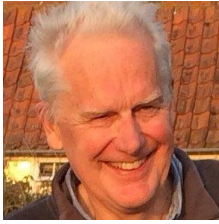


OVERVIEW | Speakers' Bios



Stephen Hill is a Director at C₂O futureplanners. He is a leading exponent of Community Land Trusts (CLTs), with 40 years of experience of housing, planning and delivering mixed-use development, urban extensions, new settlements & community-led regeneration. He is currently Chair of UK Cohousing Network and a board member of the National CLT Network.



Melissa Mean manages the Arts Programme at Knowle West Media Centre (KWMC). Her work includes producing a wide range of digital, photographic and film projects, and exploring the role that the arts can play in business development, social action and regeneration. One project focuses on citizen-led infill housing in Knowle West with We Can Make.



Nicholas Boys Smith is the founding Director of Create Streets and has run or is running a wide range of community engagement, planning, and local government consultation projects. Nicholas is currently co-chair of the Government's Building Better Building Beautiful Commission and is a Commissioner of Historic England. His publications include *Of Streets and Squares*, *Beyond Location* and *Heart in the Right Street*.



Calum Green has taken London Community Land Trust (CLT) from having its first site identified, to actively organising campaigns in 11 neighbourhoods, 6 of which have provisional agreements on sites, including in Tower Hamlets, Lewisham, Southwark, Croydon, Redbridge & on the Olympic Park. Calum was also previously a Senior Organiser with Citizens UK, where he trained over 400 community leaders across the UK.



Rose Seagrief is part of Power to Change and leads the 'Homes in Community Hands' Programme. She is responsible for their Community Business Advisory Panel. Rose has spent the past 10 years working with many communities that wish to own and develop their own assets, such as affordable homes, shops, and a range of other community facilities.



Helen Nicol is a community-led housing development manager at Locality and founder of Blue Chula, a consultancy specialising in community development & engagement, collaboration & partnership working and change & programme management.

Notes from the day

This is a short summary of some of the discussions during the workshop on Saturday 9th November 2019. We learnt a great deal from the diverse group of 26 'Big Local' members that descended on Birmingham and we hope you managed to learn some tips and share ideas on how to influence and ultimately improve your local area.

This report compliments the workbook you all produced on the day. Therefore information on the case studies presented and exercises undertaken on the day can be found on a digital copy of the workbook and in the hard copies you have.

Key themes from the day

1. Don't be hesitant, just do it!
2. Ask for forgiveness not permission... (within reason)
3. Attract people with an event and then speak to them about community-led action
4. How do we rebuild trust, both from the community and towards councils
5. Work with groups of all ages and make everyone feel valued

What we heard from you

This list is by no means exhaustive but presents a snapshot of the day's activities

- Some of the participants were sceptical about the affordability of the Older Women's Co-housing (OWCH) case study in Barnet. But also recognised that it provides a welcome community in a time when the elderly population is increasing: *"I would love to move to something like that"* – In reference to the OWCH project.
- The concept of creating communities through events seemed to pique interest from the everyone. Specifically, Melissa's case study of creating a beach in Bristol.
- In response one participant shared her case of holding front lawn competitions as a way of cleaning up the appearance of neighbourhood streets.
- The use of social media in mobilising the community and distributing information came up repeatedly: *'We have to be a collective of people, we have to work with each other.'*
- Communities that lost their community hubs were perceived to have become weaker, while those who were able to create a space for themselves were able to more easily organise, mobilise and influence others. This matches with research conducted by Local Trust, which found that the absence of meeting places negatively impacted the effectiveness of a Big Local area.¹

¹ Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion, 2019. "Left behind? Understanding communities on the edge." Local Trust. Available at: https://localtrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/local_trust_ocs_i_left_behind_research_august_2019.pdf

- We heard community groups are under resourced and over-worked. They don't feel like they can make an impact because there just aren't enough team members.

'These efforts need big teams.'

'[Developers] have left us with hardly anything, they ruined our communities because of 'regeneration'. We want people to move back to the area.'

'Where's all this money gone.'



'Act like you are the dawn light of a thriving new system not the end of the old system.'

Morning Workshop

- *Use the upcoming local elections* to promote and push for change
- *Make it easy to 'get going' but don't lose your ambition.* Set realistic early expectations for your group but don't limit yourself to that
- *Ensure that community-development workers exist within councils* in order to bridge the perceived gap, as well as reducing the administrative workload

- *Choose your location wisely.* It impacts who shows up and how much they are willing to speak freely, we heard about atheists in Collyhurst who didn't want to attend meetings held in a church. This led to changing location to the community centre
- *Maintain momentum by continuously bringing people into your community space,* even for unrelated reasons
- *Radiate Intent* – 'Don't be hesitant, just kind of do it!'
- *Organise meetings around events* that incentivise people to come for example, BBQs and sports events. Use popular local figures to promote them
- *Don't lose community infrastructure* such as pubs and community centres when building new housing in an area
- *Understand the needs and issues on the ground* through surveys, which are a powerful tool. Challenge development that isn't addressing those needs

'Stop segregating people [through different meetings], their voices should be heard together.'



'We can't do it on our own, Big Locals need other Big Locals.'

Group surgery

The purpose of the afternoon group session was to hear specific challenges that Big Locals were facing and in partnership with the speakers and other participants create an action plan for the next week, month and year.

Key issues

1. Reducing air pollution and the impact of 'county lines' (where drugs gangs from cities expand their operations into smaller towns);

2. Involving and engaging young people more effectively. A woman at the table shared her story of trying to create intergenerational groups to work on projects together. They faced a lot of challenges around the perceptions of younger people from some of the residents;
3. Engaging with transient communities for example, those who rent for a short period of time;
4. Reducing anti-social behaviour: '*Aspiration is very low;*' and

Key takeaways

- *Create a broad coalition of people*
- *Talk about people more* than talking about what you want to do
- *Your power comes through the numbers of people you have.* Numbers make for power
- *Include younger people as key stakeholders*, particularly in community-led development. This will help to retain their interest and encourage them to stay in their local community
- *Give younger people ownership.* An effective tactic from some Big Locals was giving younger groups autonomy by giving them tasks to complete. Examples include (i) asking them to conduct surveys in the community, or (ii) giving them a small budget to set up their own project
- *Find your physical home.* Groups discussed setting up a community hub. Start by finding out who owns what property or land in your area and meet with them to see how the space can be negotiated "*No pubs, community spaces, places to meet socially*"
- *Find a space then animate it to grow a critical mass of support.* When you have this 'do something' be it resident-led development, a youth facility or use it to promote integration.
- *Be careful about using shipping containers!* We heard from one Big Local where a large shipping container with activities was 'dumped' on a community. It was set on fire three times, stripped and left unlocked. "*It was done to them, not with them*"
- *Regularly performing stakeholder analyses* where you map (a) how much people support you and (b) how much power they have. You should aim to move people on the map over time so that people either support you more or those who support you gain in influence.



"We can see light at the end of the tunnel!"

Wrap up

We finished the day by participants exchanging pledge cards with actions they would undertake in the next week, month and year. We encouraged them to get in touch after a week, a month and a year to find out how each of them had got on.

The results of the feedback survey conducted by Local Trust were very positive. In general, participants found the event useful and mostly got what they wanted out of their attendance. In terms of how to improve the event, many of the participants suggested extending the networking sessions.

	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Poor
How would you rate today's event?	43%	57%	0%	0%
How was location?	50%	50%	0%	0%
How was venue?	57%	43%	0%	0%
How was food?	64%	36%	0%	0%
	Very useful	Useful	Somewhat useful	Not useful
How useful was this event?	62%	38%	0%	0%
	Too long	About right	Too short	-
Did you think length was...	8%	83%	8%	
	Got everything	Got most	Got some	Didn't
Did you get what you wanted out of the event?	23%	65%	12%	0%

We at Create Streets learnt a lot from all the Big Local members and enjoyed exchanging stories and ideas about how to improve our local areas. We would like to thank the Local Trust for inviting us to run the event and the speakers that attended who, using their wealth of experience, added to a highly focused and exciting day. We encourage all participants to make use of the free two-hour consultation slots by using the contact details provided below

Nicholas, David & Nada
CREATE Streets



Create Streets is a social enterprise founded in 2013 to help solve the housing crisis and to help communities and developers create beautiful street-based places of sufficient density that will be popular with the wider community. Its goal is to make it easier to co-create sustainable, beautiful, economically and socially successful developments with strong local support and which residents will love for generations. Over the next fifteen years we are also determined dramatically to improve the UK planning system so that it better delivers what people like and helps deliver more new homes in better places. Some of our research is available on our website at createstreets.com/research

