

# Empowered Communities in the 2020s

## IVAR Research Briefing 2 – Countries Dialogue

January 2018

**What does the future hold for communities in the four countries of the UK?**

### Introduction

**What does the future hold for communities in the four countries of the UK?** We have just completed a series of four dialogues in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales to find out what people working with communities think about this question.

There are commonalities and differences across the four countries – and of course, there are differences within each country (regionally and locally) as well. Participants in all four countries expressed shared concerns about austerity, deep-rooted poverty and increasingly fragmented and transient communities. We also found differences – political, financial, cultural – in their ideas about the future and in the kinds of positive stories of community action they told.

By looking at the differences between each country, we hope to better understand what conditions can support powerful communities in the future and where the challenges remain; and to identify emerging questions and themes to inform the final stage of research.

### About the research

The ‘Empowered Communities in the 2020s’ research looks at what needs to happen for communities to become more empowered in the future. Funded by Community Development Foundation (CDF) legacy money and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), this research will inform Local Trust’s future work on community empowerment. IVAR’s research is concerned with disadvantaged communities and we are working in depth with four local communities as well as talking with people involved in communities across the UK.

IVAR is facilitating a series of dialogues exploring the past, present and future of support to communities. The dialogues will overlap, but are loosely organised around ‘Issues’, ‘Countries’, and ‘Places’.

The questions we were asked to address are:

- How can communities become more empowered and vibrant in the next ten years?

- How can communities identify and articulate issues and take collective action to address them over the next decade?
- What might help people imagine what the future will look like, especially given the uncertainty ahead, and give them the tools to shape that future?
- What needs to happen for communities to become more empowered in the future?

This is the second interim report on the research and builds on the earlier Scoping and Issues reports that have already been published.<sup>1</sup>

## Our approach to this stage of the research

The Countries Dialogue has concentrated on hearing from a range of people in a variety of roles across the community and voluntary, funding, academic and statutory sectors, who work with communities in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Given that data collected so far was weighted towards England, we paid special attention to securing opportunities in the other three countries. Data from all four countries has been analysed and presented in this report.

Between May and October 2017, we ran workshops, carried out interviews and attended events aimed at building a picture of the diverse experiences and perspectives of people working with communities in a variety of roles in each country. Our aim was to understand the context, build on what we have learned so far and begin to focus on the future for communities (see Appendix A for a list of the kinds of questions we asked and information on participants).

## Key findings

In this interim report, we share our first ideas about what we can learn from looking across the four UK countries. Inevitably, we have left out more than we have put in, including inspiring and positive examples of community action; we will pick these up in our final report. Our intention with this interim report is to provide a snapshot of issues of concern and ideas for the future that we will take into the next phase of our research. We have not attempted to provide a comprehensive analysis of work with communities in each country; that is beyond the scope of this research and is, in any case, covered elsewhere.

The findings are organised under the following headings:

1. **Shared concerns:** looks at the similarities between the countries
2. **Differences:** looks at the differences between the countries
3. **What does this tell us about the future?** Looks at what the similarities and differences tell us about how to support powerful communities in the future.

In the report, we refer to all those who took part in interviews, workshops or events as 'participants'. We use 'community action' and 'community work' as loose terms to encompass the range of activities and support that people discussed with us.

## 1 - Shared concerns

So first, what did our findings from each country have in common? Here we set out a number of shared concerns.

### Impoverished communities

Austerity and its effects featured strongly in all our conversations. As one participant from Wales commented: *'It's alarming. If you walk around Cardiff, you can see the destitution'*. People in all four countries are struggling to cope with cuts in public services and *'focusing on just keeping things open'* (Northern Ireland). People we spoke to were dismayed by hostile government policies, the impact of welfare reforms which *'saps people's resilience down to nothing'* and the way in which people on benefits were labelled as cheats. Brexit was also looming large on the horizon, bringing significant uncertainties, especially for rural communities.

Participants reported an increasing reliance on food banks, social isolation, rising incidence of mental ill health and *'all-encompassing, post-industrial, deeply rooted social poverty'* in poor communities. The pressures of poverty militate against people's ability to engage with their communities – people's energies are consumed in the struggle to survive and they are frequently holding down several jobs and/or working in the insecure 'gig economy'.

*'In our very deprived areas, there is no hope. Even though there's the policy and legal framework, this may inadvertently impact on communities if there's not enough support. Putting in place support might help policy to achieve equality.'* (Scotland)

As we already know, poverty is linked with poor health and lower life expectancy, amongst a range of other social problems.<sup>2</sup>

Participants also commented specifically on the structural issues that are affecting communities. These included: the lack of affordable, secure housing; poor transport infrastructure – particularly in rural communities; the lack of (aspirational) employment opportunities; and stagnating local economies. One participant from Wales talked about the limits of community development when faced with deep-rooted, complex social problems:

*'Being realistic, you can't solve poverty by setting up a little group on Tuesday nights. Community development cannot help if there is no food in the cupboard. It can improve people's quality of life, but the only way to tackle poverty is economic investment.'*

### Fragmented communities

Poverty can also breed division and fear of 'the other'. People keep themselves to themselves. Our responses suggest that the Brexit debate has put a spotlight on anti-immigration sentiment – and not just in poorer communities - *'It's massive – anger being directed at other people'* (England) - often in the least diverse communities. Another aspect of Brexit is the insecurity it has visited on non-nationals.

Participants highlighted the need to have difficult conversations and allow different viewpoints to be expressed on the one hand, and the importance of finding ways to challenge the prejudices and misunderstandings that have been encouraged by the media on the other. Fear of terrorism

has fuelled Islamophobia and people who feel threatened need to see that: *'If people are interested in their homeland community, it does NOT mean they are terrorists'* (England).

Insecure housing is also leading to greater transience and increasing fragmentation amongst communities that have traditionally been stable and we return to this below.

*'Settled ex-mining communities are easier to engage, but now transience is becoming routine because of market forces – social networks are eroded because of enforced moves.'* (Wales)

We collected many examples of community activities that participants felt *do* bring people together and bridge divides. These ranged from the value of uniformed groups like the scout movement that link young people up beyond their own community, to gardening and other activities that take people outside. Participants gave us examples where sport has been used to bridge community divides, but also instances where it has reinforced them.

## Private communities

People from all four countries highlighted the loss of public spaces – from libraries to community hubs, in both rural and urban areas – triggered by reductions in public spending. It is getting more difficult to find places to meet formally or informally. This impacts on spaces for spontaneous encounters, that is to say, spaces where people from different parts of the community can bump into each other. Where spaces exist, there is increasing pressure to see them as a source of income; facilities that groups could use for nothing or very little in the past are becoming increasingly scarce.

Security concerns can also make it more difficult for people to drop in on each other – each floor of a block of flats, for example, may have its own locked gate. And fears about safety – whether justified or not – mean that people may not go out at night. While this is not new, current trends may be increasingly affecting people's ability to meet and organise.

## Transient communities

In times gone by, community development has had a strong presence on public housing estates, with community development professionals working with tenants' and residents' associations. But the nature of social housing and the housing market generally has changed and the balance between social and privately rented housing has shifted. In particular, Right to Buy means that there is now a lot of privately rented housing in areas that used to be all council housing. It can be hard for people who are on six-month tenancies<sup>3</sup> to develop a sense of identity with the local community, let alone commit to local activities. In some areas, particularly in England, people also talked about gentrification and the position some tenants find themselves in, where demanding improvements to their accommodation could lead to rent increases that they cannot afford. In Northern Ireland, people told us that drug problems on estates were driving some people to move elsewhere.

In Wales and Northern Ireland, people told us that it was common to lose young people to outward migration, especially from rural areas. Other research commissioned by Local Trust on the future for communities suggests that this may be true elsewhere.<sup>4</sup>

## Relationships with the state

There was a lot of familiar concern about the expectation that communities would pick up the pieces left by service cuts.<sup>5</sup> A Scottish participant argued that the decentralisation of responsibility is accompanied by a centralisation of power. Participants recognised the need for genuine community involvement in the decisions that affect them and welcomed moves towards co-production. For example: *'Scotland is already committed to a decentralisation bill. [There is] something about decentralising and within that, communities being part of it rather than just recipients, so they are partners in designing the process.'*

There was also debate about the extent to which asset transfer is empowering. More broadly, participants feared that community development had *'lost its rebelliousness'*.

In Northern Ireland, people talked about the *'statutorisation of community development'* and political interference in community development funding. One participant even suggested that organisations were *'paying off communities instead of addressing poverty and unlawful behaviour'*.

But in both Wales and Northern Ireland, participants stressed the importance of a strong and independent voluntary and community sector. In Wales, there is a statutory requirement for working with the voluntary sector and this has led to an *'uncomfortable closeness'* in which *'the voluntary sector has become a delivery arm for government policy'*.

There were also questions about how far statutory organisations were willing to allow genuine control:

*'There is an idea that democratic engagement is a managerial issue and something that can be delivered downwards. But you can't deliver democracy – that takes away from it being a political process. There is no allowance for a difference of opinion. (Scotland)*

Nonetheless, despite concerns about co-option, some – particularly in Scotland – saw opportunities in policies to encourage asset transfer and co-production. For example, communities in northern, rural areas of Scotland were identified as being more actively engaged with the notion of community development:

*'North is more active in the rural areas ... because the HIEs (Highlands and Islands Enterprise) have a more developmental role than the south of Scotland version. The earlier asset transfers – lands, forests, islands, etc. – were all in rural areas. The intention is that this will gradually spread to more urban areas.'*

In this section, we have described a series of common concerns and ideas raised by participants across the four countries. Many of these are about how difficult life is for disadvantaged communities and how bleak the future can look. We report these views because they are what we, as researchers, heard. We might add, however, some observations of our own. First, our participants share a commitment to work in communities: they are still out there and doing the best they can in difficult circumstances. Second, they are determined to find opportunities and acknowledge what communities can do and are doing. They also face a third, slightly different question: is their work still about communities of place? In other words, what

does 'community' mean to people who are not able to anchor themselves in a particular neighbourhood?

## 2 - Differences

We found a number of dimensions where differences between the four countries were likely to mean different things for the future for their communities into the 2020s and we outline these under the following headings:

- Politics and government
- Culture and identity
- Past and current investment in community development
- Community work on the ground.

We also highlight a number of other cross-cutting themes:

- The relationship between community development and the state
- Population change and diversity
- The potential impact of Brexit
- Funding sources
- Training opportunities
- Potential growth points and infrastructure.

### Politics and government

The devolved administrations in Wales and Scotland are Labour and Scottish National Party respectively. Scotland's devolved administration has introduced social policies that are significantly different from those in the rest of the UK. In Scotland and Wales, the relationship between national government and its citizens (and its voluntary and community sectors) is closer than it is in England, partly due to size and proximity. This presents both pitfalls and advantages - for example, some Welsh participants thought longstanding funding arrangements had weakened the voluntary and community sector's ability to be a critical voice. To an extent, the same is true of local government, which was said to be more trusted in Scotland than in England. Wales, meanwhile, has strong Labour traditions locally and this is unlikely to change.

Northern Ireland is quite different. Its politics are strongly sectarian and it is currently without a devolved administration, facing the prospect of direct rule. Local government has always had a limited role in Northern Ireland and we were told that there are fewer public services than in the rest of the UK.

Wales voted 'leave' in the Brexit referendum, despite considerable investment from the EU, largely for infrastructure projects such as roads, which it stands to lose. Scotland and Northern Ireland voted 'remain'. Within England, very broadly speaking, there is a pattern of largely Conservative rural shires and market towns that favoured Brexit, largely Labour inner city areas that were more likely to vote 'remain' and de-industrialised working class areas that voted Brexit and are vulnerable to the far right.

## Culture and identity

Participants in Wales and Northern Ireland referred to a strong shared history of community action – *‘doing something for ourselves is how it has always been’*. However, in Northern Ireland, this is strongly sectarian – for example, marching bands, sports and the Orange Order – and people’s identity is still marked by the legacy of the Troubles: even younger people in some parts of Belfast are said to talk as if they had been through it personally. This is reinforced by an education system that remains mainly segregated. These fault lines are now supplemented by immigration and new communities from countries such as Poland, Somalia and Syria.

In Wales, participants referred to the many strands of a common, if still perhaps male-dominated, identity that had been forged over a long period – for example, chapels/non-conformism, mining culture, choirs and rugby. Welsh Valley communities have strong camaraderie, but this is under threat in some post-industrial areas:

*‘Community members are doing everything they can to minimise disadvantage at a very basic level. There is a history of the chapels being a source of support, but the institutions that used to support people are disappearing since the mines closed.’*

Welsh language was said to be important to national identity, especially in rural areas, and there is an ongoing Welsh-language initiative (Menter-Iaith) to support community activities operating in Welsh. There is concern about increasing hostility to immigration – as we saw earlier, Wales voted ‘leave’ in the EU referendum. Participants also referred to the long-established fact that Wales loses its *‘brightest and best’* young people to outmigration.

In Scotland, it was difficult to pick up a coherent identity, despite recent history related to the referendum on independence – not only around the vote, but also around political engagement. The stark contrast between the extreme rurality of the Highlands and Scotland’s urban centres presents different challenges and opportunities, with the former also affected by extreme communication and transport difficulties, especially in poor weather. Communities in northern, rural areas of Scotland were identified as being more actively engaged with the notion of community development than those in the south, with unusual and inspiring instances of communities even buying back land including islands. New technologies and clean energy were thought to provide a positive focus for community action:

*‘Combining local and global aspirations is significant – for example, local renewable energy benefitting both the local and global community. With renewables, there is an aspiration for the spaces where people take decisions to be as close as possible to the people using the resource ...’*

By contrast, it is difficult to detect an English identity. Although it also has a long history of community activity of different kinds, community work and community action in England is possibly more regional in nature.

Perhaps the most troubling characteristics relate to population change and anti-immigration sentiment. One participant referred to *‘hostile government policy’* and *‘hostile media’* as the main drivers of this anti-immigration sentiment. Some participants suggested, however, that this is strongest in the least diverse areas.

## Past and current investment in community development

In all four countries, there is a strong legacy of government investment in communities through regeneration programmes in England, Scotland and Wales and peace programmes in Northern Ireland. However, in England, this is much reduced, and there is something of a backlash against the New Labour programmes that are perceived by some to have co-opted community development.<sup>6</sup> There are some smaller programmes (often geared towards asset transfer, social investment and enterprise) and the Community Organisers Programme in England introduced under the previous Coalition Government has been extended.

Cuts to public expenditure and public services have also hit the voluntary sector, locally and nationally. Participants referred to the collapse of community development infrastructure in England and Wales, which has left many smaller groups with nowhere to turn for the information, advice and help they need. Participants also reported pressures on smaller, informal organisations to formalise and grow, or merge.

With funding in short supply, there is increasing competition between infrastructure organisations and the local organisations they support, making it hard to work collaboratively. In Wales, some participants felt the situation is particularly difficult, with the long-standing community development programme, Communities First, coming to an end:

*'Communities are dealing with rapid withdrawal of funding. They are working within the debris that is left and there is not adequate time and measures to fold up the programme.'*

Like Wales, Northern Ireland may face something of a cliff edge as EU funding comes to an end. Northern Ireland has made a considerable investment in community development in the past (along with the EU), but we encountered strong criticism of policies which some participants said had propped up paramilitary organisations and failed to challenge poor practice.

Scotland, by contrast, has an extensive range of policies and programmes of support for community engagement and regeneration and a new emphasis on place-based programmes.<sup>7</sup> The overall perception is that local authority support for community development in Scotland still exists and is stronger than in England, and that there is greater continuity of support within local authorities as opposed to from voluntary and community organisations:

*'Here in Scotland, the local authority can be better at it [community development] than a third sector interface because due to funding and staffing, the third sector interface people are constantly changing – looking for new jobs, etc.'*

According to one Scottish participant, there is 'more support from local authorities than in England: we're where we were in England with local authorities in 2000. Local authorities are still doing a lot more here than they are doing in England. Resources have been protected more from cuts.'

According to our participants, the impact of local government cuts on community development and community support does vary between the countries. In England, many local authorities are hard hit and very few are able to continue to do community development themselves. In Wales, we were told that the sector had not yet been so hard hit by austerity, but the loss of Communities First funding, which was channelled through local authorities, will have an impact.

The Wellbeing and Future Generations Act (2015) is thought to offer significant opportunities for work with Welsh communities. The Act is unique to Wales and requires its public bodies to think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other, and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequality and climate change.<sup>8</sup>

In Northern Ireland, government funding is seen as overregulated, results-driven and top-down and community workers seek independence from the state. Here, the political vacuum means that nothing can be signed off and there is the prospect of job cuts. In Scotland, by contrast, while the state is still investing in community development and local government remains a major provider of community development support, even here, this support is affected by cuts to public funding and some councils are redefining both how they work with communities and how they fund that work:

*'I think there is a real role for the public sector to redefine how it works in communities. We can do what we like in community work, but as long as communities have different competing priorities, that will be a challenge. East Ayrshire seems to understand that the Community Learning Disability Team that they've chosen to retain and invest in now has a role to play internally supporting other colleagues to better understand how one can work with communities.'*

A major alternative funder in parts of the UK is the Big Lottery Fund, which supports Big Local, a programme across 150 areas in England, as well as providing small grants through its Awards for All programme.<sup>9</sup> There are smaller programmes in Wales and Scotland. Participants in Scotland also mentioned the support of the Corra Foundation (previously Lloyds TSB), while participants in Northern Ireland referred to programmes run by Community Foundation Northern Ireland as well as initiatives of the Fermanagh Trust and Resurgam. Pending negotiations, Brexit will affect EU funding, which has been significant in the past in Northern Ireland and elsewhere.

## Community work on the ground

We have already reported on the cuts to community development infrastructure. Most dedicated training courses have also closed, while the end of programmes like Communities First has affected national networks and the availability of regional and national support to communities. There were mixed views from participants in Wales about the role community hubs and anchors might play in mitigating the effects of these changes:

*'The language now is of 'hubs' but this is overused - it means things like co-locating services in a library, which won't empower people.'*

*'[Community anchors] are a means to hold physical assets that is autonomous and independent of the statutory sector, that is keeping social capital.'*

In Northern Ireland, government investment created a large infrastructure, which was criticised for becoming unwieldy. But it has left a legacy of 'good community anchors that have a strong sense of place, strong ethos, not wanting to become the harbour, but happy to be the rowing boat', which were viewed very positively. However, funding for grassroots groups has dropped and grassroots rural infrastructure has been particularly badly affected. Activities in town halls have dropped - 'even dancing' according to one participant - and there is now only one rural women's network, when previously there were six. Everything is 'spread thinner'.

By contrast, community development in Scotland still has a strong infrastructure, with three main organisations that have community development at the heart of what they are about, as well as a number of other key players. There is also some professional training still in place, along with a requirement for community development workers to be registered before they can practice. 'Community development learning' was emphasised as important in Scotland; this is a field of professional work linked to a more widely shared set of values and approaches. It draws on a long history of community education, as well as community development and youth work. Community anchors are important here, too. National Occupational Standards are in place in England and Wales and National Standards for Community Engagement are in place in Scotland.

In England, there are several different approaches: Asset Based Community Development has had a particular appeal for local authorities; the Community Organisers Programme has been extended by national government; and Citizens UK has had significant successes in some major cities. In Northern Ireland, participants referred to the growth of credit unions and sports clubs. In Scotland, we were told that community development was strongest in the north – where credit unions are also strong, both financially and democratically.

In Scotland, recent policy means that *'communities are under pressure to form community development trusts in order to be able to engage with central and local government and have a voice.'* The quality and level of community support available varies considerably, although there is some support from the Development Trust Association Scotland through Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

Despite an overall perception that there is more support for community development in Scotland than elsewhere in the UK, some feel there is still a lack of support on the ground for disadvantaged communities:

*'The legislation is there, but I've always believed that the more desperate communities need someone there to focus on taking things forward. What we've probably had in Scotland is a top-down model of community development and not a lot of people working at the coal face.'*

In this section, we have considered four important ways in which community action and community work appear to differ across the four countries. And we think that these differences can help us make progress with what might need to happen in the future to ensure communities have control and power over their lives.

### 3 - What does this tell us about the future?

What do the shared concerns and differences set out in the first two sections tell us about the conditions that will support powerful communities in the future?

We found many common features across the four countries of the UK in this stage of our research, including concerns about: the impact of austerity; the increasing transience and fragmentation in communities; the loss of public and communal spaces; the loss of community infrastructure and support for smaller organisations; and the capacity of communities – especially those most disadvantaged – to pick up the pieces of service cuts.

But there were also important differences. Notably, the Scottish Government remained much more invested in community development and its infrastructure than others and there were interesting developments in relation to community land trusts and the islands. The political culture was different in the different countries and there were closer ties with government in Scotland and Wales. Sectarianism and the legacy of the Troubles gave a very different flavour to community development in Northern Ireland, while Welsh community development, which, we were told, had not been hit as hard by the cuts to date, was now facing an uncertain future with the loss of Communities First. Of course, there were differences within the countries too – between rural and urban areas, north and south, and in relation to Brexit and immigration.

There are challenges across the four countries, certainly, but also stories of inspirational action. In this section, we set out what we found out about the way people are responding to the challenges they outlined and the questions this raised for us.

## Local government

In Scotland, continuing support for community development and its infrastructure seems to have paid dividends. However, it is important to note that even here, there are variations within the country. This is, of course, true elsewhere.

What can we learn from these different local government approaches to community development in the different countries? How are different local authorities finding the resources, in kind as much as financial, to maintain their support? Where is this working well, and how do communities avoid the co-option or over-formalisation that sometimes comes with government support? When do assets – mainly transferred out by local government – give people more control? When do they become a liability? How can their potential best be realised across the board?

## Transience

What does 'community' mean in the face of the increasing transience that has resulted from the changing structure of the housing market: from the loss of social housing and the increase in buy-to-let and short-term private tenancies? And how does community development respond?

## Support

Support or infrastructure for people who want to do something in their community is vital if it is to be sustained and to grow. We have learnt that it often needs only to be light touch, but people need to know that there is somewhere to go if they want help and ideas. However, the infrastructure that is a vital source of support for small informal groups is at risk – and highly variable across the countries.

How can light-touch support best be provided and where is it working well? In Northern Ireland, several people talked about local community anchors and rural networks being highly effective in bringing people together and achieving change, including community integration. The importance of community hubs was also emphasised elsewhere. How can the infrastructure to support powerful communities best be sustained across each country?

## Young people

We did not pick up much about digital technology and relatively little was said about the need to engage young people. In some communities, research has highlighted concerns about young people leaving and what this means for the very future of these places. In Northern Ireland, there was concern about where the next generation of activists was coming from. Is this a concern elsewhere? How can communities tap into the energies of their young people?

## Developments

Credit unions, community land trusts and social enterprise are thriving in some parts of the UK, but less so elsewhere. There are exciting developments in different parts of the countries. Why is this? And how can this energy for new technologies and other ideas be expanded? Where are new technologies and ideas making a difference to inequalities and power imbalances in disadvantaged communities specifically?

## Sport

In contrast to the loss of community spaces, respondents referred to a growth in cycling, running and general fitness clubs that bring people together. Is this true of all communities? Or just in the more affluent? And what potential is there to build on this?

## Culture

We suspect there is more we could say about different cultural traditions and how they can support community power. We plan to revisit the data we have collected so far as part of an analysis looking at communities in all their diversity and what this tells us about communities, power and support in the future.

## 4 - Conclusion

The Countries Dialogue has demonstrated that there is much we can learn from the different levels of support and different challenges faced by the four UK countries; and that there is strong support for the value of flexible support for communities who are taking action. There is significant potential to learn from other countries too, both in terms of what is being achieved and the circumstances that make this possible.

How can this learning be disseminated and made available to the whole range of communities? And how can communities be supported in testing out these ideas and applying them to their own situation? This might lead us to reaffirm the long-recognised value of community anchors or to figure out what, from among the boundless new technologies or sport, for example, will make a difference in disadvantaged communities.

Despite the often bleak picture painted by all four countries, people are still getting on the ground and doing the best they can, even as the nature of community is changing around them. Maybe the questions we need to ask next are: Is it even still about local communities? What does 'community' mean to people who are not able to anchor themselves in a place? Is neighbourhood the focus of community or do we need to think about it differently?

## Next steps

The research team is continuing to work in four communities to learn more about the research questions and to test the ideas that have been put forward so far. The research will conclude in Summer 2018. You can keep in touch with the research by signing up to [the mailing list](#).

## Appendix A: Background information

### Countries questions

Note: These questions were adapted depending on context – interview/workshop and context, experience etc.

#### Understanding the national context

1. Who's working with communities in [country]? What's different about [country]?
2. Looking to the future, what you really hope for in communities you are part of or work with in [nation] and one that articulates what you worry might happen.
3. Where are interesting and different things happening here?
4. How do you see your own work with communities developing over the next five years and how is it going to be different. Where are they looking for ideas? (This relates to the question about interesting and different).
5. What or who are going to be the biggest influences on the communities you are working with in the next five years or so?
6. What platforms are being created that allow people to take control of their lives?

#### Testing what we have heard so far

7. We have heard people say that people who are trapped in a place are less likely to (be allowed to) have multiple identities (which other people find strengthens them). We've also heard that people with multiple identities and relating to different places find that a strength as well as a challenge.
8. When is it appropriate for communities to do stuff themselves and take responsibility locally and when is it not? How are communities negotiating this boundary in [country]?
9. Where does political education live on? And how about learning skills for critical thinking and reflection? Where has it begun to appear in new forms or spaces? How does it relate to communities taking control?
10. Do you have examples of where community development does engage people in dialogue and discovery to help people understand their context and power relations? And what does it look like here?

#### Looking ahead

11. What needs to happen for people in communities to have more power and control over their own lives and the life of their community?
12. Looking ahead to the 2020s, what are the things that are going to be important to communities having control over their own future? And what do we need to start putting in place to enable that. And who is the "we"? in [country]
13. Where are young people really engaging in making a difference in their community and taking control? Are they using similar or different channels, relationships, language, and what can we learn from that?

## Countries participants

<b>Interview participants, by country</b>			
<b>England</b>	<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>Scotland</b>	<b>Wales</b>
We selected from the interviews conducted as part of the Issues fieldwork to revisit in this phase of the research.	Fermanagh Trust Northern Ireland Rural Women's Network Rural Community Network Small Change Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (CFNI)/Building Change Trust	EU Community Development Foundation Scotland Corra Foundation Edinburgh University Two independent researchers	Community Development Cymru Fusion programme, Welsh Government Severn Wye Energy Cardiff University Welsh Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA)/Communities First Programme Talwrn Network Ty Llywelyn Community Centre One independent researcher
<b>Workshop or hosted group participants, by country</b>			
<b>England</b>	<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>Scotland</b>	<b>Wales</b>
Bristol Community Development Network (c20) CoLtd conference (16) Community Development Network London (c30)	Hosted group at Fermanagh Trust (8) Hosted group at The Junction (7) Hosted group at CFNI (3)	Hosted group at Corra Foundation (formerly Lloyds TSB Foundation) (19)	Talwrn Network meeting (10)

<sup>1</sup> You can view the Issues Dialogue Interim report here:

[http://localtrust.org.uk/assets/images/assets/uploads/IVAR\\_EC2020\\_Issues\\_Report\\_FINAL\\_210917.pdf](http://localtrust.org.uk/assets/images/assets/uploads/IVAR_EC2020_Issues_Report_FINAL_210917.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, CSDH (2008) Closing the gap in a generation: health equity through action on the social

determinants of health. Final Report of the Commission on Social Determinants of Health, Geneva: World Health Organization, Available at [http://www.who.int/social\\_determinants/thecommission/finalreport/en/](http://www.who.int/social_determinants/thecommission/finalreport/en/)

<sup>3</sup> Manzo, L. and Perkins, D. (2006) 'Finding common ground: The importance of place attachment to community participation and planning', in *Journal of Planning Literature*, 20.2, 335-50. 'In cases where neighbours are anonymous and do not stay long enough to develop any emotional connection to the place, they tend not to be committed enough to improve their own home, or to work with their neighbours and local agencies to improve the whole neighbourhood', pp. 335-6.

<sup>4</sup> This point was reflected in Airey, J. and Fyans, J. (forthcoming 2018) *Place Matters: How communities in England are changing*, London: Localis - research into trends likely to affect communities in the future commissioned by Local Trust as part of their wider work in this area.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2015) The cost of the cuts: The impact on local government and poorer communities, London: JRF, Available at:

[www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/Summary-Final.pdf](http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/Summary-Final.pdf) and National Coalition for Independent Action (2015) Fight or fright: Voluntary Services in 2015, London: NCIA, Available at:

[www.independentaction.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/NCIA-Inquiry-summary-report-final.pdf](http://www.independentaction.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/NCIA-Inquiry-summary-report-final.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Aiken, M. (2014) *Ordinary Glory: Big surprise not big society*, London: National Coalition for Independent Action

<sup>7</sup> For example: The Scottish Government's work plan for 2016-17 (A Plan for Scotland: The Government's Programme for Scotland 2016 -17 available at <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00505210.pdf> ) sets out one of the key themes of 'putting people in charge and creating opportunities' with strong, resilient, supportive communities at the heart of this vision. Underpinning this, tackling inequality' and 'devolving real powers and decision-making' runs through the Scottish Government's strategic vision. See also: Fairer Scotland Action Plan (available at <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00506841.pdf>), with an aspiration "to change deep-seated multi- generational deprivation, poverty and inequalities"; Scotland's Economic Strategy (2015) (available at <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/03/5984>), which focuses specifically on tackling inequality and to this end sets out the inclusive growth agenda; Achieving a Sustainable Future: a Regeneration Strategy (available at <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/364595/0123891.pdf>), issued 'in response to the challenges faced by our most disadvantaged communities', which outlines numerous policy areas, including public service reform, which overlap with regeneration and the Christie Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services (available at <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2011/06/27154527/1>), which focuses on four pillars to drive public sector reform: people, partnership, prevention and performance. The recent legislative acts of The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2013 formalise some of the recommendations set out by the Christie Commission and others in 2011. The reform is described by the Improvement Service as 'a potential game-changer in the ambition to improve outcomes and tackle inequalities between communities in Scotland'.

<sup>8</sup> See <https://futuregenerations.wales/about-us/future-generations-act/>

<sup>9</sup> See <https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/global-content/programmes/england/awards-for-all-england>