the problem.	For example an initiative that visually shows the amount of waste generated by disposable coffee cups in one day to highlight the need to use reusable cups.	

Focus Area 2: Amplify action (Moving to a new and better way of working)

Initiative Characteristics	Question	Why is it important	Example	Current/Planned Activity
2.1 Enable safe fail experimentation	Does your initiative allow for 'safe to fail' experimentation?	Safe to fail experiments are typically small and approach a problem in a new or innovative way. Experiments which produce favorable outcomes are reproduced, whilst experiments with unfavorable outcomes are allowed to fail and not be reproduced.	For example a library that experiments with converting a meeting room into a coworking space for small businesses can easily revert back to a meeting room if the opportunity is not taken up by small businesses.	
2.2 Enable rich interactions in relational spaces	Does your initiative enable rich interactions in relational spaces? Does your initiative enable interested community stakeholders to come together, open up discussion, encourage dissent and diversity, and encourage new ideas to emerge?	Relational spaces are safe spaces created to enable rich interactions where diverse people come together to unpack, explore and discuss issues.	Examples of initiatives that enable rich interactions in relational spaces are well facilitated focus groups, large group consultations and world cafes.	
2.3 Support collective action	Does your initiative support collective action? Is your initiative part of a collective effort to address a problem?	Collaborative leadership supports collective action. This approach inspires commitment and actions by other stakeholders, builds broad based involvement of the initiatives and organisations in the solution ecosystem and encourages participation by the diverse stakeholders.	Collective impact approaches are an example of an intervention that supports collective actions. The defining features of the collective impact approach are: long term commitments by a group of key actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem. Their actions are supported by a shared measurement system, mutually reinforcing activities, ongoing communication, and are staffed by an independent backbone organization	

<p>2.4 Partition the system</p>	<p>Does your initiative partition the system by breaking your work up into different focus areas that address different parts of the problem?</p>	<p>Partitioning the system involves breaking the activities of your initiative into several different work areas. This enables work undertaken in the separate areas to remain focused. It also enables experimentation and innovation within these work areas to occur without negative consequences to the whole initiative if something goes wrong in one of the separate work areas.</p>	<p>An example of an initiative that has partitioned the system would be an employment service that splits its activities into skills development, employment placement and post-placement support.</p>	
<p>2.5 Establish network linkages</p>	<p>Does your initiative establish network linkages?</p>	<p>Establishing network linkages is where you create connections with other initiatives, organisations or individuals that are working on the same issue within the solution ecosystem. The aim is to create linkages with others that have expertise, contacts, and /or resources that enable your initiative to expand its activities.</p>	<p>Examples of initiatives that establish network linkages are ecosystem maps, networking events and project registries of initiatives.</p>	
<p>2.6 Frame issues to match diverse perspectives</p>	<p>Does your initiative frame the issue in a way that matches diverse perspectives?</p>	<p>Framing issues to match diverse perspectives is where your initiative is described in a way that encompasses different points of view on the issue. This encourages individuals, groups and organisations that think differently about the issue to work together.</p>	<p>An example of an initiative that frames issues to match diverse perspectives is a discussion guide that provides information from diverse perspectives that is used as a briefing paper for a forum that aims to take action on an issue.</p>	

Focus Area 3: Encourage self-organisation (Organisations working in new and more effective ways with one another)

Initiative Characteristics	Question	Why is it important	Example	Current/Planned Activity
3.1 Create correlation through language and symbols	Does your initiative use language and symbols that enables stakeholders with diverse perspectives to have a shared understanding and direction?	Initiatives which create correlation through language and symbols encourage the sense making and sense giving required to assist the organisations and initiatives in the solution ecosystem to recombine in new ways that increase the functioning of the solution ecosystem. These initiatives encourage a shared understanding of the solution ecosystem.	An example might be an initiative that uses a hashtag to connect and identify people who have different experience of a problem - for example the hashtag #me-too that was used by people who identified as being part of the 'me too' movement.	
3.2 Encourage individuals to accept positions as role models for the change effort	Does your initiative encourage individuals to accept positions as role models for the change effort?	Individuals that accept positions as role models for the change effort are relatable, provide meaning and create understanding for other stakeholders in the solution ecosystem this enables the organisations and initiatives to more easily recombine.	For example, an initiative that aims for community ownership having community members involved in its governance.	
3.3 Enable periodic information exchanges between partitioned subsystems	Does your initiative enable the subsystems identified in question 2.4 to come together for periodic information exchanges?	Providing an opportunity for subsystems to come together and share information (through a structure, process or event) enables the separate subsystems to have an awareness of what is occurring across the whole solution ecosystem.	An example of an initiative that enables periodic information exchanges between partitioned subsystems would be a strategy that is split into working groups that have the opportunity to periodically come together to exchange information.	
3.4 Enable resources and capabilities to recombine	Does your initiative enable resources and capabilities from stakeholders to come together?	Creating a structure, process or event that enables resources and capabilities from across the solution ecosystem to combine in new ways and supports the shift to a new way of working that is coherent.	An example of an initiative that has enabled resources and capabilities to come together would be an aged care centre that uses a schools computer training facility to offer training to seniors in the community.	

Focus Area 4: Stabilise feedback (The new way of working becomes the dominant way of working among the organisations in the system)

Initiative Characteristics	Question	Why is it important	Example	Current/Planned Activity
4.1 Integrate local constraints	Does your initiative work within local constraints? Has the initiative been adapted to meet the local needs or context?	Initiatives that adapt to any local restrictions, limits or constraints will more likely gain legitimacy and therefore are better able to stabilise in the solution ecosystem.	For example, an initiative that was an outside bar that was too noisy for residents is moved inside a vacant building – it is adapted to meet local needs.	
4.2 Provide a multiple perspective context and system structure	Does your initiative provide a structure for diverse stakeholders to continue their work together by supporting ongoing collaboration?	By providing a multiple perspective structure an initiative enables problems to be analyzed from multiple perspectives, to identify and conceive problems in new ways, and to avoid the inherent risks of working in insular environments.	For example an initiative such as a backbone organisation for a collective impact project or a membership organisation for diverse members of a network.	
4.3 Enable problem representations to anchor in the community	Does the initiative provide a variety of materials and promotional activities to increase awareness and understanding of what it does to the broader community?	Initiatives that have artifacts that inform the solution ecosystem and broader community of their purpose and activities are more likely to become embedded within the solution ecosystem.	For example an initiative with a website, flyer, bumper stickers, key rings and other marketing materials that represents the problem and the initiative to the community.	
4.4 Enable emergent outcomes to be monitored	Are unforeseen outputs and outcomes being monitored?	Through monitoring you can be aware of when the activities of an initiative produce desirable observable outcomes. Then they can be adopted and amplified. Likewise, through monitoring you can be aware when they do not produce desired outcomes and they can be allowed to fail in a contained and acceptable way.	For example an initiative such as a performance management system that enables non-predetermined outcomes to be recognised as they occur.	

Focus Area 5: Enable information flows (Helping to get information spread throughout the system)

Initiative Characteristics	Question	Why is it important	Example	Current/Planned Activity
5.1 Assist system members to keep informed and knowledgeable of forces influencing their community system	Does the initiative assist stakeholders to keep informed about forces influencing the problem you're addressing? Such as political, economic, social, technological, national and international forces	Initiatives that assist the solution ecosystem to stay informed of the political, economic, social, technological, national and international environmental forces that are influencing the problem to enable the initiative within the solution ecosystem to adapt.	For example an initiative that produces a newsletter that includes an article about how the development of a local industry will influence the problem or an information session about how a new government policy will influence the problem being addressed.	
5.2 Assist in the connection, dissemination and processing of information	Does your initiative use technology or social media to process information and/or inform and present information about what you do?	Initiatives that use technology to process or disseminate information speed up the flow and connection of information around the solution ecosystem which assist the system to transition faster.	For example an initiative that uses social media such as Facebook to disseminate information or processing technologies such as Wicked Lab's Tool for Systemic Change to present information about its activities.	
5.3 Enable connectivity between people who have different perspectives on community issues	Does your initiative enable stakeholders to connect who have different perspectives on community issues?	Initiatives that enable or increase connectivity between stakeholders that have a different perspective increases the coherence and inclusiveness of the solution ecosystem.	For example a forum that provides the opportunity for people with different perspectives to present their different approaches to the issue to a broader network.	
5.4 Retain and reuse knowledge and ideas generated through interactions	Has your initiative been documented in a way so that its insights are accessible to the community currently and in the future?	Initiatives that create an accessible record of previous interactions, results and activities enable the solution ecosystem to learn and build on previous experience.	For example, an initiative is recorded in a project register for a Local Government.	

Unplanned Exploration of Solutions with Communities

Focus Area 6: Public administration – adaptive community interface (Helping the work undertaken by community organisations to align with government priorities)

Initiative Characteristics	Question	Why is it important	Example	Current/Planned Activity
6.1 Assist public administrators to frame policies in a manner which enables community adaptation of policies	Does your initiative assist public administrators to frame policies in a manner that enables community adaptation of policies?	Adaptation of policies is important so community can implement government policies in a manner that fits the context of the community	Having a participatory budgeting challenge for food insecurity which enables the community to implement a food insecurity policy in a way that takes advantage of their resources, capabilities and context. Similarly, the initiative that won the challenge would also include this characteristic.	
6.2 Remove information differences to enable the ideas and views of citizens to align to the challenges being addressed by governments	Does your initiative remove information differences to enable the ideas and views of citizens to align to the challenges being addressed by governments?	If citizens have access to relevant information that governments hold, they can make more informed decisions when developing and implementing initiatives.	An example would be a government department making their strategic plan or organisational chart easily accessible online. Similarly, if an initiative used the available government information it would also have that characteristic.	
6.3 Encourage and assist street level workers to take into account the ideas and views of citizens	Does your initiative encourage and assist street level workers (public sector and non-profit workers who interact directly with citizens) to take into account the ideas and views of citizens?	The ideas of citizen are important to contextualise and provide new and innovative insights and information for a given place. Taking into account the ideas of citizens also encourages community ownership and strengthens democracy.	For example governments collaborating and/ or empowering citizens through a community engagement process. Similarly, an initiative where the citizens have been empowered by street level workers through a community engagement process would also contain this characteristic.	

Unplanned Exploration of Solutions with Communities

Focus Area 7: Elected government – adaptive community interface (Creating policies that are shaped by community organisations)

Initiative Characteristics	Question	Why is it important	Example	Current/Planned Activity
<p>7.1 Assist elected members to frame policies in a manner which enables community adaptation of policies</p>	<p>Does the initiative assist elected members to frame policies in a manner which enables community adaptation of policies?</p>	<p>Adaptation of policies is important so community can implement government policies in a manner that fits the context of the community</p>	<p>For example, when elected officials provide a narrative that incorporates the values and the mindset implicit in the policy which attracts communities to develop initiatives that implement that policy. Similarly if an initiative was inspired by the policy narrative, the initiative would also have this characteristics.</p>	
<p>7.2 Assist elected members to take into account the ideas and views of citizens</p>	<p>Does your initiative assist elected members to take into account the ideas and views of citizens?</p>	<p>It is important for elected members to take into account the ideas of citizen, as they provide knowledge and innovative ideas about the elected members electorate and /or portfolio responsibilities.</p>	<p>For example, having an elected member on an initiative’s management committee. Similarly the initiative itself would have this characteristic.</p>	

Planned Exploitation of Community Knowledge, Ideas and Innovations

Focus Area 8: Community innovation – public administration interface (Council using community knowledge and ideas)

Initiative Characteristics	Question	Why is it important	Example	Current/Planned Activity
8.1 Encourage and assist street level workers to exploit the knowledge, ideas and innovations of citizens	Does your initiative encourage and assist street level workers (public sector and non-profit workers who interact directly with citizens) to exploit the knowledge, ideas and innovations of citizens?	By encouraging and assisting street level workers to take the knowledge and innovation back into the bureaucracy the insights can be used in other contexts in the future.	For example, job descriptions and performance criteria that recognise the need for street level workers to gather and record community insights. Templates that assist with the gathering and recording of this information are also examples of this characteristic. Similarly, an initiative that the worker with such a job description was working on, or initiatives that are included in such a template would also contain this characteristic.	
8.2 Bridge community-led activities and projects to the strategic plans of governments	Does your initiative bridge community-led activities and projects to the strategic plans of governments?	As these initiatives align to government policies and directions, their implementation contributes to the achievement of the government directions. This can be recognised and measured.	For example, protocols that bridge community initiatives to government plans and formal alliance/partnership programs that encourage community initiatives to align to the strategic plans of government. Similarly, the community-led activities that are bridged would contain this characteristic.	
8.3 Gather, retain and reuse community knowledge and ideas in other contexts	Does your initiative gather, retain and reuse community knowledge and ideas in other contexts?	Systems must be in place that enables the storing and accessing of community information so that it can be used in other contexts in the future.	For example, a project register that records initiative information so that information and insights can be used in other contexts in the future. Similarly, if an initiative was included in a project register it would also include this characteristic.	

Planned Exploitation of Community Knowledge, Ideas and Innovations

Focus Area 9: Community innovation – elected government interface (The Council sharing information about community initiatives operating in their area)

Initiative Characteristics	Question	Why is it important	Example	Current/Planned Activity
9.1 Encourage and assist elected members to exploit the knowledge, ideas and innovations of citizens	Does your initiative encourage and assist elected members to exploit the knowledge, ideas and innovations of citizens?	By encouraging and assisting elected members to use the knowledge and innovation they will make more informed policy decisions for their electorate or area of portfolio responsibility.	For example, briefing papers and or templates that include insights from community initiatives in their electorate or portfolio of responsibility. Similarly, the initiative(s) that were included in the briefing papers and / or templates would also contain this characteristic.	
9.2 Collect, analyse, synthesise, reconfigure, manage and represent community information that is relevant to the electorate or area of portfolio responsibility of elected members	Does your initiative collect, analyse, synthesise, reconfigure, manage and represent community information that is relevant to the electorate or area of portfolio responsibility of elected members?	Systems must be in place that enable the storing and access to community information so that it can be used in other policy contexts in the future.	For example a project register that aligns the insights from initiatives to electorate and portfolio information. Similarly, an initiative included in the project register would also contain this characteristic.	

Focus Area 1: Create a disequilibrium state

(shaking up the current way of working)

1. 1 Highlight the need to organise communities differently

An example might be a Newsletter for a community visioning project that discussed the need for the community to work differently.

Focus Area 1: Create a disequilibrium state

(shaking up the current way of working)

1.2 Cultivate a passion for action

An example could be creating a shared vision for a community playground, which encourages people to come together to take action. An example could be creating a shared vision for a community playground, which encourages people to come together to take action.

Focus Area 1: Create a disequilibrium state

(shaking up the current way of working)

1.3 Manage initial starting conditions

For example, a management committee of an initiative is diverse and works collaboratively with other stakeholders

Focus Area 1: Create a disequilibrium state

(shaking up the current way of working)

1.4 Specify goals in advance

For example a strategic plan having a goal such as food secure, prosperous economy, sustainable environment or thriving families.

Focus Area 1: Create a disequilibrium state

(shaking up the current way of working)

1.5 Establish appropriate boundaries

For example an initiative that addresses part of the problem of food security such as food waste, food availability or access to food.

Focus Area 1: Create a disequilibrium state

(shaking up the current way of working)

1.6 Embrace uncertainty

For example an initiative that supports people to come together and collaboratively co-create future action.

Focus Area 1: Create a disequilibrium state

(shaking up the current way of working)

1.7 Surface conflict

For example a discussion paper that highlights different ways of thinking about an issue and different approaches to tackling the issue.

Focus Area 1: Create a disequilibrium state

(shaking up the current way of working)

1.8 Create controversy

For example an initiative that visually shows the amount of waste generated by disposable coffee cups in one day to highlight the need to use reusable cups.

Focus Area 2: Amplify action

(Moving to a new and better way of working)

2.1 Enable safe fail experimentation

For example a library that experiments with converting a meeting room into a coworking space for small businesses can easily revert back to a meeting room if the opportunity is not taken up by small businesses.

Focus Area 2: Amplify action

(Moving to a new and better way of working)

2.2 Enable rich interactions in relational spaces

Examples of initiatives that enable rich interactions in relational spaces are well facilitated focus groups, large group consultations and world cafes.

Focus Area 2: Amplify action

(Moving to a new and better way of working)

2.3 Support collective action

Collective impact approaches are an example of an intervention that supports collective actions. The defining features of the collective impact approach are: long term commitments by a group of key actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem. Their actions are supported by a shared measurement system, mutually reinforcing activities, ongoing communication, and are staffed by an independent backbone organization.

Focus Area 2: Amplify action

(Moving to a new and better way of working)

2.4 Partition the system

An example of an initiative that has partitioned the system would be an employment service that splits its activities into skills development, employment placement and post-placement support.

Focus Area 2: Amplify action

(Moving to a new and better way of working)

2.5 Establish network linkages

Examples of initiatives that establish network linkages are ecosystem maps, networking events and project registries of initiatives.

Focus Area 2: Amplify action

(Moving to a new and better way of working)

2.6 Frame issues to match diverse perspectives

An example of an initiative that frames issues to match diverse perspectives is a discussion guide that provides information from diverse perspectives that is used as a briefing paper for a forum that aims to take action on an issue.

Focus Area 3: Encourage self-organisation

(Organisations working in new and more effective ways with one another)

3.1 Create correlation through language and symbols

An example might be an initiative that uses a hashtag to connect and identify people who have different experience of a problem - for example the hashtag #me-too that was used by people who identified as being part of the 'me too' movement.

Focus Area 3: Encourage self-organisation

(Organisations working in new and more effective ways with one another)

3.2 Encourage individuals to accept positions as role models for the change effort

For example, an initiative that aims for community ownership having community members involved in its governance.

Focus Area 3: Encourage self-organisation

(Organisations working in new and more effective ways with one another)

3.3 Enable periodic information exchanges between partitioned subsystems

An example of an initiative that enables periodic information exchanges between partitioned subsystems would be a strategy that is split into working groups that have the opportunity to periodically come together to exchange information.

Focus Area 3: Encourage self-organisation

(Organisations working in new and more effective ways with one another)

3.4 Enable resources and capabilities to recombine

An example of an initiative that has enabled resources and capabilities to come together would be an aged care centre that uses a schools computer training facility to offer training to seniors in the community.

Focus Area 4: Stabilise feedback

(The new way of working becomes the dominant way of working among the organisations in the system)

4. 1 Integrate local constraints

For example, an initiative that was an outside bar that was too noisy for residents is moved inside a vacant building – it is adapted to meet local needs.

Focus Area 4: Stabilise feedback

(The new way of working becomes the dominant way of working among the organisations in the system)

4.2 Provide a multiple perspective context and system structure

For example an initiative such as a backbone organisation for a collective impact project or a membership organisation for diverse members of a network.

Focus Area 4: Stabilise feedback

(The new way of working becomes the dominant way of working among the organisations in the system)

4.3 Enable problem representations to anchor in the community

For example an initiative with a website, flyer, bumper stickers, key rings and other marketing materials that represents the problem and the initiative to the community.

Focus Area 4: Stabilise feedback

(The new way of working becomes the dominant way of working among the organisations in the system)

4.4 Enable emergent outcomes to be monitored

For example an initiative such as a performance management system that enables non-predetermined outcomes to be recognised as they occur.

Focus Area 5: Enable information flows

(Helping to get information spread throughout the system)

5.1 Assist system members to keep informed and knowledgeable of forces influencing their community system

For example an initiative that produces a newsletter that includes an article about how the development of a local industry will influence the problem or an information session about how a new government policy will influence the problem being addressed.

Focus Area 5: Enable information flows

(Helping to get information spread throughout the system)

5.2 Assist in the connection, dissemination and processing of information

For example an initiative that uses social media such as Facebook to disseminate information or processing technologies such as Wicked Lab's Tool for Systemic Change to present information about its activities.

Focus Area 5: Enable information flows

(Helping to get information spread throughout the system)

5.3 Enable connectivity between people who have different perspectives on community issues

For example a forum that provides the opportunity for people with different perspectives to present their different approaches to the issue to a broader network.

Focus Area 5: Enable information flows

(Helping to get information spread throughout the system)

5.4 Retain and reuse knowledge and ideas generated through interactions

For example, an initiative is recorded in a project register for a Local Government.



HM Government

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