Understanding Value

Putting it into practice
Tools to support tackling inactivity through system change

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Understanding value

This understanding value resource will help to guide you through the tools, models and approaches being used by places to tackle inactivity through implementing a place-based approach. This is one of nine sections of our collective resource 'Putting It Into Practice' which is organised by what we've found to be some of the practicalities of system change. The full resource can be found on our website.

A key challenge of taking a systematic approach is how you understand and show that valuable change is happening. The challenge is how we demonstrate the change that we feel and know is happening in our places in a way that energises and reassures stakeholders.

Questions you might be asking:
- Does the way that you are asked to measure what you do, miss out the value that you create?
- How can I find a way to evaluate progress in a way that was consistent with the principles of the work?

Revaluation conversations

Ripple effect mapping (REM)
Re:valuation Conversations
Active Luton

In Autumn 2021, Active Luton and the Leadership Centre started to work on exploring how value was treated and understood in the Navigating Local Systems work in Luton. This task was partly about re-imaging evaluation; and partly about stock-taking how Active Luton and their partners thought about, and talked about, 'value' in their work.

Over the next few months, a series of 3 facilitated workshops took place, and in between these sessions, face-to-face value-based conversations took place within the team. People from Active Luton, the Active Partnership and the local public health team took direct part in the workshops. They also had valuable discussions with stakeholders they came in contact with between the facilitated sessions.

Exchanging stories about what matters to us is at the core of the approach. The stories are told in an informal way and the audience listens out for 'items of value'. What was it that you heard in the story that seems to be of value to the person telling the story? These 'items of value' are the way in which the story owner shows you what matters to them.

When a series of stories have been shared, the various items of value are distributed across a framework to help make their value clear to all of the participants in the story-capture process. The framework helps to make more value visible and evident to everyone than before the stories were shared.

How to value...dialogue is the process

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<td>CONNECT</td>
<td>PROTECT</td>
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What goes where...wearing your 'sorting hat' - socialising dialogue

**VISIBLE**

- **Quantitative Value:**
  - direct and on the surface
  - Monitoring
  - Metrics
  - KPI’s...

- **Reported Benefits:**
  - qualitative outcomes
  - Interviews
  - Stories
  - Pictures...

- **Networks and Relationships:**
  - of People and of Ideas
  - Discourse Analysis
  - Social Listening
  - Network Maps

**INVISIBLE**

- **Hidden Quantitative Value inc. future value, and calculations**
  - £s
  - (Social) Return on Investment
  - Health Metrics: BMI, Qalys
  - CO2...

- **Shared Benefits and Learnings:**
  - principles, processes, ways of working
  - Reflections
  - Theories of Change
  - Thematic Analysis...

- **Transformations and Trajectories:**
  - cycles broken, emergent properties
  - Lives changing/changed
  - Roads not taken
  - Systems tipping/tipped
There's lots of flexibility about who to involve in this approach, and very little barriers to use. Some of the concepts and terms can seem a bit vague or abstract to begin with, but once you start using them, they get to feel accessible quite quickly.

- In Active Luton, a community-wellbeing trust, the active partnership and the local authority were involved in these value-based conversations.

The Re:valuation tool has also been used in various different ways across a number of places.

- In Greater Manchester, partners to Greater Manchester Moving were involved in exploring the value of their governance system and produced the ‘pointers to practice’.
- The Local Delivery Pilot in Southall, Let’s Go Southall, used story-capture as a kind of self-accounting method to reveal more about their social movement-building approach to encouraging physical activity.
- Disabled people and providers of support to physical activity were involved in the West Midlands as part of ‘Include Me’. Through this use of Re:valuation, we created a storytelling impact cycle.
- NHS Improvement used value-based conversations as a way of understanding the contribution of social movements to well-being.
- In Scotland and Northern Ireland, the Family Nurse Partnership developed ways of understanding the full value of their work.
- In Merton, the Health & Well Being Board used Re:valuation to develop their governance system.
- Sport England used Re:valuation to understand the value of the Extended Worker Programme.

Advice to others

- Think carefully about the language used – is it accessible to all partners? Try to avoid jargon and acronyms.
- Involve your communications lead at the earliest opportunity – they can then articulate the value in a meaningful way and replicate your shared language.
- Starting with a project/programme/service that all partners are involved in, or aware of, helps in developing the 6 box approach as all can be involved rather than leaving it to one person.
- Don’t give up too easily! We were sceptical when first introduced to the 6 box approach, but quickly realised its importance in ensuring that all value was articulated.
- Not every project/programme/service needs all six boxes completing, but understanding the process helps in realising which ones are of greatest significance to partners/stakeholders.
- Give yourself time as a group – it’s not a tick-box exercise, it needs time to tell the story and reflect together.
- The investment of time early on, improves the comms and makes post-project reports to funders/partners/commissioners much less time-consuming, as well as being more relevant.

How can it be used?

Local teams have used Re:valuation to help with their approaches to understanding the value and impact of:

- Social movements in encouraging physical activity
- Day-to-day asset-based community development
- System change
- Value-based conversations in their local networks
- Supervising the work of activists
- Network development into communities where there are concentrations of physical inactivity.
Putting it into practice - how the tool has been used

Who was involved?
Active Luton (Community Wellbeing Trust),
Active Partnership, Local Authority.

Why was this tool used?
Our involvement in the Navigating Local systems work made us realise that we should be doing far more to communicate the value of our work. The reporting mechanisms used didn’t allow for a balanced and rounded picture. There was – too much emphasis on the visible, and too often case studies were simply success stories, ignoring lessons learned along the way.

How was it done?
We had three facilitated sessions which took us through the following steps:

- What do we mean by a conversation about value?
- How do we capture value through storytelling?
- How to listen for items of value when others tell their story?
- How can value be split into visible and invisible – introducing the 6 boxes to ‘sort’ value?
- Understanding our ‘system’. The first introduced us to the concept of storytelling as a means of communicating value, how to gather value and listen out for items of value to demonstrate value.
- And finally, taking us through a programme well known to us all and completing the 6 box framework for the story.

‘Thinking Time’ sessions have also been introduced for key partners simply to talk about what matters to them, where there are connections between strategies and simply telling stories about their work, so that others can look for value and opportunities.

What was the impact?

- More voices involved in communicating the value of our work
- Greater emphasis on what matters and a better understanding of what matters to whom
- A shared language being developed
- Evaluating value is now being built into strategic plans.

Active Luton’s strategic plans and the associated annual plan now clearly articulates how we’ll measure success and which of the six boxes are most important for each of the actions. It’s brought together our strategic documents rather than having an outcomes framework and a KPIs schedule. Across each area of the plan, we’ve ensured that all six boxes are reflected in what we’re capturing. Having our commissioners and partners involved in this process means that we’re all clear about what’s important to us and each of the key partners/stakeholders.

What did we learn?

Determining value is a shared responsibility, not the lone voice of a project lead. Agreeing what will be measured and how this will be built into all plans. We’re now realising what matters and considering what that means to all partners/stakeholders involved. Involve the communications lead at an early stage – they’ll be better equipped to communicate the value. Accessible language is essential.

Where can I find further information?
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<td>Proposed items of value (based on listening):</td>
<td>Proposed calculations (based on listening):</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of interventions</td>
<td>Value of ‘roads not taken’ - will vary by intervention</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of link workers</td>
<td>Inequalities (indicators?)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Numbers of clients (esp young people) benefitting</td>
<td>Poverty (indicators?)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scale of population covered by system working</td>
<td>Quality of life (indicators?)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scale of staff engaged in system working</td>
<td>Well being (indicators?)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scale of partners engaged in system working</td>
<td>System working is framework for holding to account</td>
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<td>Scale of resources within system working boundaries</td>
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**Case study:**

- Cross-sectoral relationships - relational infrastructure
- Boundary crossing - outside silos
- Different conversations - talking things out
- People come to ask to invite our involvement
- Egos out of the room - heart and soul
- Informality, pick up the phone to you
- Power in networking - speed of networking - efficiency of network - Barnardo’s as a key partner
- Proven we can do it as a town, as a system
- Change Active Luton into a ‘well being’ Trust

- Different angles
- People no longer reliant on services in the same way
- Power shift: for professionals and for public
- Getting clients involved
- Breeds ‘going the extra mile’
- Scale is different
- Not reverting back to ‘type’
Ripple Effects Mapping (REM)
Active Gloucestershire

Active Gloucestershire developed their social movement we can move which inspires, connects and enables individuals, communities and organisations across Gloucestershire to help the least active move more.

This meant less direct delivery and a different approach to evaluating success over a longer time period.

**Why would I use it?**
To capture and understand the wider impacts in a complex environment in an engaging visual way.

**Who would I use it with?**
Any partners involved in developing your work or project. Those who are recipients of the work or are impacted by the work.

**How can it be used?**
To highlight activity and impact where cause and effect cannot easily be apportioned. Or where there are no obvious measures for success -- such as attendee numbers.

As well as a form of evaluation, this can also be part of an intervention, by bringing together key stakeholders to discuss what’s happening and its wider impact. In turn, this will create further ripples, making stakeholders to critically reflect on their work to date.

REM demonstrates visually the increased length of time change and impact can take when trying to influence the different elements of the system.

You can map out future expected actions and consequences, assess these and capture unintended consequences later.

**Advice to others**
If you’ve got experience facilitating workshops or focus groups, then you’ll likely be able to run REM sessions. There’s no need for a facilitator to have prior experience of REM.

It’s recommended to review and build on the maps at regular intervals, such as quarterly, to keep it updated.

It’s useful to think about who you want to attend the REM sessions. The initial REM outputs can also help to identify other people who might be useful to invite to a future session.

These sessions probably work best in an in-person format (as it allows people time to interact properly with one another), but it can also be carried out online using virtual whiteboards.

Additional qualitative evaluation expertise is helpful in analysing the map and pulling out the Impact Pathways (i.e. the chains of activities and impacts).

Developing the REM throughout a project provides the opportunity to capture where events haven’t turned out as expected. Understanding the dead ends and learning from these as well as from the successes.

**Reflections from those involved:**

"Evaluating we can move, and approaches similar to it, is an incredibly difficult task to do. This was as much of a learning process for us as the evaluation partner as it was for anyone, but we were really pleased with how it worked out, the insights generated, and the broader interest from other researchers, organisations and sectors in the evaluation methods."

Dr James Nobles, Research Fellow, University of Bristol
**Putting it into practice - how the tool has been used**

**Who was involved?**
The method was refined by Active Gloucestershire’s evaluation partner, the University of Bristol, and involved a range of partners including Clinical Commissioning Groups, the NHS, local forms, the voluntary and charity sector and different community groups.

**Why was this tool used?**
To visually demonstrate the broad and often intangible impacts of our social movement We Can Move (WCM).

**How was it done?**
Through facilitated workshops with key stakeholders in person and online. Initial workshops lasted around two hours, with follow-up sessions shorter in length (i.e. 45-60 minutes).

The workshop began with team-based discussions to discover what participants considered to be successful within WCM, or their best experiences as part of WCM. They were encouraged to think about the relationships between stakeholders in the system, as well as their own projects and areas of work. They were then asked to think about what made these achievements or impacts possible, and whether these achievements came about in an expected or unexpected manner.

They then moved into a series of smaller group activities that involved mapping a timeline of activities/actions, thinking about the impacts that occurred, identifying the connections, and understanding the wider effects.

**What was the impact?**
A visualization (map) of the ripple effects of the work in the network. It connected partners, creating new relationships and new ripples. It inspired partners and others to find out more about REM - how it can help them evaluate their work and how it can complement current evaluation models in place. Many of these impacts were previously seen as “difficult to capture” using other methods.
What did we learn?
The length of time that impacts require
to take effect. It’s important to involve
stakeholders and those impacted by
the different projects. We’re aware of
only a small proportion of the ripples.
The simplicity of this approach, with
very quick learnings, resulted in high
levels of engagement from the Active
Gloucestershire staff and the wider
stakeholders (i.e., commissioners).

Where can I find further
information?
The first paper from our evaluation
partnership has been peer-reviewed and
published. A ‘how to’ carry out Ripple
Effects Mapping, using we can move as
a case study. Read the full paper here.
A series of short training videos are also
being produced by the University of Bristol
and Bradford Teaching Hospitals.

Check out our latest free online course:
Introduction to Ripple Effects Mapping - ARC
West (nihr.ac.uk)

Summary of opportunities
• Increased engagement with a broader
  range of partners.
• Increase in funding through greater
  understanding of the work we do and
  its impact.
• Conversation opener across the
  system, due to the ripples not just being
  physical-activity focused.

Cycling-proficiency

Scenario A: Standard Impact Evaluation

Ten people signed up to cycling
proficiency training; two were
confident in cycling on roads

Several people noticed that
local roads were not safe for
cyclists

Spoke to a local
 councillor about
these issues

Councilor working with the
council and local residents
to improve road quality

Ten people signed up
to cycling proficiency
training

Two people started a
local cycling group

Cycling group has 30 regular
members who meet twice per
week

Collected follow-up data
from seven people: five were
confident cycling on roads

Start

12 weeks later

1 year later

Scenario B: Ripple Effects Mapping Evaluation
Also in this series:

- Common purpose/shared value
- Understand the lived experience
- Distributed leadership
- Capacity and time to reflect
- Test and learn
- Power shift
- Having the right conversations
- Understanding the system you are trying to shape