

A report by Carnegie UK Trust

# A shareholders' guide to rural services



  
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This report is the outcome of action research undertaken by Carnegie UK Trust's Rural Programme and was authored by Kate Braithwaite with assistance from participants at Carnegie's Rural Convention held at Hill Holt Wood in November 2010. The Rural Team gave invaluable feedback, Geoff Brown copy-edited the text and Kirsty Tait managed production.



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## Introduction

Good access to a wide range of services is one characteristic of a sustainable community. Over the last decade, however, rural areas have experienced a gradual withdrawal of services due to the pressures of centralisation – and serious cuts in local government finances are looming. There is a growing awareness that beyond an entitlement to essential services, rural communities have an important role to play in determining what else can be provided. Further, we have started to think about residents less as passive recipients of services but more as **shareholders**, with public sector leaders ‘the Board’.

Evidence gathered during Carnegie’s Rural Action Research Programme (2005–2009) has enabled us to have a deeper understanding of the ingredients of successful community involvement in the delivery of services. Since then, we have been working intensively in rural areas: areas that face many well-documented challenges, mostly related to geography and demographics (islands; remote areas; small, ageing and dispersed communities) and low-paid (often seasonal) employment. We believe that rural areas will provide a test bed for innovative solutions to service delivery in neighbourhoods everywhere. Rural communities in some places are already contributing actively to the planning, managing, delivery, evaluation and monitoring of services; this against a chorus of alarming headlines in local newspapers about the likely impact of cuts.

In this publication, we share ideas from the pioneers about the potential of community organisations and local social enterprises to respond to the services challenge, looking in detail at associated funding, skills, procurement and regulatory issues. We will challenge the assumption that services have to be provided in the way that they have since the creation of the Welfare State. We aim to share these ideas in this policy booklet with public sector commissioning bodies, social enterprise service providers and communities.

Reports in the local press are noting the level of public sector cuts that must be implemented over the next few years. The figures are huge – but what do they really mean?

The squeeze on public sector funding streams is forcing a rapid assessment by councils and other bodies of the services that can be afforded. Heads of Departments are required to produce service reviews, demonstrating where savings can be found. This has been the overwhelming imperative. These managers have to juggle a number of questions: how can I best look after the interests of my staff team? Is my own job safe? Will we be working from a different location the other side of the county? How will the unions react to my plans? What are the knock-on effects of my decision for these communities? It would be a very natural response to try and preserve as much of the existing way of doing things but such is the scale of cuts that this might not be possible. There has scarcely been time to simultaneously consider how services can cost less but be even better from the perspective of the residents, but this is what is required. Furthermore, the services that are needed in future may not look very like services today.



## Better shape up: how prepared is your public sector?

During the past few years, the public sector in all areas has undergone reforms that should mean residents are better informed about service delivery. Many improvements have centred on a more joined-up approach, with different parts of the public sector working together in partnership. Learning lessons from the successes and failures of public sector partnerships (community strategies, Local Area Agreements, Total Place et al) and their role in determining service priorities is a good starting point for our investigation.

Readers may be familiar with the bewildering range of partnerships that have been brought together over the last few years to promote 'joined-up' thinking when it comes to service delivery. These include Local Strategic Partnerships and Community Planning Partnerships. What have these initiatives achieved? Joined up thinking between public sector organisations?

There have been attempts to show how an inter-agency approach to service delivery needs of a particular area can be considered in a holistic way. For example, Total Place was an initiative in England that looked at how a 'whole area' approach to public services might lead to better services at less cost. It sought to identify and avoid overlap and duplication between (mainly public sector) organisations – hopefully delivering both service improvement and efficiency at the local level. Total Place introduced management concepts that will be very familiar to the private sector into use in the public sphere. In order to work at all, Total Place required leadership at the highest level within public bodies and a strong commitment to work together with communities to find new solutions. But the buy-in has to extend through organisations to middle managers who are tussling with the need to cut costs.

Some have criticised Total Place as a local authority driven, 'command and control' exercise. But this new spirit of collaboration may extend beyond the public sector, as developments in Suffolk demonstrate:

### Suffolk Leadership Collaborative

The Suffolk Collaborative is a new grouping of 22 chief executives of public, private and voluntary sector organisations in Suffolk. This includes councils, NHS trusts, police, businesses and umbrella organisations.

The Collaborative was formed as a project to develop collaboration across organisations in Suffolk. The Collaborative is bringing an inquiry style of learning and strategic leadership to the priorities set out in the community strategy.

The following themes are being explored:

- Helping people to help themselves;
- Connecting communities;
- Demonstrating Suffolk's aspirations;
- Simplifying public services through collaboration.

Watch! 'The Lives We Lead' on YouTube  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=pL5HytMQSnc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pL5HytMQSnc)

Our action research suggests that these sorts of partnership structures have been successful in bringing together different public sector bodies (particularly education and social services departments and the NHS) and there are tangible outcomes such as organisations sharing a Chief Executive Officer. So progress has been made in some areas. However, there is a huge amount of bureaucracy in public services and our action research suggests that community engagement in the planning of services is not yet all that it could be.

## Spotting a successful partnership? How well is your area doing?

- The average man or woman in the street will know of the partnership's existence
- Community leaders will have been actively involved in determining the priorities of the partnership
- The partnership has a clear vision for the work which is widely available
- Publishes an implementation plan with SMART goals (**S** – specific **M** – measurable **A** – achievable **R** – realistic **T** – time-based)
- Reports back to the general public on the achievements
- Achieves the active participation of the private sector, who feel integral to the success of the strategy
- Achieves the active participation of third sector representatives and through them the wider community and third sector who feel integral to the success of the strategy

The good news is that public bodies are getting better and better at community engagement: these matters are considered in our sister publication on community led planning,<sup>1</sup> where we demonstrate how important meaningful engagement with the community really is. We are not talking about 'consultation' (I've got a problem, here is my solution, what do you think about my solution?) but a genuine exercise in collecting the views of residents.

## Who pulls the strings of local partnership?

During the last decade the 'target culture' has required partnerships to measure their performance against a wide range of criteria. This culture has been pushed by central government in an attempt to drive up service delivery standards.

Were the public at large aware of these targets? Were these targets helpful in securing better outcomes for citizens? If parents looked at children's test results and noted their school was under-performing, was there anything that they could do about it when, especially in rural areas, there is a monopoly provider?

Should the partnership be accountable to central government or local people? In England there is a noticeable move away from 'Big Government'. It is now up to local areas to determine priorities:

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*'From today, the Government are putting local areas fully in control of their local area agreements. This enables local authorities and their partners to amend or drop any of the current 4,700 Local Area Agreement targets without needing ministerial agreement. Where they choose to keep the targets, central Government will have no role in monitoring them. I will also not be requiring local authorities to prepare an LAA from April 2011, once the current agreements expire'.*

**The Rt. Hon Eric Pickles MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, 13th October 2010**

This was a bit of an overstatement by the Secretary of State as some of the targets are driven by European legislation and cannot be dropped. However, in the move from a 'statist' policy to one of 'localism' is there an opportunity for services to be tailored to local priorities or will standards slip in a postcode lottery?

## Where does all the money go?

Partnership working provides an opportunity for the public sector to assess the total investment in an area (such as a county) and to gauge the benefits of this expenditure for residents. When this exercise is carried out, the results involve eye-watering amounts of money!

<sup>1</sup> Carnegie UK Trust (2010) *The Power of the Plan*

## Case study: Calling and Counting Cumbria

The Leadership Centre for Local Government and members of the Cumbria Strategic Partnership were keen to challenge the status quo and encourage more effective joint working by refocusing activity on real people in real places, developing a more accurate understanding of their needs. **Calling Cumbria** took a wide range of (mainly public sector) colleagues out into the community, and in some cases out of their comfort zone, to hear stories from residents, and from voluntary and community sector workers about their lives and work. This led to broad discussion about how services are currently delivered and highlighted that in many cases there could be a better way.

**Counting Cumbria** provided hard evidence about how much public sector money is spent in Cumbria and by whom but most importantly led to questions about local accountability, potential duplication and opportunities to debate efficiency.

Fewer than half a million people live in Cumbria. Total public expenditure in Cumbria in 2006–7 was £7.1bn, which is £14,200 per head. Of that little over a quarter, £1.9bn, was controlled by or directed through Cumbrian bodies. Of national government's £5.2bn, non-departmental public bodies spent £2.3bn: more than Cumbrian bodies.

The largest areas of aggregate expenditure were social protection £1.5bn, health £880m, economic affairs £700m (excluding £1.8bn by the Nuclear Decommissioning Agency), environmental protection £690m, public order and safety £600m and education £540m. The largest areas of expenditure by Cumbrian bodies were health £670m and education £410m. European direct expenditure (through ERDF Objectives 2 and 3) was about £10m.

Taxation raised in Cumbria was about £3.1bn, of which £2.9bn was by national means and £200m local.

Source: *Cumbria Strategic Partnership*

An appreciation of the public money flows within just one county in England prompted many questions:

- What outcomes were achieved for the money? Was there a measurable improvement in GDP? Were more businesses or jobs created? Did people live healthier lives?

- Could the money be spent in a way that achieved better results? Are these options ever considered?
- How much say do people in Cumbria have over the public money spent in their county?
- Are the needs of particular groups – for example, young people – well recognised in the way the money is spent?
- Where many organisations serve a particular purpose, are their separate administrative overheads justified? Cumbria was particularly well endowed with regeneration and business support agencies!
- How strong is the link between expenditure in an area and the capacity to initiate meaningful change?

It is clear, now that the public sector spending cuts have been announced, that there is an imperative that these questions be answered in every part of the UK and Ireland.

**We conclude that a good starting point for any re-engineering of service delivery is a 'whole-system' analysis:**

- What financial resources are currently available from national, regional and local sources?
- Who determines how this resource can be applied?
- What services are being delivered and by whom? Is there any overlap or convergence?
- What do residents expect of service delivery?
- Where there are many calls upon limited resources, what are the priorities (as far as residents are concerned) for expenditure locally?

## Conducting a review of services and considering options (and just what are the options?)

Following a process of collaboration with public sector bodies, the private and third sector and the community, the next task is a thorough review of each service to examine the way in which services are provided and also to ensure that they are of appropriate quality, they meet local people's needs and they provide value for money. We suggest that there are five steps involved in the review:

- **Step 1:** Challenging why the service is being provided
- **Step 2:** How good are our services? Could they be better?
- **Step 3:** Engaging (meaningfully) with taxpayers, service users, potential service users/ providers and stakeholders about service delivery
- **Step 4:** Develop options for service delivery
- **Step 5:** Services of the future

A large crowd of people is gathered outdoors, possibly at a public event or festival. The background shows a modern building with a glass facade and white structural elements. In the foreground, several people are visible, including a woman with long brown hair in a white top and a woman with blonde hair in a blue jacket. A large green circle is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing white text. A smaller blue circle is partially visible behind the green one, and a pinkish-red circle is at the top. The overall scene is bright and sunny.

**Step 1:**  
**Challenging why the service  
is being provided**

A first step might be to ask if it is a statutory duty to provide this service or is the service provided at the discretion of the public body? The public probably expect schools to be provided, social care to be available and rubbish to be collected, but it is quite difficult for local authorities to know exactly what services are mandatory, as Buckinghamshire County Council found out:

*Research carried out early on in the review identified that very little information is currently available about the statutory duties of Councils. A number of organisations were contacted for more information (including the Communities and Local Government department) but it appears that a conclusive list of statutory functions does not currently exist.*

**A Review into Statutory, Mandatory and Discretionary Services at Buckinghamshire County Council – November 2009**

Even where it seems that the provision of a service is mandatory, the level to which the service must be provided is often unclear. For instance, restaurants do need to be inspected on hygiene grounds but the individual department may determine the number of inspection visits. Over time, it is hard to separate fact from practice!

With this lack of clarity, it is possible for different areas to experience very different levels of service, from the Easy Jet ‘no frills’ approach to the gold-plated service.

*Residents living in Barnet, north London will be able to pay more for improved services, in a move inspired by airlines that forced down the cost of air travel by placing surcharges on non-essential items. A council spokesman has dubbed the new policy ‘EasyCouncil’. As part of the radical approach, people who pay a small fee will have their planning applications seen more quickly. The council is already pushing ahead with plans to give elderly residents a greater say in how their care budgets are spent. ‘Some things will be cheap and cheerful and in other areas we will provide complete services,’ Mike Freer, the council leader and Tory parliamentary candidate for Finchley and Golders Green, told The Guardian. ‘This is not about rolling back the frontiers of the state, but about targeting our interventions.’*

**Matthew Moore, Daily Telegraph, 28 Aug 2009**



## The example of adult care

Many people will never have needed to call upon adult care services and will therefore be unaware of how services are currently provided. What actually happens when a family, for example, with someone with Alzheimer's, who is otherwise fit, requires some support? When a local authority becomes aware of a person who may need social care, an assessment is carried out. The assessment considers the desired outcome of social care for the individual and eligibility criteria will be applied (for example, will the independence of the individual be threatened without social care?). A care plan will then be drawn up and consideration given, if relevant, to the circumstances of a carer. In order to promote choice, the local authority may arrange directly or through Direct Payments<sup>2</sup> access to a range of services:

- Residential accommodation
- Assistance and facilities in the home
- Social work support and advice
- Day centres or other facilities in the community
- Social, leisure, communication, education and training activities

What is becoming clear is that in future expectations about the level of service available will have to be adjusted to take into account the growing level of demand and the reduction in the budget available. There does need to be a national debate about the real experiences of people in accessing adult care services. Take, for example, Maria, aged 95 and becoming more and more frail and looked after by her daughter (aged 74 and suffering from angina). The local authority arranges help in getting Maria up and washed in the morning, fed at lunchtime and put to bed at night. Each visit lasts around 10 minutes, provided by a succession of different care workers. Sometimes 'bedtime' is 5.30 pm, dependent upon shift patterns<sup>3</sup>. With an ageing population, more and more people will need to access care services. Is this how we wish to spend our later years?

It would be a big mistake to assume that even now, the state is the major provider of social care. Carers already provide services that would otherwise have

to be provided by the state. The last census showed that there are nearly 6 million carers in the UK. This is 10% of the total population – a figure that will grow in our aging society. In fact, family, friends and relatives (increasingly elderly themselves) provide most health and community care. This care is worth an estimated £87 billion per year – nearly as much as total spending on the NHS. In this caring mix, the 2001 census identified 175,000 young carers, although this figure may be an underestimate. In research undertaken for the BBC, one in 12 of the 4,029 schoolchildren asked by the BBC said they had caring responsibilities - such as dressing, washing or bathing family members. If the survey reflects the UK as a whole, it would mean there are about 700,000 young carers in the UK<sup>4</sup>.

It is, therefore, important that there are services in support of the carer too: advice and counselling; domiciliary care, including help with personal care and domestic tasks; respite/breaks in the home and in appropriate residential settings; help with disablement equipment and home adaptations; meals and help with laundry.

The local authority may be a provider of adult care services, but the service may be outsourced<sup>5</sup> from the private or third sectors. Standards are regulated (e.g. in England by the Care Quality Commission or The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority in Northern Ireland) but as the cuts bite, service users may not be able to access all the support they expect. As it becomes more expensive to deliver services in rural areas, users will increasingly be expected to travel to centralised provision in towns.

So are there solutions to the delivery of statutory services that are particularly suited to rural areas? Direct Payments allow for services to be purchased by the user instead of receiving them directly from the local council. Sometimes this might involve the user becoming an employer of someone providing care services. The availability of Direct Payments presents some opportunities for users to develop local solutions, but the move to become an employer needs to be supported, as is demonstrated in the Cheshire case study.

<sup>2</sup> Direct Payments involves money being paid by a council to a person to purchase the social care services they are eligible to receive. It is intended that using Direct Payments might enable people to have greater choice, control and flexibility as to how their care needs are met, allowing people to live more independent lives.

<sup>3</sup> Evidence submitted to Carnegie's Rural Action Research Programme

<sup>4</sup> BBC/ University of Nottingham (2010)

<sup>5</sup> Outsourcing is often viewed as involving the contracting out of a service - commonly one previously performed in-house - to an external provider

## Case Study: Cheshire Centre for Independent Living Action Research

Cheshire Centre for Independent Living undertook action research for Carnegie UK Trust with a sample of 362 disabled people who were in receipt of Direct Payments to contract their own care provision.

They found that many disabled people were interested in working with their peers to provide employment for trusted local people in the role of Personal Assistants. However many found becoming an employer a daunting prospect but welcomed the opportunity of some support to achieve this outcome. Prior to this work, very little peer support existed for those in receipt of Direct Payments in Cheshire and what did was to be found mainly in the towns.

In addition, engagement of Personal Assistants from outside the disabled peoples' immediate circle, proved challenging. People (both the disabled and

their potential employees) would benefit from knowing more about engagement opportunities, and from having the ability to 'package up' jobs from more than one person for the benefit of all parties.

Cheshire Centre for Independent Living called upon central government to adopt the proposals contained in the Chartered Institute of Taxation's Low Incomes Tax Reform Group's report 'Independent Living; Direct Payments and the Tax System' (January 2008.) They considered that councils should allow extra time for Personal Assistants to accompany disabled people to Peer Support meetings, and include this as part of their care package assessment. Councils should give consideration to and address any difference in take-up rates across their area with a view to achieving the expressed preference of individual customers. Finally, they recommended that a measure to benchmark independent living as being able to live apart from one's parent(s) be introduced.

This action research by Cheshire Centre for Independent Living provided us with evidence of the real potential of direct payments, particularly in a rural area:

Benefits and Drawbacks of Direct Payments	
Benefits	Drawbacks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freedom to spend money on the services that matter most to the individual</li> <li>• Ability to 'top-up' services from own resources</li> <li>• Potential to create local employment opportunities for Personal Assistants</li> <li>• Employment of local people, known and trusted by the employer</li> <li>• Creation of peer support groups to share employment responsibilities but also to provide social contact</li> <li>• There is an opportunity for potential Personal Assistants to work together to share training, administration and regulatory costs</li> <li>• An injection of finance into the local economy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There may be no one locally who is interested in becoming a Personal Assistant (especially in some rural areas where working age people have effectively been driven out by lack of affordable housing)</li> <li>• Providing holiday and sick leave cover may be problematic</li> <li>• It is expensive to provide support for those in receipt of Direct Payments to employ people</li> <li>• Individual Personal Assistants do not have access to the range of support and training and professional development opportunities that employees of large organisations do</li> </ul>

This examination of the provision of just one 'statutory' service – adult care – demonstrates that there are already wide variations in the experience of the service in different parts of the country and that these may be greater in future as cuts bite. Furthermore, the trend to greater centralisation of service provision in towns is likely to continue. The experience of users of Direct Payments may provide rural residents with a possible solution to tailor-make services and provide clues for the future provision of other rural services.

## What about discretionary services?

We have seen in relation to adult social care how difficult it is for councils to budget for services that are judged to be essential. During times of cuts, 'discretionary' services such as community centres, parks and Christmas lights begin to look like luxuries we can no longer afford. What principles might guide decision making about discretionary services? We suggest that discretionary services should be assessed according to seven criteria:

- 1 Is the target group accessing the service or are 'undeserving' groups benefiting most from the service?
- 2 Are the service users particularly vulnerable?
- 3 Does this service help prevent additional costs downstream?
- 4 Centralised or dispersed service provision?
- 5 Is there scope for greater use of new technology in service delivery?
- 6 What is the age profile of users?
- 7 Unintended consequences of the withdrawal of discretionary services

## Is the target group accessing the service or are 'undeserving' groups benefiting from the service?

There has been some debate about rights to universal services, many of which are under threat during a period of cuts. Attention is being drawn to beneficiaries of services who are in some way 'undeserving' because they are in a position to pay for their own provision.

Sure Start is a multi-billion pound programme, introduced under the last Labour Government to provide more help with childcare for parents of toddlers. Sure Start was intended to help tackle child poverty but is an area-based programme, which has the advantage that services within a Sure Start area are universally available, thereby limiting any stigma that may accrue from individuals being targeted. There

are now thousands of centres around the country offering help with child care and toddler development. Early research into the impact of Sure Start indicated that it was families with greater 'social capital' who were able to take advantage and benefit from the provision and that the most disadvantaged families were even negatively impacted<sup>6</sup>.

Later research suggests that benefits accrue to all families but these are modest.<sup>7</sup>



<sup>6</sup> The National Evaluation of Sure Start Research team (2005) *Early Impacts of Sure Start Local Programmes on Children and Families*

<sup>7</sup> The National Evaluation of Sure Start Research Team (2008) *The Impact of Sure Start Local Programmes on Three Year Olds and Their Families*

Prime Minister David Cameron has said he is a big supporter of Sure Start, but complained that middle class parents were using it when it was targeted at poorer families:

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*'We have got to try to make sure we are focusing on the people who need help the most. There is a criticism sometimes with Sure Start that a great new centre is established and the 'sharp-elbowed' middle classes, like my wife and me, get in there and get all the services. We need to make sure the money will be helping the people whose disadvantage is the greatest. It can't just be a service that everyone can jump in to and get advantage out of. It is really there for those who are suffering the greatest disadvantage.'*

As yet, there is no consensus yet about the services that we should all enjoy and those that should be targeted.

## Are the service users particularly vulnerable?

One way of challenging why a service is provided is to consider whether the users are particularly vulnerable.

When funds are tight it makes sense to prioritise expenditure on service users who are most vulnerable. This might be in relation to income, ability to work or to find work, to those experiencing ill health or some form of disability or having responsibility as a carer or simply because of age.

Once the target groups are identified, any expenditure has to secure multiple benefits: costs associated with long-term and persistent exclusion are saved, wider priority outcomes (such as reducing re-offending and tackling unemployment) are achieved; the negative effects of a small number of highly excluded individuals on the wider community are reduced; and joint working with service providers such as probation service, mental health trusts and with the third sector is improved.

## Does this service help prevent additional costs downstream?

Sometimes small investments applied now go a long way to reduce expensive interventions by the state down the line. For example, the modest cost of a home bathing and nail cutting service (such as might be provided by a local branch of Age UK) can help a frail older person enjoy independent living at home for a longer period of time. The alternative would mean the early provision of residential care. In this case, it is fairly easy to predict cost savings of preventative action. The beneficial effects of other interventions are far more difficult to quantify and therefore to justify. This is particularly the case with young people's activities, where it is difficult to say with certainty that this crime or that teenage pregnancy did not happen because of the dance group that was established or the advice on drugs that was given.

Carnegie's Rural Programme worked with Pulteneytown People's Project (PPP) in the north of Scotland which examined some of the benefits of preventative action. PPP provides innovative support for young people - some who are at risk: who are not attending school or who have been in trouble with the police. Imaginative learning programmes are tailor-made to the individual and these are often work related, even for school age youngsters. The long term outcomes for these young people have been positive, demonstrating that support mechanisms outside the public sector, that are rooted in a local community can prove to be very effective.

<http://www.pulteneytownpeoplesproject.org.uk>

Carnegie's Rural Programme has also learned a great deal from the experience of another great social enterprise. On the border of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire sits the ancient woodland Hill Holt Wood, where an entrepreneurial approach to forestry management has created a thriving and sustainable business with many social and environmental benefits. The wood was purchased in 1995 by Nigel and Karen Lowthrop and has gone from being a damaged piece of land to a sustainable and successful business. Hill Holt educates and trains at-risk young people who have been excluded from school, giving them the lasting benefits of education, practical skills, the ability to work in a team, increased confidence and time spent outdoors. The training skills include eco-construction, the manufacture of wooden furniture and the installation of water purification systems.

The impact of Hill Holt Wood has been enormous. The Rural Beat team leader of the Lincolnshire police was impressed enough to write a letter extolling the results in April 2008:

*'During the last year the anti-social behaviour and criminal damage in our policing team area has reduced by at least 25%. Members of the community have seen joint agency working as vital and this has contributed to the level of service they have received. Without the assistance from staff from Hill Holt Wood we wouldn't be achieving such high standards*

<http://hillholtwood.com>

These stories provide an important lesson during a time when public spending is being cut. Small investments now in providing discretionary services may prevent the need for the state to pick up the tab for serious crime and health problems down the line.

However, those determining how scarce resources are spent now do need a better way of assessing the benefits of such discretionary expenditure in terms of positive outcomes over the medium to long term.

## Centralised or dispersed service provision?

There are particular challenges associated with service delivery in remote and dispersed communities. These are well documented and understood; lack of critical mass means that fixed facilities (post offices, doctors' surgeries) are expensive to sustain. People who need to access these services therefore have to travel long distances, incurring additional expenditure, even if transport is available.

There is always an outcry when a bus service is to be axed or if post office hours are to be cut. However, the loudest voices are not always regular or even occasional users, hence the 'ghost bus' syndrome – services that have won a reprieve but fail to sustain a customer base.

## The case of the Post Office

During the 'Network Change Programme', the previous UK Government's initiative to modernise the Post Office network and put it on a more financially stable footing for the future, approximately 2500 branches were closed – representing 20% of those post offices remaining in the UK. The changes were judged to be necessary because the network was losing £4 million every week.



Threats to rural post offices evoke an emotive response:

*For many people in rural areas the post office is the symbol of the life of the village itself. This may be particularly so if the pub or shop have already closed down. The building provides a focal point for social interaction, news and gossip. The sub-postmistress or master can be the eyes and ears of the community, noticing when a regular customer doesn't come in to collect their pension or offering an opportunity for conversation to people who may have few remaining social contacts.*

*"If it was not there the village would die." However, whilst participants (in the consultation workshops) were generally supportive of both the post office network and their local service, they were not always frequent users of these services. As noted, some may use larger branches. But many services previously exclusive to the post office are now available elsewhere – for example, through the Internet. Some felt that the Internet and other technologies would contribute to a further decline in post office usage.*

**Commission for Rural Communities (2007)  
The Future of the Rural Post Office Network**

This example provides a real challenge to service planners and providers; residents profess a strong attachment and importance to 'iconic' services, yet in reality many people just do not use them. High-income groups often choose to obtain services from nearby towns or cities or on-line (e.g. visiting supermarkets, downloading movies). The loss of these potential customers erodes the viability of local businesses in rural communities. Yet the real beneficiaries are residents who cannot travel easily to access facilities in town and who are of a generation not acquainted with online services.

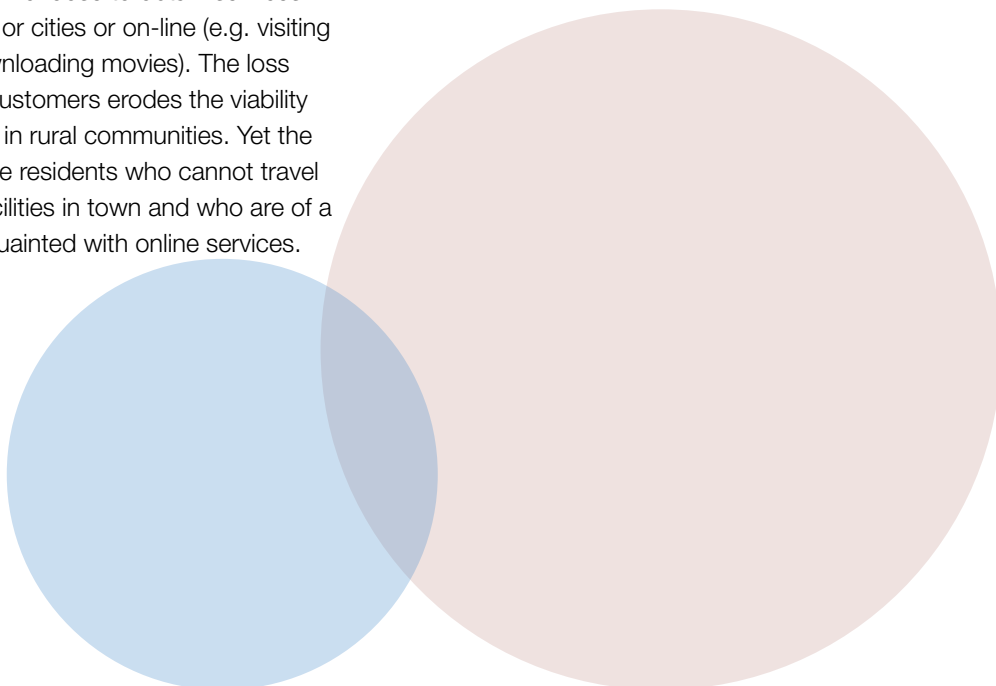
There are many reasons why more people do not use rural services like the local post office:

- Inconvenient opening times (e.g. open when many people are out at work)
- More convenient provision of a range of services elsewhere (e.g. supermarkets, online)
- Limited range of services or goods available
- Higher cost of goods
- Public transport that runs at inconvenient times to places where people do not want to go.

There are also some reasons why rural services like the village shop or post office thrive in some places:

- Services are tailored to the working lives of residents (for example home deliveries for those who are out at work)
- Multiple services under one roof (returning your library book, picking up a prescription, buying a last minute bottle of wine, buying pantomime tickets)
- Loyalty rewarded (incentivise frequent visits)
- Having a stake in the success of the service through the purchase of shares or bonds
- Volunteers work alongside employees
- Suggestions from customers are acted upon

Village post offices need the support of Government (in ensuring a portfolio of new and existing services to be delivered via these outlets) and of local people (as customers, co-owners, volunteers) combined with entrepreneurial managers in order to thrive. However, it seems from the previous quote that many potential users seem to be hankering after the opportunity for human interaction rather than postage stamps. This observation is explored further in step five of this report.



## Is there scope for greater use of new technology in service delivery?

Carnegie UK Trust's Rural Programme worked with the renowned Alston Cybermoor to explore the potential for use of technology, especially of the Internet, to help deliver services to the public. We concluded that there is huge potential to deliver services to rural communities using ICT – saving residents' time and expense in travelling to council offices and allowing citizens to carry out transactions at times that are convenient to them – 24/7.

The infrastructure to deliver these services is now broadly in place across the rural UK (although even in 2010, there are still 'not-spots'): there are increasing numbers of community-run websites which focus on local news, events and information that are capable of delivering relevant content to their area. UK online centres and local ICT training initiatives already provide rural residents with the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills to access on-line services. Broadband has now reached 60% of rural households.<sup>8</sup>

However there are also challenges associated with online provision of services: how do you target the 36% of households who do not normally access the Internet?

Communities have demonstrated that this can be achieved through the provision of interesting local content (such as reminiscences about local history and news on local events) that attracts older people and other users, encouraging them to use the Internet for the first time. Since May 2009 over 1.9 million Britons have come online for the first time and 53 per cent of them are over 50.<sup>9</sup> Over 50s – dubbed 'silver surfers', now make up the largest demographic of British people who are online. The most popular sites among silver surfers are about health, travel, cooking and genealogy and the rise in web use has also seen an increase in traffic to sites such as health site RealAge, video site Flixxy and community site Saga. It seems the private

sector has already seen the potential of delivering services to this demographic! This level of Internet use can act as platform for the delivery of other on-line services by e-government. Perhaps there is a need for peripatetic 'cyber-mentors' for those who do not yet use the Internet – and hardware such as the iPad is easy to use. Apps are being developed to measure heart rate – useful for GPs to keep an eye on patients at a distance – and it is difficult to anticipate just how far reaching future developments will be.

There are many benefits of capturing the requirements of a community on one website – allowing residents and service providers easy access to information. The website can be used to collect views on how particular services can be delivered (to shape plans for collecting rubbish or prioritising highways work for example) and for booking GP appointments. The website is owned and controlled by the community and provides a space where people feel comfortable in commenting on the services that are provided. This instant reaction by a community regarding the gritting of roads or the reliability of the bus service can be a bit un-nerving for service providers but it is a powerful mechanism to register customer satisfaction or disenchantment.

There are certain preconditions for community websites to work well: a cross section of residents in a geographic community need to develop their capacity to publish content and therefore to create a sense of ownership. It also requires the public sector to meet the challenge of working differently and more openly. Providing these are in place, engaging people about service delivery, ensuring they are well briefed and managing a transparent process are ideally suited to the web. Public sector providers need to be aware that residents increasingly access information on websites (like Mumsnet, for example) and therefore are increasingly savvy about service delivery standards.

<sup>8</sup> Alston Cybermoor and Carnegie UK Trust (2008) *Effective Rural Service Delivery through Community-Led Websites*

<sup>9</sup> UK Online Management (UKOM) and Nielsen (2010)

*'The Cybermoor site has shown that there is a huge appetite to discuss the delivery of local services in a local forum, be they delivered by the public, voluntary or private sector. It gives the chance for those providing services and implementing policy to educate residents, set expectations and improve delivery. However, this approach requires a step change in how consultation takes place – rather than being controlled centrally, feedback is qualitative and structured by the community as featured in the Cluetrain Manifesto <http://www.cluetrain.com> In a 2 month period, there were 19,053 visitors (population 1128) and 871 contributors to community discussions about the delivery of local services, planning issues and refuse collection in Alston. This dwarfs representation at public meetings to discuss the same issues.'*

#### **Daniel Heery, Alston Cybermoor**

Experience from Alston Cybermoor suggests the following benefits of community websites:

- Instant feedback for providers on a variety of services
- Promoting a safer neighbourhood – in Alston, residents have access to online 'cyber cop'
- Events calendar – promoting clubs and societies, recruiting new members and making newcomers feel at home
- Setting up online businesses thus overcoming remote location
- Weather reports and instant information about driving conditions (the road over Hartside to Alston is often the first road to be shut when it snows!)
- Local directory of businesses
- Arranging car-share lifts to work or for shopping or booking the community minibus
- Dating agency – unattached guys from Alston attracted national press attention when they sought girlfriends over the web
- Small ads – for sale/exchange/wanted
- E-newsletter and discussion groups
- Community photo-gallery

Whilst community websites seem to work well in smaller places, it is becoming evident that others are awakening to the possibilities of technology in building social networks in neighbourhoods where people are feeling isolated. Nowhere is this more evident than the new 'circle' movement for older people – such as the Southwark Circle. It works on a very simple principle; it makes connections between older people who have no family or friends nearby, encouraging shared interests, promoting activities and events which are advertised on their website. It provides helpmates for those troublesome little jobs that need doing around the house and even arranges shared telephone calls for all those interested in music or gardening. It is such a good idea, and members clearly enjoy themselves, it is bound to catch on.

*'Since joining Southwark Circle I have had a Neighbourhood Helper come round to teach me how to use a drill, which was great as I now have the confidence to use it by myself. I also like to meet other members through the calendar and especially enjoyed the picnic in the park. It was great to see that everybody made an effort to bring along some food to share'.*

#### **Ivy, member of Southwark Circle**

**<http://www.southwarkcircle.org.uk/index.php>**

There is a reoccurring theme throughout this publication – a fundamental need for people to connect with their communities. We will return to this issue in step five.

There are other uses for technology: in telemedicine where remote monitoring enables medical professionals to monitor a patient remotely. This is primarily used for managing chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes or asthma. These services can provide comparable health outcomes to traditional in-person patient encounters, supply greater satisfaction to patients, and be cost-effective. Interactive telemedicine provides real-time interactions between patient and provider, to include phone conversations and online communication.

Conducting service delivery via the Internet brings obvious cost savings that can be passed on to customers. This trend is now so established that those without Internet access are financially disadvantaged; they pay more for travel tickets, utilities and they shoulder the costs of travel to pay bills.

**There is therefore a pressing need to maximise access to Internet provision – as an essential of life.**

## What is the impact of our age profile on service delivery?

There are two very significant trends in rural demography that will impact significantly on service delivery in future years. Firstly, the population in many rural areas is ageing and secondly, there is out-migration of young people from rural areas.

Not only are people in rural areas on average older than their urban counterparts (for example, 23% of people in rural areas are of pensionable age compared with 18% of people in urban England), the population is getting older at a quicker rate. Between 2001 and 2007, the population of pensionable age increased by 15% in rural areas compared with a smaller 4% increase in the numbers of older people living in urban areas over the same period. This increased rate is due to two factors - increased life expectancy and in-migration of older people to live in rural areas.<sup>10</sup>

The number of very elderly people (aged 85 and over) in the countryside is expected to double over the next twenty years. Whilst older people in rural areas live healthier lives, increasing years inevitably take their toll and the need for care provision will increase – which is something of a demographic time bomb.

Local authorities are very aware that the influx of newly retired and very active pensioners (especially to attractive areas) is initially a great asset to a rural community. They form an army of volunteers who sit on committees and organise activities. Over the years, especially when one partner dies, and with increasing frailty, there is a danger that the older person becomes increasingly isolated. Members of the extended family, who in the past might have provided care, are living in distant parts of the country. How will these residents be supported in future?

We have already noted that Direct Payments may provide a route for care but only if there is a pool of potential Personal Assistants in the area. There is a network of third sector support in rural areas – Age UK, WRVS, befriending services and luncheon clubs. Sometimes these organisations have a contract for the delivery of services but others survive on a shoestring budget and are run by volunteers. Small project grants for this work are easy to cut. Service delivery can therefore be patchy.

The services needed by frail older people are various:

- Adaptations to residential dwellings to ensure access and to help prevent falls and to increase security
- Domiciliary care services, meals on wheels, personal hygiene
- Access to a range of clinical services
- Social activities
- Food shopping

Any community-led planning exercise needs to address the current and future needs of older residents matched against the provision of services, with an assessment of the likely effect of cuts.

There is then a need for a community response; supplementing financial resources (from the parish council precept for example), encouraging volunteering and self-help or lobbying for targeted resources from the public sector.

<sup>10</sup> Report for Cabinet Office Social Exclusion Task Force (2009) *Mapping the level of need: Assessing the social exclusion of older people in rural areas*

However, such is the size of the challenge, some different approaches may be needed in future. Some ideas are considered in section of this report.

At the other end of the demographic scale, young people are choosing not to live in rural areas – for reasons that are not that surprising. Unless parents provide transport, they are unable to participate in after-school activities or social activities in the evenings. It is very natural for young people to wish to go to university or college or to travel abroad, but when they are qualified, there may not be employment opportunities or affordable housing back home.

Recent evidence from Scotland (where some remote areas are managing to buck the trend, encouraging young people to stay or return) suggests there are a number of factors involved in decisions to stay:<sup>11</sup>

- Securing a good job locally
- Local family connections
- An appreciation of the high quality natural environment and of having easy access to outdoor activities available nearby (surfing on Tiree or skiing in the Cairngorms for example)
- The perception that certain rural areas offer a good quality of life, either economically or socially. (A good example would be the Hume sisters who work from Pierowall, on the island of Westray but who run a high value added textile enterprise called Hume Sweet Hume)
- A sense of attachment to the rural area (long-term social or hereditary connections in the area) or simply familiarity with the area. Connected to this is a sense that one's own identity is tied up with the area; the ability to identify with other people in the community; and a sense of pride in the region. (We have been impressed with the achievements of the Fèis movement; a group of Gaelic arts tuition festivals, mainly for young people, which now take place throughout Scotland).
- The ambition to start a family in the local area, often overriding any academic or career ambitions. This ambition is often accompanied by the perception that rural areas are a good place to bring up children.

- Education opportunities available locally, particularly higher education opportunities such as colleges, universities (e.g. University of the Highlands and Islands) and good secondary schools
- The perceived safety of some rural areas particularly compared to urban ones.
- A good social network and/or opportunities to meet and socialise with peers
- The perception that young people are a valued part of a rural community, and that their involvement in community affairs is encouraged

This research provides evidence that not all young people wish to move away but that the community as a whole has an important responsibility to include them fully, to promote and encourage leisure activities that are appealing (and may bring economic as well as leisure opportunities), to ensure that during their school years a strong sense of place is cultivated and of course that there is good mobile phone and broadband connection.

## Unintended consequences of the withdrawal of discretionary services

Decisions taken in County Halls may seem straightforward; for example, a very obvious cost saving can be achieved by contracting with a single private sector firm for all recycling activities in the area. However, there may be many unmeasured benefits (economic, social and environmental) of small scale and community based recycling schemes.

- Employment in collection, recycling, reuse of materials
- Training and employment opportunities for adults with learning difficulties
- Reduced miles in transporting materials for recycling
- Availability of renovated furniture for low income families
- Local income generating potential (for example, mobile phone cases into restaurant tables, black plastic from farms into garden furniture)
- Education opportunities as local schools compete to reduce their consumption of valuable materials

<sup>11</sup> Scottish Government (2010) *Factors Influencing Rural Migration Decisions in Scotland: An Analysis of the Evidence*

Decision-making must be well informed, not just in terms of financial gain, but also of the additional benefits of the availability of a particular service in a rural area. There are a number of ways in which this gain might be assessed: for example, Social Return On Investment is an approach to understanding and managing the impacts of a project, organisation or policy. It is based on stakeholders and puts financial value on the important impacts identified by stakeholders that do not have market values.

<http://www.sroi-uk.org>

Our examination of the factors influencing the availability and need for discretionary services in rural areas reveals a number of interesting trends:

- Communities should have a plan for their area, defining the services that are essential (and be prepared to fight hard to keep them) and to identify the services that they want but must play a central role in resourcing/delivering.
- Communities are well-placed to identify the people within their community who are particularly vulnerable and to consider how collectively they can provide support.
- Communities should develop a keen understanding of the range of outcomes they expect to be delivered from the services delivered in their area.
- Communities have a duty, using all available means, to encourage and promote the use of local services
- Broadband access is an essential of modern life. It can enliven democracy, keep service providers on their toes and build solidarity.
- Communities should examine population trends for their area and plan ahead – and not be afraid to innovate



**Step 2:**  
**How are we doing?**  
Comparing performance  
with other areas



Nowadays members of the public can access quite a lot of information about the performance of the public sector in a particular area. Indeed, the last decade has seen a growing measurement culture. For example, in Scotland the Audit Scotland website shows information on the performance of all councils, fire and police services.

**<http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/performance/council/>**

In Wales, The Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) (Wales) Order 2010 sets out performance indicators and performance standards across a range of local authority services.

In England, the inspection regime that tested how all English local authorities were performing according to information produced by the Audit Commission and other 'watchdogs' in what was

called a Comprehensive Area Assessment, has been abolished. The new Coalition Government judged that these assessments were too burdensome and expensive and the power to judge how services are performing is now to be placed in the hands of local people. Along with this new responsibility, communities are to be given powers to save local facilities threatened with closure and the right to bid to take over local state-run services. Local authorities will be required to provide their communities with simple to understand data on performance and residents are credited with the ability to judge how well services are being delivered.

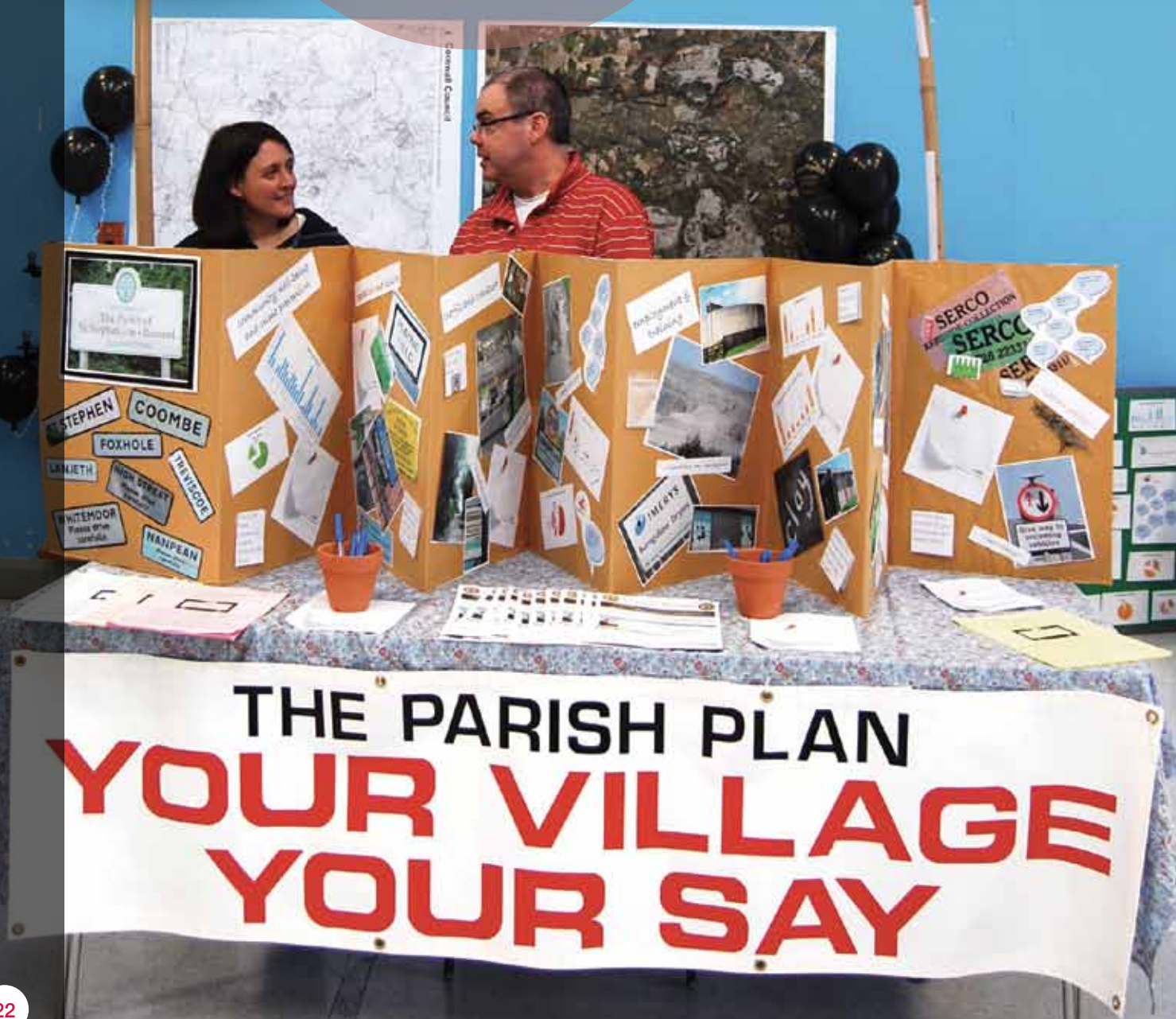
Communities will need to examine their local services in a new way; at first there may not be readily available information but in time this will need to be provided by public sector bodies. To prompt a debate in your community here is a checklist to get you started.

**Services checklist for rural communities**

Service	Your comments
Water supply	
Flood control	
Electricity supply	
Potential for renewable energy	
Telephone (land line and mobile) and broadband connectivity	
Access to primary level education	
Access to general health care suited to each stage of life	
Security and public safety – access to police and fire services.	
An accessible and flexible community meeting place within a reasonable distance	
Access to benefits and advice services for those who are eligible or in need	
Housing to buy or to rent that is affordable, economic to run and suited to the size of the household	
Services for older people	
Opportunities for recreation – including self-improvement, religious activity, arts and hobbies, physical activity and socialising	
Affordable and accessible transport	
Social clubs and activities	
Access to affordable and healthy food	
Involvement in local decision-making	
Active and effective parish or town council or community council	
Active and effective ward councillor	
Local employment opportunities that provide a living wage and a sense of achievement	
Formal and informal education opportunities	
Facilities for waste management and recycling	
Allotments	

# Step 3:

We're all in this together:  
Engaging with taxpayers, service users,  
potential service users/providers and  
stakeholders about service delivery



It is clear that the way in which public bodies used to communicate with residents in the past was not always effective. Formal meetings in town halls attract only the 'usual suspects'. Bodies such as parish and town councils or community councils may well respond to written documents or formal meetings but the man in the street would not. The debate triggered by the need to cut budgets is too important and public bodies have to find new ways of engaging in the debate.

Communities which have already undertaken a local plan (such as a parish plan or action plan) will be aware of the service delivery priorities for their local community; what once seemed a useful way of identifying initiatives is now an **essential tool** in the battle for resources. However in the past these plans often considered the 'here and now' whereas they really need to be future-proofed. Communities have been reactive, acting only when closure of a service was announced. Now they have to anticipate change (noting for example that school rolls are dropping or that the postmaster will retire in five years time). Community-led planning (as we



note in a sister publication called *The Power of the Plan*<sup>12</sup>) should become a natural part of community life – something that all citizens contribute to. If this is to happen, then the planning process has to be engaging and fun – probably integrated into existing cultural activities such as fetes and festivals where everyone is gathered together anyway.

Public servants have to accept that all residents have a right to debate, discuss and contest service delivery plans on local radio, on community websites and in the local press. Residents need to assess whether the cuts in services are fair, realistic or arbitrary. How are the impacts of cuts taken into account in the decision making process? These hard decisions cannot be made behind closed doors when communities are to play a much more obvious role in the way services are designed in future.

Local elected members have an important role in this debate. Many councillors, not included in 'cabinet' style local government, should feel reinvigorated by this new challenge. Armed with evidence from the community led plans in their area, they are well placed to champion local services. Councillors have an enhanced responsibility to represent local circumstances to their peers and to ensure local priorities are adequately reflected in strategic plans (such as Community Strategies).

There is a growing awareness that communities have a role to play in determining how services are prioritised but their contribution extends beyond this aspect into other areas of involvement: into the design, delivery, management, funding and evaluation of services. The concept of **co-production** is entering the vocabulary of every public body. We see co-production as a partnership between citizens and public bodies to achieve better services and in 2007, Carnegie UK Trust asked Professor Tony Bovaird<sup>13</sup> to explore the potential of co-production:

<sup>12</sup> Carnegie UK Trust (2010) *The Power of the Plan*

<sup>13</sup> Bovaird, T (2007) *Beyond Engagement and Participation – User and Community Co-production of Services*

*'Traditional conceptions of professional service planning and delivery in the public domain are out-dated, whether the professional is working in a monolithic bureaucracy, an arms-length agency or an outsourced unit, and need to be revised to account for the potential of co-production by users and communities. What is needed is a new public service ethos or compact, in which a central role of professionals is to support, encourage and co-ordinate the co-production capabilities of service users, and the communities in which they live. Moreover, there is a need for a new type of public service professional – the 'co-production' development officer, who can help to overcome the reluctance of many professionals to share power with users and their communities and who can act internally in organisations (and partnerships) to broker new roles for co-production between traditional service professionals, service managers and the political decision-makers who shape the strategic direction of the service system.'*

We have already come across examples of co-production in this publication; the relatives who share responsibility for the care of family members, the social enterprises that provide training for children at risk and the provision of information about public services on community websites. Of course there will continue to be specialist areas where the intervention of the public will never be possible or desirable but in many areas, co-production is likely to become the norm for many more services in future. We have included many inspiring examples in Appendix 1.

A good starting point to consider co-production is to examine the values that underpin these types of relationships. It is not just a question of a transaction between a purchaser and provider of services. Effective co-production acknowledges that everyone (including the patient, pupil or parish council) has something to contribute.

This is consistent with an asset-based approach, which we describe in a sister publication called 'Appreciating Assets'.<sup>14</sup> Reciprocity is an important dimension of co-production – do a good deed and it will be returned and non-financial transactions are valued.

Rural areas of the UK and Ireland are already characterised by high levels of involvement in community activities and of volunteering, adding greatly to the quality of life experienced by many residents. Some are suggesting that these contributions, made when individuals are fit and well, might be returned in kind when people are older and less able to cope through a formalised system of time banking. This topic is examined in more detail in step five of this report. What is clear, citizens have a great deal to offer; from a user perspective they have an understanding of what works, they have knowledge and skills from all sorts of professions; they have energy and time and real commitment to the place where they live.

If, however, rural residents are to play a greater role in the way services are delivered in future there are some structural changes that need to happen to ease the process.

*'Accelerating co-production rests on some more structural changes to: budgets, with more control passed down to individual users and frontline professionals; support for civic society and mutual help; performance regimes; and professional training and culture.'*<sup>15</sup>

**In the next section, we look at what really happens when the cuts are announced and what is a realistic response from the community. We then consider the implications for communities who wish to get involved in service delivery in terms of finance, skills, procurement and the regulatory system.**

<sup>14</sup> Carnegie UK Trust and IACD (2010) *Appreciating Assets*

<sup>15</sup> Cabinet Office (2009) *Co-production in Public Services: a new partnership with citizens*

# Step 4: Develop options for service delivery

If you could design a  
new celebration for  
your community

what would it be?

Pantomime

what would it look like?

Wonderful set + stage, brilliant lighting

what would you eat?

cupcakes

what kind of music would  
you listen to?

depends on the show

where would you hold it?

Community Centre

## What actually happens when the cuts are reported – can the community act?

The local papers are full of reports that if facilities from care homes to ferry boats, from Tourist Information Centres to libraries, are important to communities then the communities will have run them. This press cutting from Lancashire is typical of front pages right across the UK and Ireland:

**PUBLIC toilets, a popular miniature “zoo” and a country park’s visitor centre have all been earmarked for closure in the latest round of cuts announced by Town Hall chiefs.**

Popular events such as the firework display and bonfire at Leverhulme Park and the Kite Festival at Moss Bank Park, which attracted thousands of visitors last year, also face the axe under the spending cuts, which could be implemented as early as next April.

Almost 30 posts are at risk and all workers across the Council’s neighbourhood services department yesterday started a 90-day consultation period over the impact of the cuts. Town Hall bosses say that if each of the proposals is implemented, the council will save more than £1.7 million over three years. The authority is being told to save 40 per cent of its annual budget over four years by the government, as it aims to reduce the national deficit.

If the plans are approved in February next year, every one of the borough’s public toilets would be closed, Animal World, at Moss Bank Park, and Rock Hall Visitor Centre, at Moses Gate Country Park, would also close and there would be cuts to the frequency of grass cutting, street cleaning and routine inspection and maintenance of play areas, allotments, woodlands and flower beds.

*Source: local press*

When visitors arrive in town for a day’s shopping, they naturally will need to pay a visit to the toilets, expecting them to be clean and pleasant to use. Yet councils obviously see toilets as a luxury they can no longer afford to provide. Other assets seem, on the surface, to be potentially more attractive to the community – the country park sounds like something worth keeping. In any case, communities the length and breadth of the country are being asked to rise to this challenge – take these assets and services on (even though some of them may be loss making and indeed a long-term liability).

Trying hard to preserve a service delivery model based upon the way we have always done things is probably not a good starting point. It is difficult for creative thinking to take place when difficult decisions are being made in a hurry. But that is what is needed.

So, for example, do visitors really need to visit a publicly owned and run toilet? Or might they actually prefer to visit the upgraded toilets in the local pub, which charges 30p, and by the way, why don’t we stop for lunch? Moving beyond the outcry in the local press – is anyone asking the publican if this might be a really good idea?

Other services cannot be divested so easily. There might be a highly respected Wildlife Trust, that already runs successful nature reserves and who would relish the opportunity of taking over a County Park. Their rangers may have all the conservation skills needed to enhance the site. They may already have a catering arm that could provide café services and a public liability insurance package in place.

But would the Wildlife Trust be expected to raise public money to ‘buy’ the Country Park from the Council? Is this circulation of public (i.e. ‘our’) money, from one part of the public sector to another acceptable? Would it be possible to raise funds through a share issue? How many share issues will there be within that community? Can local people afford to become shareholders in a facility that provides a beautiful space but that is not an essential of life? Does the Council understand how long it takes to put the necessary funding together – even when the potential purchaser is a well-established player?

However, there may be no Wildlife Trust. There may just be a group of interested local people, with no organisation or track record. They would need to embark upon a long journey to formally constitute their organisation, demonstrate to people that they have a range of competencies before fund raising. It could take years!

Will the council be in a position to provide the prospective new managers of the site with a detailed financial breakdown for the facility – in the case of the Country Park it may be a transfer from an quasi-independent business unit of the council but what if a local community were thinking of taking on a single library – one of fifty or so libraries in a county. Would the accounts recognise all those back office functions that get ‘hidden’ in the overall budgets of councils? Actually – does the Head of the Library Service really know how much it costs to run the service in its entirety?

Are the days of single purpose council-run facilities well and truly over? Might the library be run from the community hall or could readers collect their chosen text from the pub? The small fee the publican receives for each transaction might be all that is needed to keep his business going. But whilst we are planning services for the future – and given technological advances, do we even need books? Are we planning services for the future based upon a full appreciation of the assets – tangible and intangible – that we have at our disposal?

This is the dilemma – the timescale for financial cuts and the time needed to put in place considered alternative arrangements (yet alone to incorporate innovative solutions) are incompatible.

**The important message from these examples is that transfer of services to the community takes time and it cannot be achieved in a hurry when funding has to be assembled, asset transfer terms agreed and people skills developed.**

## Funding services

We have already looked at Direct Payments as a way of giving users more choice in buying the care they need but this is just the start of greater devolution of resources to localities.

A sensible starting point for the community is to get involved in decision-making about how available resources are deployed locally – a process called participatory budgeting. Participatory budgeting allows the citizens of an area (neighbourhood, regeneration or local authority area) to participate in the allocation of part of the local Council’s or other statutory agency’s (health services, police) available financial resources. Participatory budgets increase transparency, accountability, understanding and social inclusion in local government affairs. Many of the places that have tried out participatory budgets have been located in towns and cities but there is no reason why the process should not work really well for rural areas too. All that is required is the commitment of the public body to the process, clear guidelines about the amount that is up for discussion and the general areas of expenditure under debate and the widespread support of a good cross section of the electorate. Participatory budgeting can be built into the community-led planning process.



If you wish to find out more about participatory budgeting, visit the following website:

<http://www.participatorybudgeting.org.uk/>

In England, the Big Society Network and National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) have selected nine areas to try out a form of participatory budgeting called 'Your Local Budget'. The projects will test a variety of methods for involving citizens in budget decisions, ranging from working with service users to trial how pooled personalised care budgets can be used to provide day centre activities, to examining how parish councils can use their local precept – income raised from parishioners – to support the provision of local services that are at risk from budget cuts. We will follow the progress of parish and town councils in Herefordshire pilot area with great interest.

Participatory budgeting may allow the closer targeting of financial resources to meet local needs. It is a big step forward to have the opportunity to influence how public money is spent in your area. However this does not guarantee that your community will win resources when there are many competing demands. Is it possible to raise money locally to provide services? There are undoubtedly new opportunities for parish and town councils (in England) and community councils (in Wales) to play a more significant role in service delivery and perhaps to demonstrate to other parts of the UK and Ireland how the tier of local government that is closest to the people can rise to the services challenge. The power that the councils in England and Wales enjoy is the precept – money collected through the council tax that can be deployed for the benefit of local people. To give an idea of how much might be available, the average Band D parish precept in England in 2010-11 is £44.55.<sup>16</sup>

The National Association of Local Councils has produced an excellent publication called 'Localism in Action' which provides case studies of how parish and town councils have deployed their precept to support service delivery.

[http://www.nalc.gov.uk/Publications/Booklets\\_and\\_Resources.aspx](http://www.nalc.gov.uk/Publications/Booklets_and_Resources.aspx)

Other ways of raising income to support local services through the local tax system have been tried. A Business Improvement District (BID) is a partnership between a local authority and the local business community to develop projects and services that will benefit the trading environment within the boundary of a clearly defined commercial area. Business Improvement Districts have been established across England, Wales and Scotland and legislation has also been passed in the Republic of Ireland. If local businesses vote in favour, a levy on the business rates is collected for specific projects in the BID area. Local Authorities have an important role to play in the establishment of a BID in their area as they are charged with legal responsibilities, including the provision of the ratings data to calculate the BID levy, the collection and enforcement of the BID levy via a ring-fenced BID Revenue Account that is then passed straight to the BID company, the organisation of the formal BID ballot, and the preparation and commitment to the baseline service agreements.

Further information about BIDS can be found on <http://www.ukbids.org/index.php>

If financial resources from local government are not available, how else can services be resourced?

<sup>16</sup> Communities and Local Government (2010) Statistical Release

Public bodies may have physical assets and services that they wish to divest, offering the community the opportunity to take them on and earn an income from doing so. Communities should be aware of the publicly-owned assets within their area. Local authorities keep registers of their assets and these are available online. The Asset Register is an accounting tool that has to be maintained by local authorities and contains all information about the land and property assets owned or leased by the council. The register is updated every financial year.

The Asset Register categorises every property for the purpose of capital accounting. It gathers information that is used to calculate the appreciation and depreciation of assets. This needs to be recorded for sales and purchase purposes. Valuation of the assets owned is carried out regularly. An Asset Management Plan sets out how the local authority will implement its Asset Management Strategy to ensure that land and property assets are used effectively and efficiently and how the asset contributes to the delivery of quality services to citizens.

Once familiar with the publicly-owned assets in their area, the community can consider how they might get involved in the ownership, management or control of that asset should it become available. This topic is discussed in our sister publication, *'Appreciating Assets'*.<sup>17</sup>

Whether a community is presented with the opportunity of taking on a publicly owned asset or if a privately owned asset like a shop or pub comes on the market, there will be a need to raise finance. Enterprises providing community benefit such as the delivery of an important service can be financed through the sale of community shares or bonds. A share is a legal right to membership and part-ownership of an organisation in return for an investment. In order to issue shares the group should be registered as a Community Interest Company (CIC), an Industrial and Provident Society (IPS) or as an ordinary limited company. A bond is a form of loan that has to date been a less common form of financing community initiatives. It is a legal

agreement between the issuer of the bond and the purchaser that usually states the amount of interest to be paid on set dates on the loan and when the loan will be repaid in full. If you are interested in finding out more about the relative merits of shares and bonds, a good starting point would be the factsheets produced by the Development Trusts Association and Co-operatives UK in conjunction with the Cabinet Office and Department for Communities and Local Government:

<http://www.communityshares.org.uk/>

Here we include two examples of renewable energy schemes that have used share issues in order to raise finance. Bro Dyfi Community Renewables is a community energy co-operative registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts. Established in 2001 to develop community-owned renewable energy projects in the Dyfi Valley area in Wales, the group erected a 75kW wind turbine in 2003, with money raised from a share offer. Shareholders receive an annual dividend, and 30% of Bro Dyfi Community Renewable's annual profit goes to a community energy fund used for energy efficiency measures within the Dyfi Valley. The latest project is a much larger (500kW) turbine on Mynydd Glandulas. Again, this project has been funded by a share offer. Carnegie has a short video case study of this project: <http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk>

And the initiative has a useful website;

<http://www.ecodyfi.org.uk/energy/energybdcr.htm>

Settle Hydro was established as an 'Industrial and Provident Society for the Benefit of the Community' with the specific purpose of owning the Settle Weir Hydro Electric Scheme. The Society will generate revenue by selling 'green' hydro-electricity. Any surplus revenue will be used by the Society to benefit the local community through its twin aims of regenerating the local economy and promoting the environmental sustainability of Settle District.

<http://www.settlehydro.org.uk/>

<sup>17</sup> Carnegie UK Trust and IACD (2010) *Appreciating Assets*

There are many services that could be resourced through a share or bond issue; ones where there is an expected income stream that is reliable and where entrepreneurial skills can be applied to maximise opportunities.

**Our examples have been chosen for a reason; we believe that renewable energy (biomass, bio-digesters, mini-hydro, wind, solar, tidal or wave) provides income generating potential for many rural communities. Income can then be invested in local services, liberating that place from dependency on grants. This independence could provide many benefits; enlivening local democracy as the community determines how the money is spent, building in resilience through distributed energy systems and reducing dependence on fossil fuels.**

Although there is potential for communities to become more financially independent, public and private sources of finance and that of charitable trusts and foundations are still likely to be needed to support the reform of service delivery. How should these scarce resources be deployed? Traditional forms of financing for social and community enterprises tend to be conservative and are almost entirely dependent on one form of finance – the grant, and therefore there is a dearth of working capital. What progress has been made in channelling social investment towards social enterprise and community owned businesses? The Government's Social Investment Taskforce back in 2000 found that financial institutions such as Community Development Finance Initiatives (CDFIs) that provide small loans were struggling to raise sufficient investment even in the context of exceptional financial sector growth.

The social enterprise sector in rural communities will not flourish unless it can source finance from a wider array of innovative providers. The risk of not stimulating this provision is the stifling of entrepreneurship and creativity around solutions to service delivery challenges.

Loan finance can be defined as money lent which has to be returned to the lender usually with interest. Equity investment (as explored in relation to community shares and bonds above) is medium to long-term finance provided by an investor in return for taking shares in an organisation. Additionally, there are variations on the two themes, including 'patient capital', a form of investment, which is a mix of grant and loan or equity, incorporating social returns often with flexible repayment terms.

For some organisations, the transition to debt finance is seen as too great a leap and in response to this, initiatives have been developed with financial products that bridge the gap between grants and loans. The Adventure Capital Fund was an example of specialist finance that worked in this way, allowing the borrower an extended period of time before requesting repayment. Similarly, Communitybuilders provided a mix of grants and loans for organisations' enterprising approaches to the delivery of public services. However, public funding, designed to catalyse social enterprise, has been too short term. Trusts, charitable investors and ethical investment funds lacked proper incentives and investment channels to address the shortfall.

In mid 2011, the new Big Society Bank will be launched for England. The bank, which was first proposed by the Labour government, will use money from dormant bank accounts and elsewhere to become a wholesale provider of finance, in theory making it easier for social enterprises to access capital.

During the 2010 UK election, almost all political parties were extolling the virtues of mutuals, co-operatives and the 'John Lewis' business model. If these routes for service delivery are to be developed, there needs to be appropriate financial vehicles to provide investment. We find inspiration in the Basque Country, where their model of worker-owned businesses has flourished over the past 55 years.

<sup>41</sup> Horn & Webber (2007), *New Tools for Resolving Wicked Problems*, MacroVU(r), Inc. and Strategy Kinetics, LLC; Chapman et al, (2009) *Connecting the Dots*, Demos

Mondragón Cooperatives was founded in the 1950s with one small worker-owned cooperative making parts for washing machines. Today, with 120 businesses and 100,000 workers, Mondragón Cooperatives comprise the largest consortium of worker-owned businesses in the world with sales of 24 million Euros (2007). In 2009, when twenty-five percent of all businesses in Spain failed, less than one percent of businesses failed in the Mondragón Cooperatives, so they must be doing something right!

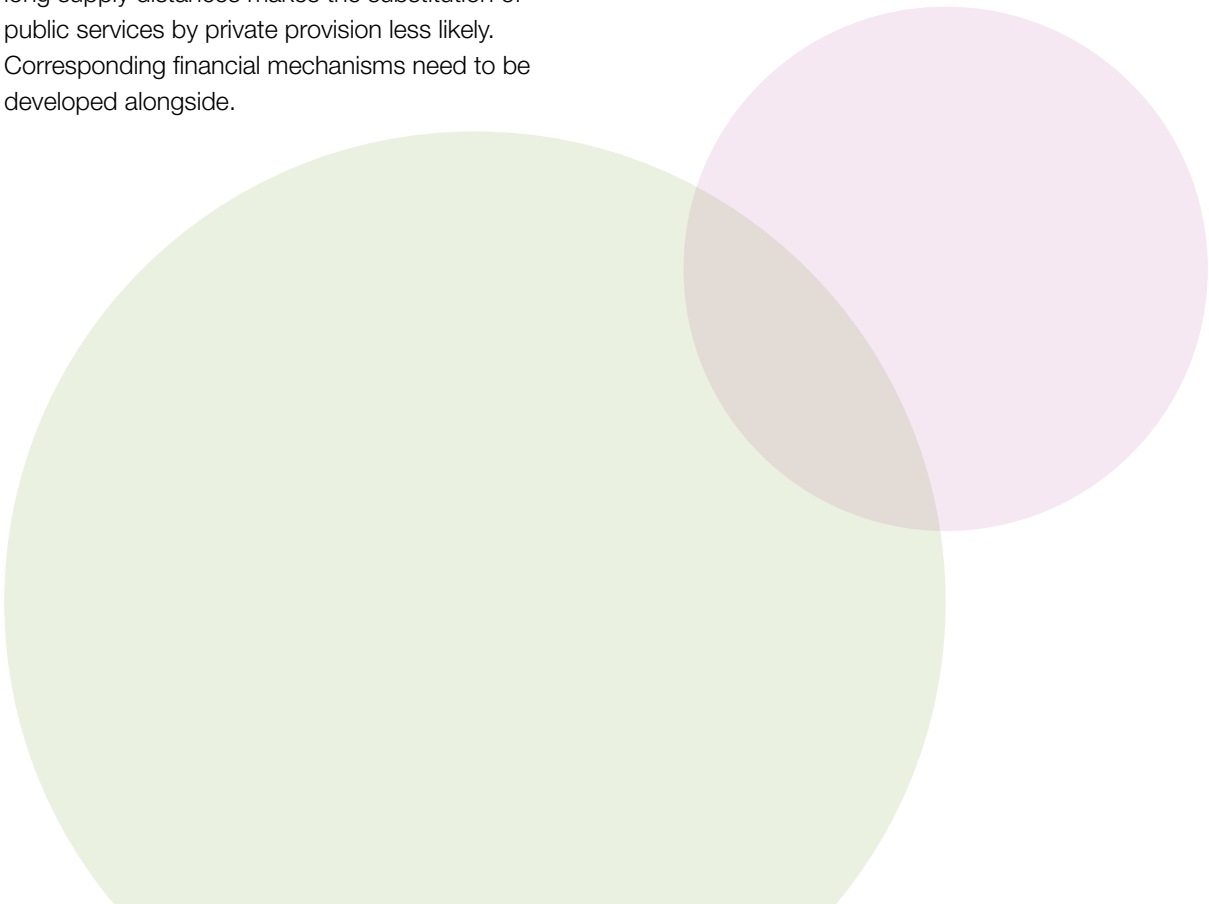
The Mondragón Cooperative businesses produce a wide range of products and services, including an incubation centre, where they help develop and fund new projects. The MCC includes its own cooperatively owned bank, Caja Laboral, with 394 branches throughout Spain. To become a worker member, an individual must apply for an open job and invest 14,000 Euros in their company. This sum can be borrowed from Caja Laboral at 1% interest over 10 years.

It would seem that the worker owned co-operative takes time to develop, benefits from attention to research and development and is best supported by dedicated investment streams.

During the age of austerity we expect a period of rapid innovation such as happened in Spain, and nowhere is this more necessary than in new rural service delivery mechanisms, where the combination of a small customer base and long supply distances makes the substitution of public services by private provision less likely. Corresponding financial mechanisms need to be developed alongside.

One such innovation is the Social Impact Bond; a contract between a public sector body and Social Impact Bond investors, in which the former commits to pay for an improved social outcome. It is thought that by enabling non-government investment, Social Impact Bonds will lead to greater spending on the sort of preventative services that we have highlighted in Pultneytown and Hill Holt Wood, that seem to have such a positive impact on tackling social problems.

Social Impact Bonds are a unique funding mechanism; payments by the public sector are calculated so that, if Social Impact Bond-funded services improve outcomes, these payments will cover the costs of the interventions. Investors carry the risk that funded interventions may fail to improve outcomes. Trusts and foundations, commercial investors and high net worth individuals will make investment in Social Impact Bonds in the expectation that they will receive a 'blended' social and financial return on their investment. The financial return is greatest when the service is most successful, as the costs that would have been incurred by the public sector (imprisonment, taking children into care for example) are saved. Service providers receive upfront payment for the delivery of services and are encouraged to innovate in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for the target population.



Our experience in working with Community Land Trusts demonstrates that there are differing financial needs at different stages in the project development cycle: the pre-development stages being particularly risky. In another example of financial innovation by leading UK Trusts and Foundations, the Community Land Trust Fund was launched in October 2008 with the aim of assisting the development of community-led affordable housing projects. The aim of the fund is to help remove barriers to the development of community land trust projects, including poor access to risk capital and bank finance.

Pre-development finance may be made available when a Community Land Trust project has developed an outline concept for a housing development including the identification of a target market for the properties, a potential site and a project budget. Pre-development finance may then be needed to fund the costs of conducting site surveys and employing architects for submission of a detailed planning application, procuring construction and raising further finance for the project. The desired outcome of pre-development finance would be a scheme ready to go on site.

<http://www.cltfund.org.uk/>

Within the community-led housing movement there are other innovations; the involvement of groups of eventual residents in self-build projects where they contribute 'sweat equity' and the private sale of housing units within a development in order to subsidise affordable houses for rent for local people.

There is also a need for new local investment vehicles, where the resources of wealthy people, who are prepared to forgo high financial return on investment for the satisfaction of high social impact locally, are used to support essential local services.

In this section of our report we have identified some of the existing ways of funding service delivery but highlight the need for accelerating innovation in the development of new investment vehicles. We now consider the requirements for new skills within the public sector and by new service delivery bodies.

## New skills for those involved in service design and delivery

We have an expectation that local authorities will have a reduced role in terms of the delivery of services whilst retaining an enabling and commissioning function. For example, Suffolk County Council has planned a 30% funding cut by fundamentally reshaping the way it works. The council has said it will restructure, outsource some services and trim back-office staff in a bid to combat a reduction in income from the Government.

Council leader Jeremy Pembroke said the result would be a smaller council, working in partnership with borough and district authorities and with community groups.

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*'We will work much closer with districts and boroughs and health organisations and working with the voluntary sector, who have a big role to play in developing the new strategic direction'*

Although not all local authorities will divest as many services as Suffolk, many will need to collaborate more with a range of public, private and third sector organisations. Heads of Service will have responsibility for specifying the resources required for a specific service, setting up mechanism for procurement, appointing a delivery body, managing contracts, setting quality standards, monitoring progress and assessing risk. Whilst already skilled in project management and expertise in their field, professional managers will need skills in engaging with communities, an appreciation of the benefits and risks of working with new delivery mechanisms and a fuller understanding of the total costs involved in the delivery of a service. For those delivering services from within arms length business units (or indeed worker co-operatives) there will be an expectation that managers will be entrepreneurial in outlook.

The skills development needs for communities involved in aspects of service delivery are no less challenging, requiring as they do a mix of community development, business planning, appropriate governance, financial management, fundraising, marketing, property management, succession planning, adherence to quality standards and regulatory frameworks – to name just a few skills!

The good news is that support is available through a number of intermediary bodies. The Development Trusts Association (DTA) is a network of community enterprise specialists, dedicated to helping people set up development trusts and helping existing development trusts learn from each other and work effectively. They have a wealth of grassroots expertise and knowledge in community regeneration, asset development and cultivating local enterprise and also have a pool of technical experts including lawyers, architects, planning designers and surveyors for one-off advice.

<http://www.thepooldta.co.uk/index.html>

A partnership between the Cabinet Office, Local Partnerships, Employee Ownership Association and Co-operatives UK have launched the Mutuals Information Service to provide a service for staff in the public sector looking to set up mutuals and public sector co-operatives such as GP out of hours co-operatives and co-operative trust schools.

<http://www.mutuals.org.uk/>

The Plunkett Foundation works with a range of organisations to develop support programmes for rural co-operative and social enterprises.

<http://www.plunkett.co.uk/index.cfm>

The Social Enterprise Coalition is the UK's national body for social enterprise and has a Social Enterprise Business Support Programme.

<http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/>

Community Land Trusts have their own National Network, with a range of useful resources on their website:

<http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk/>

## Commissioning services

There has been a growing appreciation over the last decade that more needs to be done to enable social enterprises to compete for public service delivery contracts. In England there is some attention being given to the practical changes that are needed in terms of commissioning and procurement if social enterprises are to participate more fully in service delivery. For instance, a Private Members Bill, the Public Services (social enterprise and social value) Bill, if passed, will require the Secretary of State and local authorities to publish strategies in connection with promoting social enterprise; to enable communities to participate in the formulation and implementation of those strategies and to require that public sector contracts include provisions relating to social outcomes and social value. This could change the way that public sector services and contracts are commissioned and delivered.

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*The government spends £141 billion a year purchasing goods and services. This includes everything from paper, equipment and maintenance contracts to many of our public services. It contracts the private sector (and to a lesser extent social enterprises) to provide these goods and services. Until now most decisions on who delivers these contracts have been made on price, capacity and track record. They have not been made on how they can create jobs, stimulate local economies, support local communities, or reduce environmental harm.*

**Peter Holbrook, CEO of the Social Enterprise Coalition**

Any community group or social enterprise considering service delivery options should meet with relevant managers in the public body:

- Who manages the service you are interested in?
- Who is in charge politically – an executive in the cabinet or a committee chair?
- Check which decisions are delegated to senior management – does the local authority have a service director?
- Who has responsibility for day-to-day management?
- Is there a specific client or commissioning officer in charge of letting contracts or buying in services such as care provision, waste recycling or construction?

There are a number of steps in the commissioning of any service: a review will be undertaken and a political decision made about the overall outcome desired. A specification is drawn up for the service and criteria set for judging competing applications.

A pre-tender process often precedes tendering for service delivery, where the enterprise is required to include information and documentation on a number of issues, to demonstrate fitness and technical ability. This might include evidence of legal constitution, insurance, CVs and training certificates of staff and a performance bond.<sup>18</sup>

When considering the range of alternative delivery organisations, a commissioning body will normally carry out an ‘options appraisal’. This process will look at each possible service delivery mechanism and judge it against a set of criteria. The following characteristics are often considered:

- 1 **Design and scope:** How each option meets the organisation’s strategic objectives, how it will be able to meet current and future needs and how it incorporates the wishes of users
- 2 **Accountability, governance and participation:** The implications of each option for enhancing democratic accountability and user/community and staff involvement in planning the service.

- 3 **Financial assessment:** Assess whole life and transaction costs, investment requirements and funding, affordability, Best Value and risk assessment.
- 4 **Quality of service:** The potential impact on performance, service integration, continuous improvement and innovation, flexibility, responsiveness and accessibility.
- 5 **Local/regional economy and community well being:** Assess impact on jobs, skills, labour market and local economy, contribution to regeneration and economic development strategies, community well being and cohesion.
- 6 **Quality of employment:** Ability to retain terms and conditions, pensions and labour standards, impact on working practices, workplace training, access/provision of childcare and health and safety in workplace and community.
- 7 **Sustainable development:** Impact on local/regional production and supply chains, access to parks and recreational activities, services and facilities, environmental impacts and efficient use of resources.
- 8 **Ability to address social justice and inequalities:** How each option might reduce health and other inequalities and discrimination for different equality groups. It should assess the contribution to building community capacity and participation.
- 9 **Capability, management and intellectual knowledge:** Effect of each option on retention of key skills and intellectual knowledge, ability to manage change and regulatory frameworks and transferability of skills.
- 10 **Organisational arrangements:** Effect on flexibility, scope for collaboration and consortia, impact of transfer to arms length bodies and trusts and capability of third sector organisations.
- 11 **Added value:** Proposals over and above core requirements and additional community benefits.

<sup>18</sup> Performance bonds are required as a guarantee in the event that the organisation fails to deliver, providing the local authority with a fund to rescue the service, which may require immediate replacement.

## What services can be devolved?

The services A to Z, shown in Appendix 1, shows how just how wide a range of services is being delivered somewhere in the UK or Ireland, by community groups, social enterprises, development trusts or co-operatives.

## Structures for service delivery

One of the particular challenges for small social enterprises is that public sector bodies will not wish to contract with many small providers. There are often good business reasons for the aggregation of similar, smaller contracts into a larger, more economical one for a council. Partnering with others – whether in the private, social enterprise, voluntary or public sector – can provide opportunities. Another first step for a social enterprise to get involved with service delivery is as a sub-contractor, joining forces with a larger enterprise with the skills and capacity that you lack.

A useful publication, although published in 2003, is 'Public Procurement – a toolkit for social enterprises'

<http://www.s-p-i-n.co.uk/assets/dtitoolkitforsocialenterprise.pdf>

Below we consider some of the available structures and legal entities for service deliverers:



## Community Interest Company (CIC)

A legal form developed primarily for social enterprise. It combines the features of the conventional company form with elements of charitable organisation, including a lock on assets to ensure they are held for community benefit. CICs must also publish an annual social report explaining how they are serving a specified community of interest, or locality. They submit annual reports to a dedicated CIC Regulator. The advantages of a CIC include the freedom to pursue a business approach and the asset lock. This means the assets and profits must be retained within the CIC, and used solely for community benefit, or transferred to another organisation that itself has an asset lock. The model does allow a dividend to be paid to investors, but the rate is tightly controlled.

## Company limited by guarantee (CLG)

A registered company with members rather than shareholders. CLG members guarantee a nominal sum for paying liabilities in the event of insolvent liquidation. Members may also pay a membership subscription.

## Company limited by shares (CLS)

A registered company that is controlled by its shareholders. CLS shares may be privately held, or in the case of a public company, shares may be available to trade on the open market.

## Industrial and Provident Society (IPS)

There are two principal legal forms of IPS – an industrial and provident society for the benefit of the community (BenCom) and a bona fide co-op. BenComs reinvest all their profits for the benefit of their community as defined in their constitution. Bona fide co-ops are democratically controlled by their membership, who also share all distributed profits. Mutuals are organisations whose members come together for a shared purpose. They are democratically controlled and members must join to access the benefits. IPSs are one example, but mutuals also include friendly societies, building societies and credit unions.

## Charitable status

Charitable status is available to all organisations with exclusively charitable purposes and activities; it is not a legal structure in itself. Public benefit is the legal requirement that all charities must have charitable purposes that benefit the public. The Charity Act 2006 has defined a new set of charitable purposes. Charitable status provides tax advantages but quite strict trading constraints; hence it is not appropriate for all social enterprises. Several 'charities' in the voluntary sector have set up independent social enterprises as trading arms to generate income to support their charitable aims.

## Mutual

In a public sector context, mutuals are businesses that are owned by their members. They can operate as employee-owned, co-operative or wider social enterprises. They can include or participate a variety of commercial arrangements, including joint ventures with government or other parties.

## Employee Ownership

Employee ownership refers to companies where employees own a significant or controlling stake in the business. Employee ownership can involve a direct shareholding where employees own individual shares, or indirectly where shares are held in a trust for the benefit of employees.

## Co-operative

Co-operatives are businesses that are fully or majority owned by their members – who may be employees, consumers, others in the community or a mix of these. Co-operatives work on one member, one vote – rather than one share, one vote – and sign up to an agreed set of values and principles.

## Social Enterprise

A social enterprise is any business or service with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders and owners.

## Joint Venture (JV)

The term 'joint venture' describes a range of different commercial arrangements between two or more separate businesses, organisations or public bodies. A JV can be a contractual arrangement, or separate legal entity, under which a new business is created in which the parties work together, sharing the risks and benefits arising.

# Step 5: Services of the future



Rural communities all over the UK and Ireland already successfully deliver a range of services for their communities, as is demonstrated by the inspiring examples listed in Appendix 1.

We believe that it is possible for communities to get involved in delivering services that meet two important objectives: cost effectiveness and quality. There are a number of ways in which community-based organisations can achieve these outcomes:

- Locally based Personal Assistants can cut the time and expense of travel and spend quality time with the person who needs care
- The multiple use of a building such as a community hall for a range of services can cut overheads, provide a good environment for interdisciplinary working and provide a steady income stream through rents.
- The out-posting of public sector staff can provide a better quality of life for workers by reducing commuting times and help put the organisation in touch with the interests and needs of local people.
- The use of volunteers alongside employees means that running costs are reduced whilst providing meaningful and satisfying opportunities for local people to contribute to their community.
- Multi-functional, area-based teams from the council, health service and police can work alongside residents to ensure local priorities are met.
- The use of Internet technology can provide savings in transaction costs, reduced travel times and wins time for professionals to spend time online or on the phone with those who need the most attention.

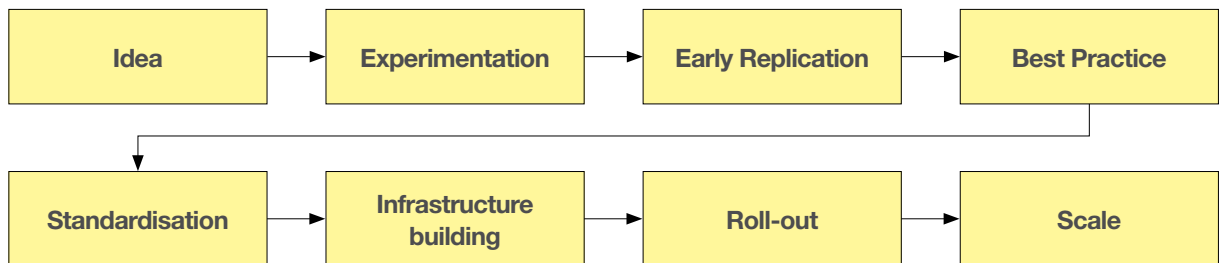
However, we have also noted in this publication, the urgent need for innovation in the way that services are designed, funded and delivered in ways that are cost effective and that meet the expectations of users. Our recent experience in supporting the development of Community Land Trusts illustrates also that there is a need for a cultural change in government and its institutions if innovation is to flourish.

With new ideas, we always expect that there will be a series of stages from bright idea, through to mainstreaming, as shown in the diagram below:

The experience of pioneers in the Community Land Trust movement has been painful, as seemingly every conceivable obstacle has been placed in their path by a range of regulators and quangos. There needs to be a willingness to embrace new thinking – a ‘we can do this together’ attitude rather than a culture that imposes an inappropriately rigorous regulatory framework. The pioneers need to be encouraged and supported, with new investment vehicles and greater collaboration between the various bodies that look after the interests of service users.

This is all just the beginning of a revolution in service delivery; what are the future possibilities?

Phases of innovation from bright idea to scale



Source: Community Finance Solutions

Could the level of customer demand and the level of interest expressed directly determine the delivery of services? For example, over the next five years BT is rolling out superfast fibre optic broadband (BT Infinity) across the UK. If you're not on the announced roll out plan, The 'Race to Infinity' gives you the opportunity to fast track your area to get BT Infinity next. The five areas with the largest percentage of votes by December 31st 2010 will win the chance to bring superfast broadband to their area. This seems a brutal mechanism, dependent on numbers rather than the particular circumstances of communities.

At a number of different stages in this text, we have identified the clearly expressed need for the human touch; for people within communities to build a network of family, friends and neighbours and to enjoy social interaction. It is this that people miss when a village post office shuts, when care workers can only spend ten minutes with an older person and it is the ingredient that makes a young person choose to stay. The link between social isolation and mental health is very strong:

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*'Studies done over two decades involving more than thirty-seven thousand people show that social isolation – the sense that you have nobody with whom you can share your private feelings or have close contact – doubles the chance of sickness or death. Isolation itself, a 1987 report in Science concluded, 'is as significant to mortality rates as smoking, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity and lack of physical exercise.' Indeed, smoking increases mortality risk by a factor of just 1.6, while social isolation does so by a factor of 2.0, making it a greater health risk.'*<sup>19</sup>

This suggests that in future priority should be given to those opportunities that exist within rural communities to reinforce and build social networks, clubs and activities that bring people together: that in doing so, the problems that might crop up down the line are prevented.

Taking this and our other hopes for the development of service delivery into account, next we imagine four different scenarios into the not too distant future.

We know that there are ageing populations in rural communities representing increased demand at a time when there are fewer public resources. We have also noted the army of newly retired and very active people that have moved to live in those communities. Might their regular volunteering be acknowledged through a Time Bank? At its most basic level, Time Banking is simply about spending an hour doing something for somebody in your community. That hour goes into the Time Bank as a credit. Then you have a Time credits to spend on having someone doing something for you, maybe in many years' time when the volunteer needs assistance. It's a simple idea, but it has powerful ripple effects in building community connections.

Time Banking UK is the national umbrella charity linking and supporting time banks across the country by providing inspiration, guidance and mutual help. There are already 93 time banks in existence and 100 more in the pipeline.

<http://www.timebanking.org/index.htm>

Carnegie UK Trust has a long association with libraries and, historically, provided resources for many to be built across the UK and Ireland. Now, libraries are coming under threat because of the cuts. Some libraries have demonstrated how it is possible to attract many users (for example, by including coffee shops and crèches) but the library of the future might look very different: the county council could have a virtual 'library in the cloud', where readers using Kindles (or similar products) can access all the books that have ever been written. This need not be a solitary occupation: book clubs could meet at the local pub to discuss the merits of the latest bestseller over a pint; the writing group could publish their work on-line, volunteers could read it at the local day centre and school children could publish local news online.

<sup>19</sup> Goleman, D (2006) *Social Intelligence: The New Science of Social Relationships*

Rural Library of the Future?



What of the future for small rural schools? Why should a school always be a separate building? Might lessons be held in the local community centre supervised by a teaching assistant and with flat screen TV, interactive white board and video-conferencing allowing access to the most exciting teachers and experts from anywhere in the world?

Might much time be spent in the outdoors so children fully appreciate the environment that surrounds them and that will provide them with future employment, food and water and energy? Imagine the fun when neighbouring schools meet up for regular camping expeditions, community celebrations and displays of work.

Rural School of the Future?



Rural Care Home of the Future?

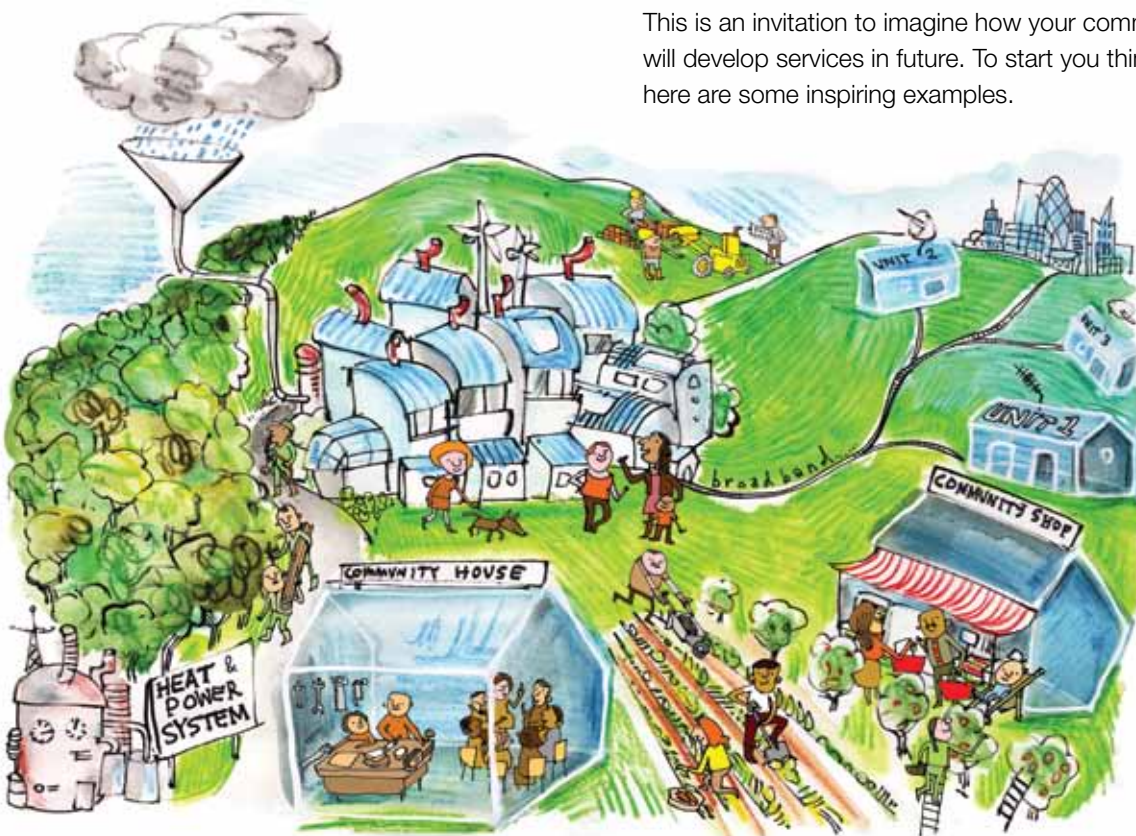


Back to the greatest challenge that rural communities face – the care of older residents. Imagine a Swedish style ‘community house’, owned and run by the community, where older people can move when they can no longer live independently; where they can access as much or as little care as they need without having to move away to a distant

town; where they can enjoy the independence of a private apartment but the company of friends that they have grown up with. Imagine the restaurant serving excellent meals (whilst catering for visitors and producing ready meals for busy families) and the hairdressers and treatment rooms for visiting clinicians and therapists.

This is an invitation to imagine how your community will develop services in future. To start you thinking, here are some inspiring examples.

Rural Community of the Future?



## Appendix 1: Bright ideas and inspiration: an A to Z of services

Service	Examples
<b>Accessibility</b>	<p><b>Sensory Trust</b></p> <p>The Sensory Trust makes places more accessible, attractive and useful for everyone regardless of age, disability or background. They work with developers, architects and landowners in the UK to integrate social inclusion into the design and development process. Their work spans urban parks, healthcare and residential environments, schools, wildlife sites and the wider countryside. <a href="http://www.sensorytrust.org.uk">http://www.sensorytrust.org.uk</a></p>
<b>Addiction</b>	<p><b>The Caesars Palace, Great Yarmouth a social enterprise casino</b></p> <p>The Caesars Palace arcade is just one part of a seafront complex, which employs and trains long-term unemployed people in its bars, nightclub and eco-friendly hotel for people with special needs. Profits from Caesars Palace are used to fight gambling addictions by funding, training and employing gambling addiction advisors through another local social enterprise, Count Me Out, and help fund a gambling and substance misuse support group.</p> <p><a href="http://www.countmeout.org.uk/">http://www.countmeout.org.uk/</a></p>
<b>Affordable Housing</b>	<p><b>Housing Associations</b></p> <p>Housing associations are independent not-for-profit bodies that provide low-cost social housing for people in housing need</p> <p><b>National Housing Federation</b> – <a href="http://www.housing.org.uk/">http://www.housing.org.uk/</a></p> <p><b>Scottish Federation of Housing Associations</b> – <a href="http://www.sfha.co.uk">www.sfha.co.uk</a></p> <p><b>Community Housing Cymru</b> – <a href="http://www.chcymru.org.uk">http://www.chcymru.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Community Land Trusts</b> – A CLT is a non-profit, community-based organisation committed to the stewardship and affordability of land, housing and other buildings used for community benefit in perpetuity.</p> <p><a href="http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk">http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk</a></p>
<b>After School Care/ Family Centres</b>	<p><b>Innellan &amp; Toward Family Centre</b>, Argyll and Bute, Scotland</p> <p>Innellan &amp; Toward Family Centre provides childcare, pre-school education and children's clubs for the rural communities south of Dunoon in Cowal. Families are supported to develop links across the community through events, activities and fundraising initiatives.</p> <p><a href="http://www.spanglefish.com/innellanandtowardfamilycentre/">http://www.spanglefish.com/innellanandtowardfamilycentre/</a></p>
<b>Agenda 21</b>	<p><b>Dorset Agenda 21 (da21)</b></p> <p>Dorset Agenda 21 (da21) is an independent charity that works co-operatively with local people, communities, businesses, educational bodies, local government and other organisations to encourage sustainable living in Dorset.</p> <p><a href="http://www.dorsetagenda21.org.uk">http://www.dorsetagenda21.org.uk</a></p>

<b>AIDS/HIV</b>	<p><b>LASS (Leicestershire AIDS Support Services)</b> Is an independent voluntary organisation that provides services for people who are living with or affected by HIV/AIDS, in partnership with other agencies.</p> <p><a href="http://www.lass.org.uk">http://www.lass.org.uk</a></p>
<b>Allotments/ Gardens</b>	<p><b>The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners</b> The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners is the recognised national representative body for the allotment movement in the U.K. The Society is owned, managed and funded by its members to protect, promote and preserve allotments for future generations to enjoy.</p> <p><a href="http://www.nsalg.org.uk/index.php">http://www.nsalg.org.uk/index.php</a></p> <p><b>Landshare</b> Landshare brings together people who have a passion for homegrown food, connecting those who have land to share with those who need land for cultivating food. Since its launch through River Cottage in 2009 it has grown into a thriving community of more than 55,000 growers, sharers and helpers.</p> <p><a href="http://www.landshare.net/index/">http://www.landshare.net/index/</a></p>
<b>Archaeology</b>	<p><b>Community Archaeology Ltd</b> Community Archaeology Ltd a private limited company bringing a new approach to archaeology</p> <p><a href="http://www.communityarchaeology.co.uk">http://www.communityarchaeology.co.uk</a></p>
<b>Arts, Culture and Heritage</b>	<p><b>Galeri Caernarfon</b> Galeri Caernarfon Cyf was set up as an independent Development Trust in 1992 and began by taking on the challenging task of transforming and refurbishing some of Caernarfon's biggest eyesores. To date, the Trust has renovated and refurbished over twenty neglected and vacant properties in the town, which are now occupied by tenants. The Trust's busy work programme includes property development, setting up and managing Galeri's Arts Project and running the brand new £7.5million Creative Enterprise Centre at the town's Victoria Dock.</p> <p><a href="http://www.galericarnarfon.com/eng/about.aspx">http://www.galericarnarfon.com/eng/about.aspx</a></p> <p><b>Sirius Arts Centre</b>, Cobh, Ireland This has been operating as a non-profit, charitable company since 1998 and has been running as a full time multidisciplinary arts and cultural centre for over a decade. It is one of the most respected arts centres in Ireland for its innovative and creative arts programming.</p> <p><a href="http://www.iol.ie/~cobharts/">http://www.iol.ie/~cobharts/</a></p>
<b>Blocked drains and sewers</b>	<p><b>The Lengthsman scheme</b> This is, in essence, the re-incarnation of an old concept; a local person contracted to maintain roadside verges and drainage, public open space and pathways. The modern Lengthsman role has now been expanded to tackle small-scale environmental projects directly or jointly with the local community and the partners involved. See for example, the scheme in Lancashire:</p> <p><a href="http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/environment/countryside/lengthsman/lengthsman.asp">http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/environment/countryside/lengthsman/lengthsman.asp</a></p>

Service	Examples
<b>Community Broadband</b>	<p><b>CBN</b></p> <p>CBN is working with a range of clients to help them realise the benefits of Next Generation broadband networks. They are driven by a variety of motives; some are driven by the need to find new ways to deliver public services, some by issues of digital and rural inclusion</p> <p><a href="http://www.broadband.coop/">http://www.broadband.coop/</a></p>
<b>Business Advice</b>	<p><b>OpportunityKintyre</b>, Argyll and Bute, Scotland</p> <p>Provide free, confidential business mentoring, following the Sirolli method. We have a paid Enterprise Facilitator and a panel of around 50 volunteers</p>
<b>Business Premises</b>	<p><b>The Melting Pot</b></p> <p>The Melting Pot, a unique place in the heart of Edinburgh, providing spaces for individuals and organisations to work, connect, meet and hold events. The only facility of its type in Scotland, The Melting Pot is a not-for-profit social enterprise.</p> <p><a href="http://www.themeltingpotedinburgh.org.uk/">http://www.themeltingpotedinburgh.org.uk/</a></p>
<b>Car Parks</b>	<p><b>All Saints Action Network</b>, Wolverhampton</p> <p>The All Saints Action Network (ASAN) employs a radical approach to community development and regeneration that has established a portfolio of businesses whose profits benefit an inner-city Wolverhampton area. ASAN runs a car park providing its prime revenue source based at a 100,000 square feet old bus garage secured on peppercorn rent in 2001.</p> <p><a href="http://www.asan.org.uk">http://www.asan.org.uk</a></p>
<b>Carers</b>	<p><b>The Dochas Fund</b>, Argyll and Bute, Scotland</p> <p>The Dochas Centre is a Carers' Centre that offers carers a place to come to get advice and support. They run several support groups and drop in sessions. The centre also contains a gallery displaying different exhibitions, which also allows people to support the Fund by purchasing prints and cards of the original artwork.</p> <p><a href="http://www.dochasfund.org.uk">http://www.dochasfund.org.uk</a></p>
<b>Care</b>	<p><b>Sunderland Home Care Associates</b></p> <p>Margaret Elliott is a veteran of the social enterprise movement, having launched two co-ops in the 1970s. In 1994 she set up Sunderland Home Care Associates, which has grown into a massive success (Social Enterprise Of The Year at the 2006 Enterprising Solutions Awards), finding work for almost 200 disadvantaged local residents while supplying care to over 500 elderly and disabled people. The company has a turnover of 1.75 million pounds and is fully employee-owned, with staff receiving above market pay and conditions as well as having a say in all major decisions.</p> <p><a href="http://www.sunderlandhomecare.co.uk">www.sunderlandhomecare.co.uk</a></p>

<b>Children's play areas</b>	<p><b>Eoropie Dunes Park</b>, Lewis, Scotland</p> <p>This unique play and leisure facility is the inspiration of a group of mothers whose children had no local playground. Guth Airson Iarntasan Nis' (GAIN) is a user-led voluntary organisation that owns and manages the Eoropie Dunes Park on behalf parents, children and the wider community. GAIN (Gaelic for 'A Voice for the Needs of Ness') was originally established in 1998 "to enhance play and leisure facilities and encourage environmental awareness".</p> <p><a href="http://www.eoropiedunespark.co.uk/">http://www.eoropiedunespark.co.uk/</a></p>
<b>Common Land and village greens</b>	<p><b>GreenSpace</b></p> <p>Greenspace is a registered charity that works to improve parks and green spaces by raising awareness, involving communities and creating skilled professionals.</p> <p><a href="http://www.green-space.org.uk">http://www.green-space.org.uk</a></p>
<b>Community Centres and Village Halls</b>	<p>Countless community-owned centres and halls in the UK and Ireland – for information see SCVO or ACRE websites</p> <p><a href="http://microsites.scvo.org.uk/villagehalls/Home/Home.aspx">http://microsites.scvo.org.uk/villagehalls/Home/Home.aspx</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.acre.org.uk/communityassets_villagehalls_informationservice.html">http://www.acre.org.uk/communityassets_villagehalls_informationservice.html</a></p>
<b>Community Development</b>	<p><b>Connecting Communities C2</b></p> <p>Connecting Communities (C2) is a community development and learning programme designed to equip participants with the skills and capabilities for effective community engagement and collaborative working. It uses the powerful medium of narrative to embed learning. Aimed at people working in service delivery and improvement, C2 is an Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Programme delivered as a series of interactive workshops and site visits. C2 is an evidence-based programme developed by the Health Complexity Group (HCG) at the Peninsula College of Medicine and Dentistry, Exeter. Based on community stories of transformational change C2 uses complexity science as the framework to understand enablers and barriers to change and improvement.</p> <p><a href="http://www.healthcomplexity.net/content.php?s=c2&amp;c=c2_main.php">http://www.healthcomplexity.net/content.php?s=c2&amp;c=c2_main.php</a></p>
<b>Composting</b>	<p><b>Community Composting Network</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.communitycompost.org">http://www.communitycompost.org</a> – case studies on the web-site</p>
<b>Conservation Areas</b>	<p><b>North Harris</b></p> <p>Harris is an island that is mostly in community ownership. In 2003 there was a community-led buyout of the 55,000-acre North Harris Estate by the North Harris Trust, the 7,500-acre Seaforth Estate followed and earlier this year crofters on the west side took the 16,250-acre publicly owned crofting estates of Borve, Luskentyre and Scaristavore. Discussions have been ongoing about Harris becoming Scotland's third National Park and Britain's first island national park. The North Harris Trust has set up a Harris National Park Study Group (an one of the first to be partly in community ownership.) See here for more details:</p> <p><a href="http://www.heraldscotland.com/life-style/real-lives/national-park-plan-for-harris-1.1051552">http://www.heraldscotland.com/life-style/real-lives/national-park-plan-for-harris-1.1051552</a></p>

Service	Examples
<b>Cycling</b>	<p><b>Sustrans</b> – <a href="http://www.sustrans.org.uk/">http://www.sustrans.org.uk/</a></p> <p><b>Sustrans online shop</b> – <a href="http://www.sustransshop.co.uk/">http://www.sustransshop.co.uk/</a></p>
<b>Debt Advice</b>	<p><b>Citizens Advice Bureau</b> – <a href="http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/">http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/</a></p>
<b>Early Years</b>	<p><b>WCS</b></p> <p>WCS runs 15 community childcare centres for children aged 6 months to 5 years old in the City of Westminster where, despite its apparent wealth, extremely high numbers of children are classified as being in need. The society is funded through a mixture of grants and trade, by selling high-quality nursery education both to the council and directly to families. WCS supports lower income families by providing subsidised services and helping parents to improve their parenting skills.</p> <p><a href="http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/pages/june-osullivan-wcs-chief-executive.html">http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/pages/june-osullivan-wcs-chief-executive.html</a></p>
<b>Eco-village</b>	<p><b>Cloughjordan</b></p> <p>The Cloughjordan Ecovillage is a not-for-profit organisation developing an alternative model for sustainable living. The eco-village aims to provide a healthy, satisfying and socially rich lifestyle while minimising ecological impacts.</p> <p>The 67-acre site includes beautiful and fertile land for growing food and trees to promote local food production and biodiversity. The eco-village will also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 114 low energy homes and 16 live-work units</li> <li>• A solar- and wood-powered community heating system</li> <li>• Pedestrian pathways lined with fruit and nut trees</li> <li>• A streamside walkway</li> <li>• 50 acres of land for allotments, farming and woodland</li> <li>• A green enterprise centre and hi-spec broadband</li> <li>• A centre of education for sustainable living</li> <li>• An eco-hostel for visitors</li> <li>• A nearby train station and local car-sharing scheme</li> </ul> <p><a href="http://www.thevillage.ie">http://www.thevillage.ie</a></p>
<b>Migrant workers and asylum seekers</b>	<p><b>One World centre, SEEDS</b></p> <p>SEEDS was initially established in the spring of 2004. They have a committee of 18 and 490 members from 38 nationalities living and working in the Derry area. Because inward migration is a relatively new phenomenon to Northern Ireland, the indigenous communities are coming to terms with the influx of new citizens. This has created many issues and concerns. Many migrant workers are ill-prepared to live in a society that is currently coming to terms with centuries of sectarian politics. SEEDS are working closely with many statutory bodies and community representatives to reduce the impact of change in a society going through transition.</p> <p>As a first step in this direction SEEDS has opened a 'One World Centre' providing a range of services and activities promoting integration and meeting unmet needs. This is the first One World Centre of its kind in Ireland and now houses seven different ethnic minority groups as well as the Foyle Language School. <a href="http://www.seeds.ie">http://www.seeds.ie</a></p>

<p><b>Credit unions</b></p>	<p><b>Access to Credit Unions for Everyone</b> ACE Credit Union Services is a national credit union support organisation, which has been in operation for ten years. About 45 credit unions based in England, Scotland, Wales and Jersey are currently affiliated to ACE. <a href="http://www.acecus.org/">http://www.acecus.org/</a></p> <p><b>Association of British Credit Unions Ltd.</b> ABCUL is the main trade association for credit unions in Britain. They provide a wide range of services to their members including information, representation and training. <a href="http://www.abcul.org">http://www.abcul.org</a></p> <p><b>Social Investment Scotland</b> – <a href="http://www.socialinvestmentscotland.com">http://www.socialinvestmentscotland.com</a></p>
<p><b>Food/ food growing and farmer's markets</b></p>	<p><b>Making Local Food Work</b> An advice and support service for community food enterprises across England <a href="http://www.makinglocalfoodwork.co.uk/">www.makinglocalfoodwork.co.uk/</a></p> <p><b>Real Bread Campaign – Community Supported Baking (CBS)</b> Information about the emergence of Community Supported Baking <a href="http://www.sustainweb.org/realbread/community_supported_baking/">http://www.sustainweb.org/realbread/community_supported_baking/</a></p> <p><b>Punjabi Women's Kitchen</b>, Leith, Edinburgh <i>Punjab'n De Rasoi</i>, to give the café its proper name, has opened with the help of £70,000 from the Scottish Government's Third Sector Enterprise Fund. Each day, volunteers work with trained staff. The aim is to provide skills and training in catering, customer service and food hygiene with extra tuition in literacy and numeracy when it is needed. <a href="http://www.leithopenspace.co.uk/community-news/recipes-for-success-in-the-punjabi-womens-kitchen/">http://www.leithopenspace.co.uk/community-news/recipes-for-success-in-the-punjabi-womens-kitchen/</a></p> <p><b>Incredible Edible Todmorden</b> Incredible Edible Todmorden aims to increase the amount of local food grown and eaten in the town. Businesses, schools, farmers and the community are all involved. Vegetables and fruit are springing up everywhere. Public flowerbeds are being transformed into community herb gardens and vegetable patches. <a href="http://www.incredible-edible-todmorden.co.uk/">www.incredible-edible-todmorden.co.uk/</a></p> <p><b>Shipbourne Farmers Market</b> In 1285, Edward I granted the village of Shipbourne permission to hold a weekly market. In 2003, with the help of a grant from Rural Revival, the Parochial Church Council re-inaugurated the market. The regular Thursday venue has now grown to the point where there are 20 stalls and 200+ visitors. Their objective is to provide a focus for the community (which has been lacking since the closure of the village shops many years ago) and a retail outlet for small local producers. The Market is run entirely by volunteers. Any surplus made by the market is donated to Agricultural charities such as the Farm Crisis Network and Bread-line Africa. <a href="http://www.kfma.org.uk/market-page.html?marketID=30">http://www.kfma.org.uk/market-page.html?marketID=30</a></p>

Service	Examples
<b>Homelessness</b>	<p><b>The Homeless World Cup</b></p> <p>The Homeless World Cup is a world-class, annual, international football tournament that uses football as a catalyst to encourage people who are homeless to change their lives; and to change the attitudes of governments, media, public and key influencers to create better solutions to homelessness around the world. Founded by world-leading social entrepreneur, Big Issue founder Mel Young, this is run from Edinburgh.</p> <p><a href="http://www.homelessworldcup.org">http://www.homelessworldcup.org</a></p>
<b>Hospices</b>	<p><b>Myton Hospices</b></p> <p>Each year the Myton Hospices care for over 1700 patients and their families at hospices in Warwick, Rugby and Coventry. The hospices give support and reassurance, relieve symptoms and control pain, and help individuals make the most of every minute of their lives. The Myton Hospices are an independent charity and all services are provided free of charge but the running costs for the three hospices amount to more than £5.2million per annum, raised through voluntary donations.</p> <p><a href="http://www.mytonhospice.org">www.mytonhospice.org</a></p>
<b>Interpreting/ language school</b>	<p><b>Columba Centre Islay/ Ionad Chaluum Chille Ìle</b></p> <p>Argyll's only Gaelic Centre, opened in August 2002 as a Centre for Gaelic Language and Culture. The old fever hospital at Gartnatra was renovated and the Centre now offers teaching rooms, library, meeting rooms, a broadcasting studio, computer suite and an exhibition area. The Centre works closely with various local community groups to enhance the enjoyment, interpretation and learning of Gaelic Language and culture. Courses through the medium of Gaelic are offered at different levels, higher education level and community classes.</p> <p><a href="http://www.ile.ac.uk">www.ile.ac.uk</a></p>
<b>LEADER Local Action Groups</b>	<p>There is a huge amount of community-led social enterprise being delivered by Local Action Groups across the UK and Ireland. You can find out about this through the Rural Development Programme Networks:</p> <p>England: <a href="http://www.rdpenetwork.org.uk">www.rdpenetwork.org.uk</a></p> <p>Scotland: <a href="http://www.ruralgateway.org.uk">www.ruralgateway.org.uk</a></p> <p>Wales: <a href="http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/farmingandcountryside/ruraldevelopment/walesruralnetwork">http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/farmingandcountryside/ruraldevelopment/walesruralnetwork</a></p> <p>Northern Ireland: <a href="http://www.ruralnetworkni.org.uk">www.ruralnetworkni.org.uk</a></p> <p>Ireland: <a href="http://www.nrn.ie">www.nrn.ie</a></p>
<b>Leisure including swimming pools</b>	<p><b>Atlantis Leisure and Mid Argyll Community Pool</b></p> <p>A community-owned leisure centres in Argyll and Bute. Atlantis Leisure was a Carnegie RARP partners and have produced an action research report titled: 'Community led Service Provision in Rural Areas' based on their 18 years experience.</p> <p><a href="http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/publications/steps_to_successful_community-led_service_provision_in_rural_areas">http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/publications/steps_to_successful_community-led_service_provision_in_rural_areas</a></p>

<p><b>Libraries</b></p>	<p><b>Chestnut Centre</b>, Deighton The Chestnut Centre opened in May 2005 containing a nursery, community café, meeting space, IT suite, Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing (KNH), the police, 6 business units, employment support and family support workers. A library and information centre was a natural extension to the Chestnut Centre's existing role, offering a library service, free internet access, free access to all council services, council payments and enquiries, help with completing council forms and a reporting service for council services such as potholes and street lights.  The centre is run by Fresh Horizons, a social enterprise company. <b><a href="http://www.facebook.com/chestnutlibrary">http://www.facebook.com/chestnutlibrary</a></b></p> <p><b>Bookdonors</b>, Selkirk Bookdonors is a social enterprise trading in used books to help people, charities and our environment. <b><a href="http://www.book-donors.co.uk">http://www.book-donors.co.uk</a></b></p>
<p><b>Litter</b></p>	<p><b>The CPRE Norfolk Anti-Litter Group</b> The CPRE Norfolk Anti-Litter Group takes local campaigning action to clean up Norfolk and prevent the spread of litter and fly tipping across the county. The group is working with district and county councils to look at fresh ways to tackle the litter problem, while also engaging with parish councils, community groups and schools across Norfolk. Litter picking events have been featured on BBC TV and BBC Radio and volunteers collected over 250 bags of rubbish last year during the annual 'Clean Up Norfolk' event. <b><a href="http://www.cprenorfolk.org.uk">http://www.cprenorfolk.org.uk</a></b></p>
<p><b>Meals on Wheels</b></p>	<p><b>Duhallow Community Food Services</b> Established in 1997, Duhallow Community Food Services is an award winning community enterprise providing a subsidised meal service to those that are not in a position to cook for themselves and are isolated because of age, illness, lack of transport or other disadvantages that result in living in a rural area. In order to supplement the cost of producing the "meals on wheels" service, Duhallow Community Food Services expanded the business into two other key facets, bakery and contract catering. For family and community events, celebrations and gatherings, Duhallow Community Food Services offer a selection of meal options. Typically this service is used for christenings, communions, confirmations, home entertaining and wider community events. <b><a href="http://www.foodinduhallow.com/">http://www.foodinduhallow.com/</a></b></p>
<p><b>Music Festivals</b></p>	<p><b>Isle of Jura Music Festival</b> The Isle of Jura Music Festival Organising Committee is a charitable, unincorporated association. Their purpose is to organise and run a Music Festival on the Isle of Jura, to provide opportunities for young people to learn/improve their music based skill and help them refine and develop those skills in the future. By bringing in top class musicians every year to perform and run workshops, the instruction and inspiration they provide is invaluable. Through their youth education programme they have been able to help through a small annual grant, a number of young people to fulfil their potential and follow their chosen path. <b><a href="http://www.juramusicfestival.com">www.juramusicfestival.com</a></b></p>

Service	Examples
<p><b>Older people – Services</b></p>	<p><b>ILM Highland</b>            ILM (Highland) was set up in 1994 to provide valuable services to benefit the community, economy and environment of the Scottish Highlands. As a charity and social enterprise, one of our key aims is to ensure that elderly and more vulnerable people have access to specific services that will enhance their every-day lives leading to a more comfortable and cost-saving way of life. <a href="http://www.ilmhighland.co.uk">http://www.ilmhighland.co.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Parks and gardens</b></p>	<p><b>Green Estate</b>            Green Estate is part of the family of third sector organisations that operate from the Manor and Castle areas in South Sheffield. Their story started in 1998. The inner city area, like many others, was suffering some of the worst effects of social, economic and environmental poverty. Although in an appalling state, it was clear that this area itself had an exceptional history, significant areas of green spaces and a lot of people that wanted to make a difference. This inspired them to up take on the role of stewards to their ‘Green Estate’            Today, they weave competitive commercial services together with other landscape, cultural and social initiatives.  <a href="http://www.greenestate.org.uk">www.greenestate.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Post Offices and shops</b></p>	<p><b>Community Retailing Network</b>            From small communities seeking to retain their local shop, post office or petrol pumps to larger urban areas trying to provide better access to affordable, fresh, healthy food – community ownership can offer a sustainable, long-term solution.            The Network aims to support and develop community owned retailing  <a href="http://www.communityretailing.co.uk/">http://www.communityretailing.co.uk/</a></p> <p><b>The Plunkett Foundation – The Village Core Programme</b>            The Village CORE Programme is a dedicated support programme for communities looking to set up and run a community-owned rural shop.            It provides advisory support along with a £40,000 funding package comprised of a £20,000 grant matched with a £20,000 loan, which is also matched by the equivalent community contributions.            This programme, which will have supported over 50 new community-owned rural shops by the end of 2009, has recently been renewed for a further three years.  <a href="http://www.plunkett.co.uk/whatwedo/core/Core.cfm">http://www.plunkett.co.uk/whatwedo/core/Core.cfm</a></p>

<b>Public Houses/ brewery</b>	<p><b>Hesket Newmarket Brewery</b></p> <p>The brewery in Hesket Newmarket, Cumbria had become a Mecca for real ale enthusiasts, its beers winning awards up and down the country. When it came onto the market, the normal option would have been for private investors to buy the brewery. But locals rejected this idea when it became apparent that many investors were more interested in the resale value of the brewery land, rather than the brewery itself or the economic fortunes of the wider community.</p> <p>Instead, local people came up with the idea of forming a brewery cooperative, a community enterprise run on democratic principles through which members who lived locally or had local connections could own equal shares. Hesket Newmarket Brewery Co-operative began operating in January 2000</p> <p><a href="http://www.hesketbrewery.co.uk/">http://www.hesketbrewery.co.uk/</a></p>
<b>Renewable Energy</b>	<p><b>Community Energy Scotland</b></p> <p>Scotland's only national body dedicated to supporting community-based organisations to benefit from renewable energy. Their aim is to build confidence, resilience and wealth at community level in Scotland through sustainable energy development.</p> <p><a href="http://www.communityenergyscotland.org.uk/">http://www.communityenergyscotland.org.uk/</a></p>
<b>Residential children's homes</b>	<p><b>Spark of Genius</b></p> <p>Spark of Genius is an independent organisation, which works predominantly with young people, their families and carers, who need a variety of supports to achieve their true potential. Spark of Genius provides: Spark of Genius has several small rural residential houses, all within easy reach of major towns and cities. Our houses provide a therapeutic environment to support children and young people who have a variety of needs.</p> <p><a href="http://www.sparkofgenius.com/residential.html">http://www.sparkofgenius.com/residential.html</a></p> <p><b>Kibble Centre</b></p> <p>The Kibble Centre in Paisley is today one of Scotland's largest and most thriving social enterprises, working with young people who have a complex mix of social, emotional, educational and behavioural problems. They are pioneering social enterprise to deliver high quality and sustainable services for the public benefit.</p> <p><a href="http://www.kibble.org">http://www.kibble.org</a></p>
<b>School Meals</b>	<p><b>Local Food Links</b>, Bridport, Dorset</p> <p>Local Food Links Ltd is a community owned social enterprise based at the Bridport Centre for Local Food, in West Dorset. Building on a successful soup lunch pilot project pioneered with Bridport Primary School and St. Mary's Primary School in 2006 and 2006, Local Food Links has partnered with the eight primary schools in the Bridport Pyramid to provide a transported hot meals service to children and families. Four schools in neighbouring pyramids joined the partnership in 2008. In February 2009, Local Food Links took on management of a Dorset County Council owned kitchen in the Blandford Children's Centre. Between March and May, full hot school meal services will be rolled out to the eight schools in the Blandford Pyramid. Parents and carers of children at a Local Food Links partner school can now choose, order, and pay for meals online, through <a href="http://myschoolmeals.co.uk">myschoolmeals.co.uk</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.localfoodlinks.org.uk">http://www.localfoodlinks.org.uk</a></p>

Service	Examples
<b>Training</b>	<p><b>Growing Well</b>            Growing Well is a Soil Association certified social enterprise based at Low Sizergh Farm, Cumbria, growing and selling superb organic vegetables from a six-acre site. They train all kinds of people in horticulture and run a programme of educational visits to the site. They create volunteering placements for local people recovering from mental health issues, giving everyone opportunities to build their confidence and skills in a busy work environment. Also run a Cropshare scheme.  <a href="http://www.growingwell.co.uk/">http://www.growingwell.co.uk/</a></p> <p><b>Community Opportunities for Participation in Enterprise</b>            C.O.P.E. stands for Community Opportunities for Participation in Enterprise. It was established in the Shetland Islands in 1997 following a three-year pilot under the local authority. It is now a limited company with charitable status, employing almost 100 staff and trainees, plus a number of volunteers. 11 of the 50 members of staff have disabilities, and C.O.P.E. provide placements for an additional 45 people on training and support programmes. In addition they offer opportunities to 20 volunteers who work within the programme assisting the trainees and gaining key skills.  <a href="http://www.cope.ltd.uk/">http://www.cope.ltd.uk/</a></p> <p><b>STRIDE (SHARP Training, Recycling, and Income Development Enterprise)</b>            STRIDE is an award-winning social enterprise based in Leicester providing work experience and training in a real business environment.            STRIDE accepts donated furniture and purchase damaged and returned furniture from catalogue companies for socially disadvantaged trainees to collect, renovate and deliver to low-income families. Trainees build up skills to return to the labour market, SHARP meets its social responsibility by providing furniture to beneficiaries of its charity, and an income is generated by selling the rest of the furniture to the general public. STRIDE has since opened three factory shops to meet the growing demand  <a href="http://www.leicesterstride.co.uk/">http://www.leicesterstride.co.uk/</a></p> <p><b>Engine Shed</b>            Edinburgh's famous Engine Shed café, established in 1989, offers training to people with a range of learning disabilities. Trainees at the café work alongside staff in order to develop the skills and confidence necessary for a successful transition into the world of paid work. Training programmes also extend to work experience with local employers as well as the opportunity to study for relevant vocational qualifications. Trainees work in the bakery, the food processing unit, the shop and the café as well as doing external catering.  <a href="http://www.engineshed.org.uk">www.engineshed.org.uk</a></p>

<b>Transport</b>	<p><b>HCT Group (“HCT”)</b> HCT is an award winning and rapidly growing provider of public transport and related training services in the UK. Originally founded in 1982, their vision is social justice and equality for all. Their transport services are based at six depots in London, two in Yorkshire, and one in Hull. The company operates mainstream bus routes, education transport for children with disabilities, social services transport for older and disabled people, yellow school bus services and a wide range of community transport services. <a href="http://www.hctgroup.org/">http://www.hctgroup.org/</a></p> <p><b>Community Transport Association UK</b> The CTA is a rapidly growing national charity giving voice and providing leadership, learning and enterprise support to a wide range of organisations delivering innovative and flexible transport solutions to achieve social change in their communities. <a href="http://www.ctauk.org/">http://www.ctauk.org/</a></p>
<b>Travellers</b>	<p><b>Mendip Gypsy and Traveller CLT Project</b> Mendip Community Land Trust is a new scheme being offered by Mendip District Council for Gypsies and Travellers to establish, develop and own permanent residential sites within Mendip. As an alternative to building large-scale Local Authority rented sites, the scheme offers a way for groups to set up small scale, family sized sites, which are self-managed and offer high, long-term security for the residents. <a href="http://www.mendip-clt.org.uk/">http://www.mendip-clt.org.uk/</a></p>
<b>Trees and woodland</b>	<p><b>Community Woodlands Association</b> The Community Woodlands Association was established in 2003 as the direct representative body of Scotland’s community woodland groups. We help community woodland groups across the country achieve their aspirations and potential, providing advice, assistance and information, facilitating networking and training, and representing and promoting community woodlands to the wider world. <a href="http://www.communitywoods.org/">http://www.communitywoods.org/</a></p>
<b>Unemployment</b>	<p><b>The Grow Organisation UK Ltd</b> The Grow Organisation Ltd is an innovative umbrella social enterprise offering recognised training and qualifications, volunteering opportunities, placements and professional work experience to individuals farthest removed from the labour market. The Grow group consists of individual social enterprises, charities, and national franchise partners delivering a diverse range of services with the same goals, values and ethics. Their focus is on people and positive changes. Programmes include Mow &amp; Grow, Cook for Life, Trade &amp; Grow, Recycle &amp; Grow and Clean &amp; Grow. <a href="http://www.thegroworganisation.org">http://www.thegroworganisation.org</a></p> <p><b>Forth Sector</b> Forth Sector is one of the UK’s leading and most innovative social enterprises with the primary focus to provide employability support to aid the recovery of people with mental health problems. <a href="http://www.forthsector.org.uk/">http://www.forthsector.org.uk/</a></p> <p><b>The WISE Group</b> The Wise Group is a social enterprise with a reputation built since 1983 on devising and managing efficient, innovative and flexible ways into work. They increase job and training opportunities for people, contribute to the regeneration of communities, and help create a fairer and greener society. <a href="http://www.thewisegroup.co.uk/">http://www.thewisegroup.co.uk/</a></p>

Service	Examples
<b>Waste management/ recycling</b>	<p><b>MESS (Mull's Environmentally Sensitive Solutions)</b>, Argyll and Bute, Scotland. A community-led partnership to reduce waste on Mull and Iona, MESS is contracted to service island recycling banks, and also engages volunteers in the operation of its two charity shops. Profits generated by the charity shops are distributed amongst other community groups and projects. MESS also promotes composting, energy efficiency and produces bio-diesel. <a href="http://www.mict.co.uk">http://www.mict.co.uk</a></p> <p><b>Community Recycling Network for Scotland</b> The Community Recycling Network for Scotland (CRNS) exists to build a strong community-recycling sector in Scotland, creating real social, environmental and economic benefits for local communities. Membership comprises over 130 recycling, reuse and waste prevention organisations across Scotland. <a href="http://www.crns.org.uk">http://www.crns.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>South Shropshire Furniture Scheme</b> South Shropshire Furniture Scheme (SSFS) started in 1994. It was an informal network providing domestic furniture to people with low incomes and disadvantaged backgrounds. It now delivers a variety of reuse services on behalf of South Shropshire District Council. SSFS has a turnover of over £370,000, with 50 per cent of its income coming from contracts. <a href="http://www.furniturescheme.co.uk/">www.furniturescheme.co.uk/</a></p>
<b>Young People</b>	<p><b>Stramash – Inspiring Life through Adventure/ Scotland's Outdoor Social Enterprise</b>, Argyll and Bute, Scotland Stramash delivers top quality outdoor learning, outdoor activities, expeditions and outdoor sports development. Being a social enterprise means that Stramash invests its resources back into communities and individuals, making a real difference to people's lives. (Also offers adult courses too.) <a href="http://www.stramash.org.uk">http://www.stramash.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>TR14ers</b>, Cornwall In September 2005 following a chance meeting between Sgt David Aynsley and internationally renowned choreographer Danny Price, the idea for community dance workshops was born. Workshops began in October 2005 and have been successful beyond anyone's wildest imaginings with over 400 members who now call themselves the TR 14ERS. Workshops are free and take place over two days each school holiday and are aimed at young people aged 11–18 years. Between workshops Danny trains 'champions' from the TR14ERS, to keep the momentum and practice going. <a href="http://www.tr14ers.co.uk/">http://www.tr14ers.co.uk/</a></p>
<b>Youth Hostels</b>	<p><b>Papay Community Cooperative – Beltane House, Hostel and Shop</b> The Papay Community Cooperative provides a licensed general merchants' shop and visitor accommodation in Beltane House, a community-run complex created from a row of 19th century converted farm cottages. Owned and run by the community, Beltane provides quality self-catering accommodation offering a range of private and shared hostel rooms. <a href="http://www.papawestrays.co.uk">http://www.papawestrays.co.uk</a></p>









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