Local Delivery Pilots

Community of Learning Workshops Write Up

Workshops held in June in Birmingham (11th), London (13th) and Leeds (14th)
Overview

• This slide deck is a story of what happened at the workshops: featuring the slides from the presentation; highlights from the discussion sessions; and a summary of the thoughts you left us with.

• 140 delegates attended from a range of organisations including local authorities, Active Partnerships, leisure trusts, community interest organisations, national governing bodies and national organisations. Delegates engaged with 22 representatives from the local delivery pilots.

• The aim of the workshops was to provide an open, honest and authentic environment for everyone attending to engage with the pilots and hear about the emerging learning and to share their own stories and experiences.
How were we feeling about the day

Birmingham
- intrigued
- curious
- interested
- optimistic
- excited
- ready
- open-minded
- forward
- enthusiastic
- ready

London
- excited
- interested
- curious
- good
- positive
- learning
- ready
- progress
- People
- colleagues
- talkative
- tired
- ready to go
- meeting
- energised
- exhausted
- forward
- involved
- feeling good
- sharing
- tip top
- really good
- excited
- long-distance commuter
- anticipatory
- optimistic
- listening
- optimistic
- mint
- really good
- nervous
- inquisitive
- feeling good
- involved
- fine thank you
- awake and raring to go
- feeling good
- forward
- slightly damp

Leeds
- interested
- intrigued
- curious
- local
- excited
- enthusiastic
- forward
- looking forward to it
- damp
- hungry
- learning
- interested
- local
- pump
- positive
- far pilots
- great
- innovative
- lancastrian
- keen
- good
- forward
- eagerness
- nice
- inquisitive
- wet
- active
- new
- anticipation
- energised
- teaching
- happy
- keen
- improved
- people
- great thanks and you
- pen
- pride
- happy
- anticipation
- energised
The Pilots’ story of now

• Delegates had discussions with the Pilots who shared updates about their place, who’s involved, their focus, what they’ve been up to and what’s coming next.

• A selection of the presentations given by the Pilots at the workshops can be found in the links below:
  • Essex LDP
  • Greater Manchester LDP
  • Doncaster LDP

• To read more about each Pilot, visit the our website to access the Pilot Pen Portraits. The latest versions will be uploaded late July 2019.
EXPLORING THE EMERGING LEARNING

Naomi Shearon
Strategic Lead, market Insight
Sport England
Our story of now
Growing a movement

Progress moves at the speed of trust

Holding our nerve

Bridging the empathy gap

Demonstrating value
Growing a movement
Growing a movement

• To get to a point when meaningful action is being taken by a range of people and organisations, where people trust each other and see that they’re working towards the same things, is not a quick fix.
• In the first six months of learning we observed that the majority of time was being spent on shaping and solidifying the structures that would enable the pilots to ‘work differently’ – e.g. steering groups, stakeholder workshops, system mapping sessions, Executive leadership groups etc.
• These new configurations have provided opportunities for new kinds of discussion to happen amongst new combinations of people.
• This revealed something very important very early! Whilst there was an implicit understanding of the role of people being physically active in their places – and how this actually drove multiple ambitions… it was absent from the work of the place (not in strategies, budgets, development or training plans, performance measures etc). This meant that all of the things and people who were influencing activity were not thinking about their role in that as much as they could be.
• In the last 6 months we have seen more focus on what creates energy and action amongst those groups of people – and experimentation around unlocking the energy and capacity of the people involved.
• This has resulted in more time being spent on building and fostering relationships than many of the pilots had anticipated.
• This in turn has led them to convert much of the development money so far into capacity – with a particular focus on bringing people in who can build authentic relationships with the wide range of people and organisations involved.
Growing a movement 2

• An interesting part of this has been importance of creating a shared sense of what matters – starting where people are and what matters to them, and not just getting them to agree to a pre-determined vision. Meeting people in their world and starting the conversation in terms of what they care about. Spending time on connecting people’s issues and energies to this opportunity to unlock potential.

• This has brought the issue of ‘communications’ into sharp focus. Originally seen as a peripheral consideration – or something that is done to ‘manage’ people/stakeholders – it has now become clear that the story you tell, and the way you choose to tell it, including the specific language you use needs to be flexible and compelling to a wide group of people. In fact this is emerging as some of the central work of the pilot.

• Pilots have also recognised that an authentic ‘messenger’ is as important as a strong message.

• Having a wide range of authentic relationships across the system has opened up a new challenge – how to keep those people connected to the ideas and each other? And how do you turn passion into individual or collective action?

• Pilots have recently been experimenting with a range of approaches to answer the question ‘what binds us to this idea, to this opportunity, and to each other? And how can we all feel we are doing something ‘joined up?’ This has included committing to ways of working together (including investment principles), co-producing ‘pointers for practice,’ and creating ‘brand identities’ together

• So we can see this balancing of tools to create energy and tools to harness that energy into some collective action that feels like progress to those involved.

• All this matters because pilots are realising that authentic relationships where people do real work together leads to a ‘multiplier effect’ – where the network can achieve much greater influence and impact than the LDP core team can alone.

• Tangible examples of real potential are now emerging which are – in turn – creating a reinforcing mindset shift from ‘it’s too big and complex’ to one of possibility and ‘we can do this’ which further energises.
“Progress moves at the speed of trust”
LDPs are uncovering the importance of investing time in working in ways that prioritise building trust in relationships and understanding before acting. Sometimes this seems like a slower course of action than just ‘getting things done’ but LDPs are seeing that the depth and range of possibilities that are emerging from foundations of trust hold greater potential than rushing into ‘more of the same.’

This is partially driven by a growing sense that trust is the key ingredient for true collaboration, and also partially because – as LDPS engage more widely – previous initiatives that have been experienced as letting people down, leaving people out and eroding trust has become a very clear blocker to relationships and progress in the present.

This has led to the pilots trying to find ways of signalling and sustaining non-traditional ways of working that give people the confidence that this is a real opportunity to do things differently. Examples include:

- Developing skills and capabilities around creating ‘thinking environments’ that focus on how meetings and events take place in order to build trust in the room and allow everyone to do their best thinking and make the most of what they can offer
- Creative engagement training and approaches – which engage people’s interest and curiosity through fun methods and empower people to come up with solutions and ideas
- Moving into the communities at the heart of the LDPs – i.e. physically situating the LDP teams in community locations to build up relationships, recognition and trust
- Recruiting LDP roles from within communities
- Co-producing ideas and voting on preferred investment approaches with stakeholders and communities
Bridging the empathy gap
Bridging the empathy gap

- This is an ongoing theme. One of the very first things that the pilots started to highlight was that many degrees of separation have emerged between the people who make decisions and take actions that effect communities, and the communities themselves.
- The ways to connect with residents and communities are often not well established or known by people running services. Mechanisms to connect with communities are diminishing.
- The way community consultation typically works is not providing people with a chance to meet people, hear different perspectives, and take decisions based on empathy and understanding - efforts to consult with communities have become typically narrow (in terms of topic) or distancing (in terms of methods).
- This means that the real root issues are often missed and so the solutions that are invested in aren’t often tackling the real barriers for people.
- The past 6 months have seen LDPs getting to grips with what community engagement means in reality, and understanding the implications and challenges inherent in truly doing this.
- This also brings us back to language and communication – pilots are talking about the need to check and reframe language and terminology: for instance, some of the language used with communities has been very deficit-framed (e.g. talking about deprived areas); has talked about ‘being active’ in a way that doesn’t resonate; uses obscure ‘professionalised’ language; or reflects internal structures and processes that don’t hold meaning in communities.
Holding our nerve
The people working on the LDPs have experienced increased pressure over the past six months. This has come from every direction - senior leadership, colleagues, from the community, and from (potential) partners.

Whilst large strides have been made on joint working to tackle some of the biggest barriers to activity for local residents and communities, there seems to be is an expectation in the system that Sport England funding will mean paying for the delivery of activities or ‘stuff’; and there is some unrest at a perceived lack of tangible activity.

There is also sometimes personal pressure to justify the time spent on LDP work when it is not a formally recognised part of someone’s job or their typical organisational structures.

The change in approach, and the associated discomfort felt when adopting it, reveals that the current system is characterised by a traditional ‘project management’ way of working, that places value on determining courses of action quickly, and judges whether time and resource has been effectively used in terms of what has been delivered.

It is taking a lot of focus and resilience to maintain the approach that the LDPs set out to do in the face of pressure to revert to the traditional and familiar ways of spending time and money.

It has been important for those involved in the LDPs to ‘hold their nerve’ in the face of pressure to justify the time invested in the LDP to date, to release funding or to ‘see things happening’ that makes it visible and obvious that investment is being made in the places.
Holding our nerve 2

• ‘The money’ can be a source of real energy and also a source of real tension in the system.
• The current system tends to place stakeholders in competition with each other: where there are competitive bids for funding, stakeholders are encouraged to argue for ‘their’ solutions.
• Bidding and tender processes also typically demand that stakeholders clearly define the specification that is to be delivered, and take responsibility for delivering. This sits in opposition to the more fluid, responsive and joined-up approaches that are needed to solve some of the biggest challenges.
• Even where communities are conscious that past solutions have been imposed on them and haven’t worked in the long run, they (or those that aim to represent them) still expect to see physical, tangible ‘stuff’ to appear quickly and there is unrest when these expectations are not met. This appears to be in response to a fear of missing out on opportunities for investment in the community, a feeling of responsibility from some community representatives to prove that something will come from people’s time and energy in consultation, and previous experiences of contributing to thinking and then feeling that those contributions did not pay off or result in changes that people could see or feel.
• This shows us two things that feel very important about work like this:
  • That it is necessary to find a way to balance the often longer-term value that is being created by working in a more joined up and systemic way with some of the shorter term value that people currently see as progress. This requires meeting people in their world enough to build and maintain trust in a way that doesn’t derail the deeper transformational work.
  • This also shows us that working in a more collaborative way doesn’t necessarily mean continuous harmony and agreement! It requires exploring multiple perspectives and finding ways through.
Demonstrating value
There has been a collective mindset shift within the Sport England team and the LDPs in terms of the role of ‘evaluation.’

The emphasis has shifted from ultimately proving the value of the LDPs ‘in the future’ to being able to talk about the value this week, this month, and so far.

It is becoming clear that an inevitability of working in a way that feels different and that doesn’t always produce the sorts of reassurances that the system is currently used to, means that there is a need to demonstrate value on a nearly constant basis in order to reassure people and maintain confidence and trust in the approach.

This is an evolution of a strong theme from the first 6 months – ‘counting what counts’

  o The world of measurement and evaluation has become a world of performance management and tracking accountability
  o This can create signals and unwritten rules to a system about what really matters, which doesn’t often fit with what people within that system would personally say really matters to them or the place.
  o The LDPs have been trying to think beyond measurement and evaluation to decide what ‘matters around here’ and then finding ways to understand if and how that is changing.

This has moved on in the last 6 months – chiefly because the initial concern was around what objective data would be needed to prove impact, and concerns about the role of gathering data in the signals that it sends to the system about what is important.
LDPs are increasingly able to ‘feel’ change in their places but are questioning how best to demonstrate change to others.

Additionally – the diversity in perceptions of ‘what is valuable’ is really becoming clear. Because the nature of the LDP work is to generate energy and channel the resource of a wide range of partners, it is reasonable that those partners will be able to see how their work is creating value in the way that they understand and measure it e.g. health vs. transport vs. planning etc.

Increasingly it is becoming important to talk to communities about what value is being created for them – which is typically a very different sort of ‘measure’ than the way national or local government understand it.

At the moment – this is resulted in a growing enthusiasm for some concepts / ways of thinking and working:

- ‘Process learning’ - both as a means of reflecting on how things are changing and identifying learning,
- Gathering and telling stories - personal stories that help to communicate the purpose of the LDP and demonstrate its value
- Increased emphasis and concern about short and medium term indicators (or ‘indications’ as someone helpfully re-framed!)

LDPs have identified a challenge in doing this, of having the discipline to set aside time for capturing process learnings on an ongoing basis; and of finding techniques to make it easier to do so.

We are working increasingly together to figure out how to demonstrate value with the LDPs. Increasing sense that this is a challenge that we will need to work together on – rather than as a set of individual pilots.
Open Space discussions

There was a wide variety of discussions ranging across:

• Bridging the empathy gap and empathy mapping
• Telling stories
• Building trust
• Holding our nerve
• Communications, branding and engagement
• Collaborating with NGBs
• Ideas that can help the pilots from others in the room
• Health and social prescribing
• Doing LDP without the money
TELLING STORIES
BUILDING NARRATIVES

WHY?
- influence
- identifying good practice
- reframing conversations to shift stories, campaigns, sharing people’s experiences
- learning - abcd
- enabling people to collaborate

Questions
- practical steps to build the movement (via stories)
- creating atmosphere to share
- using the stories to grow the movement

STORY OF ME - STORY OF NEW STORY OF US:
- compelling
- authentic
- data, stats - clear call to action
- details, sensing, feelings, emotions

DOING THE LDP’S WITHOUT
- walking manual
- time to have trust
- focusing the conversations
- quick wins, harmony
- build the relationships
- involve the system
- thinking in a smaller area
- plain English
- policy changes is the most effective form of money
- removing bureaucratic signs
- make the case

MANAGE EXPECTATION
- build into planning
- strategies
- play streets
- voluntary sector
- build into messaging

THE CONVERSATIONS
- build
- narrative with key
- use for writing ball games
the conversations

BRIDGING EMPATHY

Constantly Evolving
How do we ask the question?

The Gap Between People Lives Inclusive

Human Behaviour

Common Purpose

Building Trust

Listening?

Reflective Listening

Creating Engagement

Speaking to other Engagement

What would you do?

Embedded in Community

Engagement on their own Street

Think about the person's Language

More joined working with?
the conversations

Collaborating with NGB’s (partners)

* Other COL missions NGB’s attendance?
* Understanding the community and using what works...
* Funding / Cash Flow: Pilot... Investment?
* Table Tennis England flexibility
* Capability of OTHERs? Varied.....
* What’s your local not national offer?
  * How do we create the conditions to have a conversations between self...? and not just between?
  * What’s sport’s role in the Pilots?
* Different departments / roles / risk / contacts in NGB’s?
  * Capacity... space... flexibility... of NGB’s?
  * Humility... get rid of structures/products... how can you help support that community through those that know the community... aligning yourself to that community? Not being precious about brand... previous... partners... re-establishing relationships...
* COL per partnership
* Can we use NGB’s... Local Delivery Team meeting...
Reflections and actions
Reflections and actions

• At the end of the workshops delegates were asked to think about and respond to two questions:

  • What has resonated with you most today?

  • What will you go away and do?
Reflections and actions: what resonated Common Themes

• Trust is a key component of changing things in peoples lives and driving change
• We need to listen to communities and their needs
• Don’t start the conversation with physical activity or being active. Change the conversation, talk about what matters to people
• Clear that the Pilots are knowledgeable about their places
• Many of our challenges are shared across lots of different types of places – we can learn from each other
• We need to work across organisations and systems
• Learning is a continuous process
• We need to be iterative
Reflections and actions: what will you go away and do common themes

- Reflect on and share the learning with partners and stakeholders
- Keep enquiring and asking questions, it provokes discussion
- Keep communicating - talk more to communities, partners, leaders
- Stay open minded and really listen
- Build a clear narrative of the work we are doing, including storytelling. Stories are powerful
- Get in touch with the Pilots – visit some Pilot places with similar challenges to build on the learning and sharing experiences
- Review our engagement approach with communities – reframe the questions
The Local Delivery Pilots and Sport England appreciate the time delegates spent with us at the workshops.

In our webinar on 3 July we gave a short reprise of the exploring the learning section delivered during the workshops. You can register to watch the webinar on demand [here](#). If you have colleagues you think might be interested in hearing about the expanding learning please pass the information on.

If you are reading this write up having not attended a workshop but are interested in joining the LDP Community of Learning you can contact us at [LDPCommunityofLearning@sportengland.org](mailto:LDPCommunityofLearning@sportengland.org)
Thank you!