



Cynefin projects in Cardiff

Place Study

Background

Cynefin in Cardiff focused on a number of inner-city neighbourhoods that are situated around the busy high street City Road. The demographic is difficult to characterise as there are many different people living in a relatively small space. Generally, the area has a transient, multicultural population made up of students (particularly in the east), older people, families, young professionals, economically deprived residents (particularly in the south) and wealthy people (towards the north).

Focusing on this area was challenging but also exciting. Initial questions arose such as: is it possible to create a sense of pride in place in a transient community and how do you support urban residents to create more sustainable neighbourhoods? There appeared to be little resource focused on this area from public sector agencies so there were plenty of opportunities to work with residents from a low baseline and to create new, positive change.



Community Visioning Event

What happened?

Firstly, extensive, local statistical and street level research was carried out alongside consultation exercises with local Public Sector and Third Sector officers. This was an important first step as research mistakes were rectified; additional local intelligence was added; organisations offered support; and duplication of activities that were already operating



Figure 1 - Cynefin Cardiff Process Chart

was avoided.

Following this, a series of visioning/consultation events took place. Firstly, a community visioning event was organised where residents expressed the opportunities and challenges that existed in the area, and discussed ideas that might make the area more sustainable. These ideas were taken to an 'ideas and support' event where professionals, linked to the ideas that emerged from the visioning event, discussed possibilities and expressed commitment to get involved. Afterwards a series of theme related workshops were organised to prioritise project ideas.

Throughout 2014 a series of projects were co-productively delivered, linked to the themes of: community engagement; active travel; food and growing; waste and local environmental quality; community arts; and regeneration.

In order to celebrate successes and plan future projects a community 're-visioning' event took place towards the end of 2014. Residents, now armed with concrete examples of what is possible, discussed numerous ideas about future projects. These projects were prioritised, co-designed and delivered with residents and a number of other stakeholders throughout 2015.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Well-being Goals	A prosperous Wales	A resilient Wales	A healthier Wales	A more equal Wales	A Wales of cohesive communities	A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	A globally responsible Wales	Sustainable Development Principle - ways of working
								Long term Prevention Integration Collaboration Involvement

Although most of the projects were successful, the process wasn't straightforward and many barriers and challenges were encountered. The most challenging aspects were (in no particular order):

- Residential, public and third sector apathy
- Inconsistent volunteers; wavering desire to see projects through to the end
- Difficulty in finding grant recipients
- Effectively engaging with such a complex and multi-cultural demographic
- Political obstructions
- Uncertainty over the length of the Cynefin Programme

Generally these issues were overcome through persistence, by forming many partnerships, and by working closely with charities and social enterprises when there was a lack of support from other agencies. Some difficulties arose due to the Place Coordinator (PC)'s association with Cardiff Council (the PC was placed at County Hall), as some stakeholders appeared to find it difficult to understand the impartial and independent PC role, which appeared to undermine some projects. Certain projects, however, would have been impossible without the support of the local authority.

Practical details

In total, 16 projects were delivered between January 2014 and November 2015, with around £40k of direct grant funding successfully acquired and a further £60k associate funding received. Over 40 different organisations have been involved in one or more of the projects. Hundreds of residents have actively taken part in the design and/or delivery of projects and thousands of people have attended events. Although the details differ between individual projects, the process was generally similar (Figure 2).



Figure 2 - Cynefin Cardiff Project Process

Many positive outcomes have arisen from Cynefin Cardiff that collectively have improved the physical and psychological makeup of the area (Figure 3) In addition, Cynefin Cardiff has a sizeable following on social media with 350 followers on Facebook and 540 followers on Twitter.

Guidelines (what do you need to replicate this?)

- A variety of good quality community spaces
- Money
- Honest community consultation
- An engaged community
- Good quality graphic designers
- Good, popular communicators
- Relatively progressive council/councillors
- Grant recipients
- A co-ordinator who is willing to work anti-social hours
- Time to take ideas from a start point to a finish
- Strong social media presence
- Dynamic social enterprises



3 x large visioning events
5 x theme related workshops
20+ Project workshops



11 x community waymarkers
21 x removal of un-needed street furniture



16 x new bike stands
10 x new litter bins
3 x murals



1 green space regen plan
1 community garden formed
3 x community planters



4 x food waste workshops
7 x food waste roadshows
2 x street cleanliness surveys



2 x food festivals
2 x swap shop events
1 pedal powered cinema

Figure 3 - Cynefin Cardiff Outcomes

What's next?

A key partner for many of the aforementioned projects has been Green City Events. Cynefin has been supporting Green City with a funding application that will include the continuation of some of the more successful projects that have taken place in Cynefin Cardiff areas over the last few years. If the application is successful then the Cynefin Cardiff 'legacy' will certainly continue beyond the length of the programme. If the application is unsuccessful then it is difficult to predict whether projects will continue or not, as there are so many variables involved. Due to the demographic of the area it is difficult to imagine that some of the projects will be taken on by volunteers without the support of a Cynefin type role. This is mainly due to the amount of time many projects take (it took over 10 months to deliver a community mural for example) and due to the complexities of running a project from start to finish (see Figure 2).

Stakeholders involved

The people of Adamsdown, Cathays, Plasnewydd and Roath, Cardiff, Roath Residents Action Group/Plasnewydd, Community Garden, Green City Events, Cardiff YMCA/Plasnewydd Community Centre, Cardiff University, Student Volunteer Centre, Cardiff Council (various departments), Adamsdown Environmental Action, GroupDan, Green Photography, Lia's Kitchen, St Martins Church, Sustrans, Cardiff Cycle City, Modern Alchemists, People Around Here, The various food businesses of Roath and Adamsdown, South Wales Police, I Loves the 'Diff Mackintosh Community Gardens, Roath Cardiff.Net, The Gate Arts Centre, Made in Roath, Pedal Emporium, Darkened Rooms, Community First (STAR Cluster), Food Cardiff, The Big Lottery, WRAP and Tidy Towns.

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