

What motivates people to get involved and what gets in the way?

Emerging findings from our research into
Empowered Communities in the 2020s.



Care and consideration for
other people and the future



What motivates?

Drivers

What makes people want to take action/get involved?



Injustice: Wanting to correct an injustice or take action about something that is going wrong



Emotional response to an event or issue: Feeling angry, sad, passionate or excited



Aspiration: To make life and the place you live in better for yourself and the people around you



Values rooted in faith, politics or family; inherited because it is what your mother or grandmother did



Purpose: Having a sense of purpose makes people feel good about themselves and their lives



Responsibility: Feeling a sense of responsibility to care for others in the community



Something people feel is going wrong, a gap or a problem



People want to make their place better or the lives of people like them better

What motivates?

Enablers

What makes people want to take action/get involved?



Relationships: Being encouraged to get involved and guided by someone you trust; and the opportunity to meet people, to be social



Resources: Having the money and time to volunteer



Confidence or hope: Believing that you can make a difference



People: Having role models, supporters or help with making connections



Ownership: A community that leads and drives the process



Somebody you trust says...
this is going on, why
don't you join in, you've
got something to say

What gets in the way?

Internal constraints



Fear: Fear of drawing attention to yourself, of being 'found out' by authorities (for example, this was raised in relation to some refugees)



Money: Worrying about paying bills, living in poverty



Time: Working long hours or having other responsibilities that make it difficult to find the time



Caring duties: Looking after grandchildren and elderly parents



Culture: In some areas, the women take on the caring duties while men dominate town and community councils



Health: Poor health can be a barrier



Disability: Stress and anxiety brought on by punitive benefits changes are 'time consuming and draining, they sap resilience down to nothing'



Confidence: You go along and do not feel able to contribute



Despondency: Thinking that community action does not make a difference



It's very hard for them to do community work because they are struggling to meet the absolutely pressing needs pouring through the door

What gets in the way?

External disincentives



Format: Unfamiliar or off-putting way that meetings are conducted; not understanding how a local system works



Culture: The language and tone of events, activities and meetings; includes male dominated meetings and/or ego driven individuals holding power at local level



Issues: Feeling that the issues being put forward are not those that are relevant or interesting to you



Institutions: Statutory agencies that do not understand how to work with communities



Experience: You go along and do not feel heard. Outsiders may have fantastic ideas, but communities are tired of being surveyed, consulted and still not having a voice



Many Somalis locally are struggling, going out early in the morning and coming back late in the evening. And what could a single mother do trying to bring up young children on her own? They might want to engage but would they have the time and capacity? They have to feed their children. They may be working Saturdays and Sundays. Everyone is struggling