

# EVENT PROGRAMME

Big Local  
CONNECTS

## 2 DAYS OF ACTIVITY & INSPIRATION

The final Connects is all about showcasing your achievements after over a decade of Big Local and looking ahead to what comes next.



**Fancy winning one of four vouchers for a professional photographer to come to your Big Local area?**

Complete the competition card in your bag and hand it into the Local Trust stall to be in with a chance of winning. Winners will be announced during Saturday's finale.



# SPEEDY SUPPORT SESSIONS

2.10pm–4.00pm on Friday in the Theatre

10.40am–12.10pm on Saturday in the Banqueting Hall

Have a one-to-one conversation with any of our Make it Happen partners, to get answers to your questions or find out more about the support they can offer your partnership. Sessions will last up to 30 minutes and spaces are allocated on a first come first serve basis. **Book your slot/s at the Local Trust stall.**

## FUNDRAISING AND INCOME GENERATION

**Dan Woolley and Annoushka Deighton,**  
Stir to Action

Do you need to raise funds for your project or organisation? Stir to Action advisors Annoushka and Dan are here to answer your fundraising questions and provide advice on topics like grant funding (finding opportunities, writing bids, developing strategies), crowdfunding, community shares and more.

## ADDRESSING FUEL POVERTY, CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNITY ASSETS

**Tess Rushton and Harriet Sansom,**  
Centre for Sustainable Energy

Want to make your community building more energy efficient? Or better support local households with fuel poverty this winter? Maybe you are interested in the potential of community-led renewable energy? Get advice on a range of energy and environment-related topics with Tess and Harriet from the Centre for Sustainable Energy.

## COMMISSIONING LOCAL PARTNERS TO DELIVER YOUR PROJECTS

**Lucy Elmes and Rhys Morgan,** Take A Part

Want to learn how to commission people or organisations to help you deliver ambitious or tricky projects? Come and chat to Lucy and Rhys from Take A Part about the opportunities available to you, including how to commission and useful resources to help you get started with commissioning.

## MEASURING THE CHANGE YOU'VE MADE IN THE COMMUNITY

**Richard Usher,** Just Ideas and a member of the Local Trust Research team

Come and chat to Richard and the Local Trust Research team about how to measure the change you are making in your Big Local area, different ways to evaluate projects and activities, and how to share learnings and achievements with your community, funders and Local Trust.

## SECURING COMMUNITY ASSETS AND BECOMING A LEGAL BODY

**Mick McGrath and Nabillah Ismail,** Locality

Are you considering setting up a legal body? Or maybe you're taking over or managing a community asset? No matter where you are in your journey, book a 30-minute session with expert Locality advisors, to ask questions and discuss next steps.

## MASTERING YOUR COMMUNICATIONS AND TELLING YOUR BIG LOCAL STORY

**Peg Alexander and Tamsin Curror,**  
Communications freelancers

Whether your Big Local is coming to an end and you want to celebrate the difference you have made, or you are about to start the next chapter and continue your work, what is the story you want to tell? And what is the best way to share it and bring your community with you? Come and chat to Tamsin and Peg to help you work that out.

## WORKER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

**Kay Coombs and Rebecca Beard,** Peas in a Pod

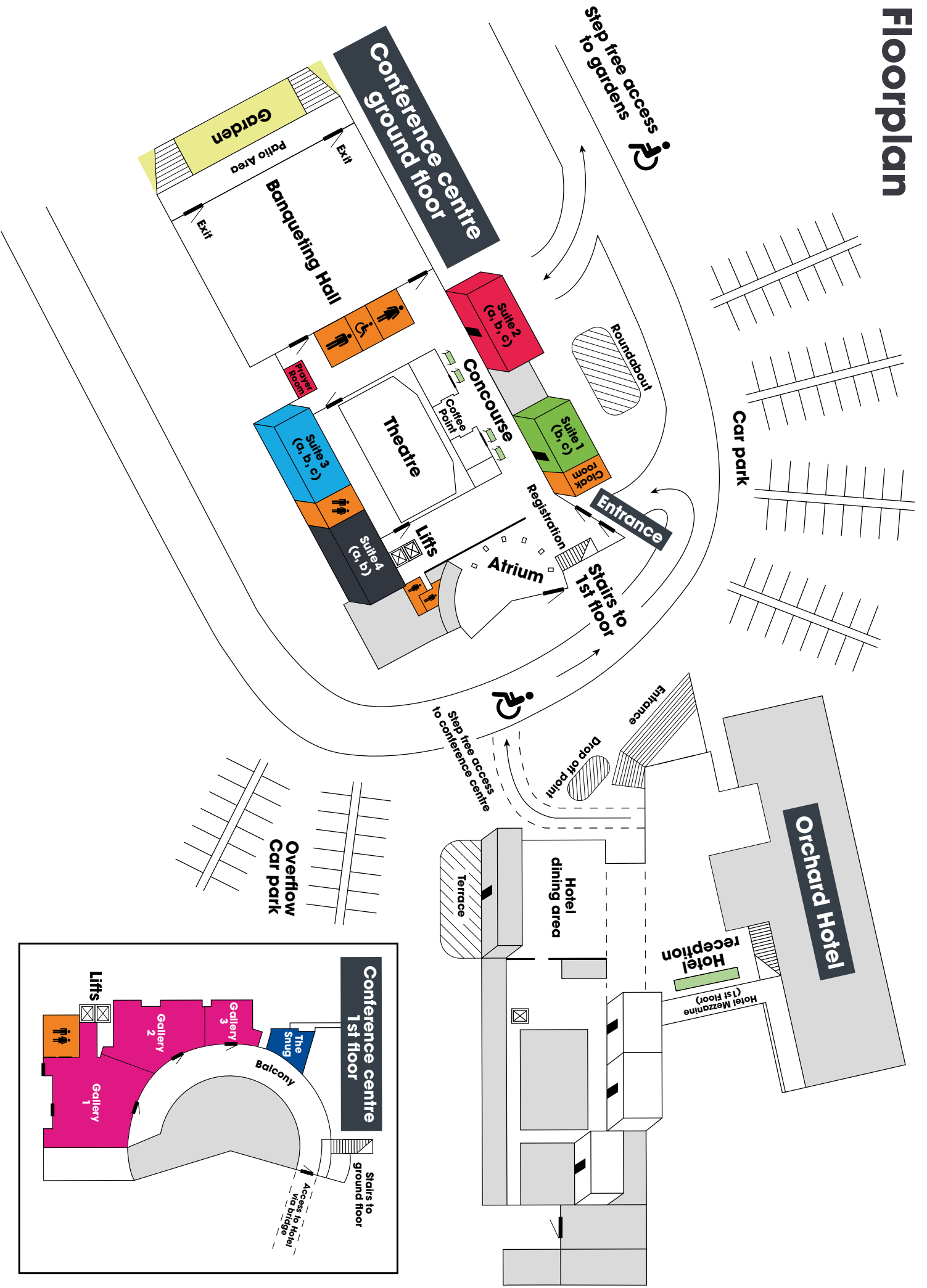
Have you got a strong worker team supporting your partnership? Facing worker-related challenges and not sure who to turn to for advice? Peas in a Pod Consulting are on hand to provide practical and hands-on support to help overcome these sorts of challenges. Whether it is recruitment issues, burnout, conflicts, workplace gripes or something else entirely, we want to hear from you.

## COMMUNITY ORGANISING

**Nick Laffan,** Community Organisers

Community organising is the work of bringing people together to take action around their common concerns and overcome social injustice – starting with reaching out, listening and connecting people. Book a 30-minute session with us to find out more and how this way of working can be applied across a wide range of contexts and can help to build and sustain momentum.

# Floorplan



# SESSION TYPES

Find a session type that you're in the mood for:

- **Listen and learn** – to new and inspiring ideas
- **Do** – an activity together
- **Interact** – by contributing and sharing experiences

## FRIDAY

### Open all day (12.15pm–9.45pm)

**Prayer room**  
See floorplan

**Luggage storage**  
Cloakroom

**Chill out (drop in)**  
Gallery 3

**Type:** Do

Drop in to the chill out room at anytime to take some time for yourself.

### 12.10pm–1.10pm

**Buffet lunch and registration**  
Banqueting Hall and Entrance

Register for Connects and pick up your welcome bag. A cloakroom is available nearby where you can store your coat and bag. Settle into the event, catch up with old friends and make new ones over lunch.

### 1.10pm–2.00pm

**Welcome, opening session and keynote**  
Banqueting Hall

**Type:** Listen and learn

**Speakers:** Matt Leach (Local Trust), Marcelluz Baz (Switch Up)

Local Trust CEO Matt will be kicking off the final Connects with a Big Local programme update. Our keynote speech will be from Marcelluz Baz BEM, founder, and chief executive of Switch Up. His organisation works with Nottinghamshire's most disadvantaged and deprived communities affected by crime and violence. Switch Up empowers young people, through their award winning five pillar model, supporting them into employment, training, and education.

Plus, find out about the Amazing Communities Together network.

### 2.00pm–6.50pm drop ins

**Hot chocolate van**  
Outside front entrance

Use the golden tokens in your bag to get your free hot chocolate!

**Future booth**  
Concourse

**Type:** Do

Come along to the future booth for a short, casual interview. Discuss the most important issues in your area and share your view on how both national and local government needs to change its policy and practice to better support your work. The interview will be filmed and used to inform Local Trust's policy work and the conversations we have with policy makers and politicians to influence political agendas in the run up to the next election.

**Mindful exercise**  
Gallery 1

**Type:** Do

Join wellbeing expert and concert pianist Xenia Pestova Bennett for some gentle seated or standing movement, mindfulness exercises and breathwork. Learn simple and effective techniques to relieve stress, relax and boost creativity as you take a break from the busy day.

**Ask Local Trust**  
Atrium

Chat to Local Trust staff about anything, including close out, funding and support questions. Sign up to a visit or book your speedy support session here too.

**Join Amazing Communities Together**  
Atrium

Chat to Amazing Communities Together and find out about their exciting plans for the coming year and how you can become part of a movement for change beyond the end of Big Local by joining the network.

**Get creative with clay**  
Atrium

**Type:** Do

**Speakers:** Vicky Walker and Ella Moore, Common Room Social

Drop by our craft station and make an eye-catching wall hanging using clay and dried flowers. Relax, chat and get creative.

\*All drop ins will be closed between 4.00pm and 5.10pm for our panel discussion



**2.10pm–3.00pm**

**Media masterclass with community communications expert**  
Conference Suite 1 b/c

Delivery mode

**Type:** Listen and learn

**Speaker:** Peg Alexander

Keen for more people to hear about the amazing achievements of your Big Local? Want to bag a journalist to come along to your upcoming event? Interested in upskilling yourself to become a confident community spokesperson? Then join Peg Alexander, a communications expert, for a media masterclass where you'll learn how to get local journalists on side, how to find a story hook the media can't resist and some tips and tricks for becoming more confident with public speaking.

*This session will be repeated at 3.10pm on Friday.*

**Our volunteer journeys: past, present and future**  
Conference Suite 2

Reflective

**Type:** Interact

**Speaker:** Sheetal Mistry, Koreo

As Big Local begins to wind down, it can be easy to forget about the incredible skills you've developed as a volunteer, and how you can use these skills for the next step in your volunteer journey. Join this short session to reflect on how far you've come and what you might want to focus on next.

**Life beyond Big Local, with Dover Big Local**  
Conference Suite 3

Future-focused

**Type:** Listen and learn

**Speakers:** Linda Aldred, Andrea Morgan and Bernie Mayall, Dover Big Local and Carl Adams, Big Local area advisor

Dover Big Local have recently secured funding through the National Lottery's Reaching Communities Fund to continue their work beyond Big Local. Join them to hear about their journey so far, why they decided to continue beyond Big Local funding, and their top tips. Plus they'll share how Make It Happen support has helped them reflect on everything they've achieved along the way – including the stuff they'd forgotten!

*This session will be repeated at 3.10pm on Friday.*

**The power of evaluation to influence local authorities and funders**  
Conference Suite 4

Future-focused

**Type:** Listen and learn

**Speakers:** Loretta Allen and Zoe Edwards, Wormley and Turnford Big Local and Rowena Russell, Big Local Jarrow CIC

Hear from two Big Local areas about the power of using evaluation to strengthen their funding applications. Wormley and Turnford and Big Local Jarrow CIC will share how they've influenced local authorities and organisations by showcasing their impact. Learn how to evidence positive changes you've made in your community, so you're in a stronger position for your future beyond Big Local.

**Overcoming major Big Local challenges**  
Gallery 2

Delivery mode

**Type:** Interact

**Speakers:** Dyke House Big Local

Hear from Big Local partnerships who have faced major change or setbacks as part of their journey, including how they kept momentum and what they learnt from the process. There will also be time to share your experiences of Big Local challenges.

*This session will be repeated at 3.10pm on Friday.*

**2.10pm–4.00pm**

**Stonebridge City Farm**  
Pre-booking required, speak to us at the Ask Local Trust stall

**Type:** Visit

Learn about how Stonebridge City Farm has grown from an inner-city farm to become the heart of the community. You will get the chance to explore the projects on the farm and meet their animals. Plus we'll learn how the farm has become an educational hub for schools, community groups and students, and hear about their thriving volunteer programme which engages people from all walks of life, while remaining a free-to-enter visitor centre.

*This visit will be repeated on Saturday at 10.40am*

**FoodPrint and Himmah**  
Pre-booking required, speak to us at the Ask Local Trust stall

**Type:** Visit

Learn how the organisation Himmah took over the operations of Foodprint, an innovative student-led social supermarket helping those experiencing food poverty to access cheap and fresh produce. You'll hear how they've grown the project to become more financially sustainable and responded to increasing demand following Covid-19 and the cost-of-living crisis. You will also hear how Himmah successfully builds and works in partnership with other local charities to achieve their goals.

*This visit will be repeated on Saturday at 10.40am*

**3.10pm–4.00pm**

**Media masterclass with community communications expert**  
Conference Suite 1 b/c

Delivery mode

**Type:** Listen and learn

**Speaker:** Peg Alexander

Keen for more people to hear about the amazing achievements of your Big Local? Want to bag a journalist to come along to your upcoming event? Interested in upskilling yourself to become a confident community spokesperson? Then join Peg Alexander, a communications expert, for a media masterclass where you'll learn how to get local journalists on side, how to find a story hook the media can't resist and some tips and tricks for becoming more confident with public speaking.

*This is a repeat of the session at 2.10pm.*

**Communities taking control – democratic models of community ownership of assets, businesses and services**  
Conference Suite 2

Future-focused

**Type:** Listen and learn

**Speaker:** Dan Stanley, Stir to Action

With an uncertain economic future, declining levels of participation in civil society, and the loss of community assets, we need to explore the role of other models of ownership for social infrastructure, key businesses, and essential services. Democratic ownership has a long tradition of creating and protecting social infrastructure and businesses, to make sure they meet the social and economic needs of local communities. Join this session to understand more about these ownership models, explore how they work in different communities and sectors, and the potential benefits for your Big Local area and its legacy.

**Life beyond Big Local, with Dover Big Local**  
Conference Suite 3

Future-focused

**Type:** Listen and learn

**Speakers:** Linda Aldred, Andrea Morgan and Bernie Mayall, Dover Big Local and Carl Adams, Big Local area advisor

Dover Big Local have recently secured funding through the National Lottery's Reaching Communities Fund to continue their work beyond Big Local. Join them to hear about their journey so far, why they decided to continue beyond Big Local funding, and their top tips. Plus they'll share how Make It Happen support has helped them reflect on everything they've achieved along the way – including the stuff they'd forgotten!

*This is a repeat of the session at 2.10pm.*

## 3.10pm–4.00pm

### Moving beyond the foodbank Conference Suite 4

**Type:** [Interact](#)

**Speakers:** Courtney Scott, Food, Farming and Countryside Commission and Denise Bentley, First Love Foundation

Is your Big Local running a food bank or other food aid projects? Hear the inspiring story behind First Love Foundation's 'more than food' approach in Tower Hamlets and take away key learnings to help you strengthen your own food project.

Delivery  
-mode

### Overcoming major Big Local challenges Gallery 2

**Type:** [Interact](#)

**Speakers:** Greatfield Big Local

Hear from Big Local partnerships who have faced major change or setbacks as part of their journey, including how they kept momentum and what they learnt from the process. There will also be time to share your experiences of Big Local challenges.

*This is a repeat of the session at 2.10pm.*

Delivery  
-mode

## 4.10pm–5.10pm

### Panel discussion – Powerful endings Banqueting Hall

**Type:** [Listen and learn](#)

**Speakers:** Immy Kaur from Impact Hub Birmingham and Olli Whittington from Shift

This session will offer an opportunity to reflect back on the amazing achievements, failures to learn from and challenges overcome through the lifespan of Big Local and explore what it means to end the programme positively. We will hear from Immy Kaur about the value of good endings and her experience of the end of Impact Hub Birmingham and Olli Whittington from Shift will share initial findings from their research into what Big Local volunteers feel they need to end the programme well.

## 5.20pm–6.00pm

### Where are they now? Revisiting Big Local stories with our former journalist-at-large Theatre

Reflective

**Type:** [Listen and learn](#)

**Speaker:** Louise Tickle, former Local Trust journalist-at-large

Join Louise for a trip down memory lane as she interviews Big Local areas she visited during her time as Local Trust's journalist-at-large, to explore what happened next in their stories.

*This is similar to the session on Saturday at 10.40am.*

## 6.10pm–6.50pm

### Community connect Theatre

**Type:** [Interact](#)

**Speaker:** James Goodman, Local Trust

Connect with Big Local areas that you haven't met before. Chat about anything from your Big Local projects, to your communities and legacy plans. This is an opportunity to listen, learn, share your worries, encourage hope in others and come away with new ideas and actions.

## 7.00pm–8.30pm

### Buffet dinner Banqueting Hall

## 8.30pm–9.30pm

### Entertainment Banqueting Hall

**Type:** [Do](#)

Hear from Nat Sloane, Chair of the National Lottery Community Fund at the time Big Local was set up.

Indeedy Musical Bingo returns for the final Connects! Dinner will be followed by musical bingo from 8.30pm. Mark songs off on your bingo card as you hear them and compete to win hilarious and exciting prizes.

Feel free to take some downtime or drop in to one of the activities between 5:20pm-6:50pm

Coaches to offsite hotels from 9.45pm

# SATURDAY

**8.30am–9.15am**

**Arrive and settle in for day two**  
Entrance

**Open all day (8.30am–2.30pm)**

**Prayer room**  
See floorplan

**Luggage storage**  
Cloak room

**Chill out (drop in)**  
Gallery 3

**Type:** Do

Drop in to the chill out room at anytime to take some time for yourself.

**Ask Local Trust (drop in)**

Atrium

(closed for panel discussion)

Chat to Local Trust staff about anything, including close out, funding and support questions. Sign up to a visit or book your speedy support session here too.

**Join Amazing Communities Together (drop in)**

Atrium

(closed for panel discussion)

Chat to Amazing Communities Together and find out about their exciting plans for the coming year and how you can become part of a movement for change beyond the end of Big Local by joining the network.

**9.30am - 10.30am**

**Welcome and panel discussion - Powerful futures**  
Banqueting Hall

**Type:** Listen and learn

**Speakers:** Emma LeBlanc, Camden Council, Matt Bell, Plymouth Octopus and Ruth Taylor, Common Cause Foundation

When we consider the future, we often think about what needs to be done and the finance needed to deliver. This session will take a step back to explore what we need as individuals within our communities to be able to prepare for and respond to the challenges and uncertainty of the future. We will hear from a range of speakers who will encourage us to explore the unique strengths and talents that each of us hold and share ideas for how to protect and develop these as we collectively contribute to a future with stronger, more resilient communities.

**10.30am–2.30pm drop ins**

**Hot chocolate van**  
Outside front entrance

Use the golden tokens in your bag to get your free hot chocolate!

**Get creative with clay**

Atrium

**Type:** Do

**Speakers:** Vicky Walker and Ella Moore, Common Room Social

Drop by our craft station and make an eye-catching wall hanging using clay and dried flowers. Relax, chat and get creative.

**Future booth**  
Concourse

(opens at 10.40am)

**Type:** Do

Come along to the future booth for a short, casual interview. Discuss the most important issues in your area and share your view on how both national and local government needs to change its policy and practice to better support your work. The interview will be filmed and used to inform Local Trust's policy work and the conversations we have with policy makers and politicians to influence political agendas in the run up to the next election.

**Mindful exercise**  
Gallery 1

**Type:** Do

Join wellbeing expert and concert pianist Xenia Pestova Bennett for some gentle seated or standing movement, mindfulness exercises and breathwork. Learn simple and effective techniques to relieve stress, relax and boost creativity as you take a break from the busy day.

**10.40-11.40am**

**Reflecting on your Big Local journey: Some practical tools to takeaway**  
Conference Suite 1 b/c

Future-focused

**Type:** Interact

**Speakers:** Helen Garforth and Richard Usher, Just Ideas

Take a deep dive into the tools that can help your partnership reflect on your achievements, how you have worked together and with others and what you have learnt.

**Sustaining your role - the secret to maintaining a grant distribution approach in your Big Local Area**  
Conference Suite 2

Delivery-mode

**Type:** Listen and learn

**Speaker:** Dave Brennan, Castle Cavendish

This workshop explores Castle Cavendish's developing role as an Area Lead Organisation in the central part of Nottingham, where it uses its expertise, its knowledge and its relationships with trusted Voluntary Community Sector (VCS) delivery partners to access funds from Nottingham City Council and support a £500k community grants programme.

**Big Local failures, frustrations and rising to the challenge of the programme**  
Conference Suite 4

Reflective

**Type:** Interact

**Speaker:** Leila Jancovich, Failspace

The last decade has been one of extreme change and uncertainty, making community-led change challenging. Join us to express your frustrations about plans not met, the barriers you have faced and how you have met them. We will also commit some time to look at the positives, including those successes that might be less obvious (but just as important) to the wider community.

**Key steps to building an inclusive culture in your partnership**  
Gallery 2

Delivery-mode

**Type:** Interact

**Speaker:** Advita Patel

Learn the key steps to building a culture of inclusivity within your partnership and everyday work. You will leave the session with a clearer understanding of how bias can impact your decision making, the importance of trust, as well as practical tools to apply learning beyond the session.

**Where are they now? Revisiting Big Local stories with our former journalist-at-large**  
Theatre

Reflective

**Type:** Listen and learn

**Speaker:** Ryan Herman, former Local Trust journalist-at-large

Join Ryan for a trip down memory lane as he interviews Big Local areas he visited during his time as Local Trust's journalist-at-large, to explore what happened next in their stories.

*This is similar to the session on Friday at 5.20pm.*

**10.40am-12.10pm**

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*This is a repeat of the visit on Friday at 2.10pm.*

**FoodPrint and Himmah**  
Pre-booking required, speak to us at the Ask Local Trust stall

**Type:** Visit

Learn how the organisation Himmah took over the operations of Foodprint, an innovative student-led social supermarket helping those experiencing food poverty access cheap and fresh produce. You'll hear how they've grown the project to become more financially sustainable and responded to increasing demand following Covid-19 and the cost-of-living crisis. You will also hear how Himmah successfully builds and works in partnership with other local charities to achieve their goals.

*This is a repeat of the visit on Friday at 2.10pm.*

**Feel free to take some downtime or drop in to one of the activities happening ahead of the Finale**

**12.20pm-12.55pm**

**Finale Theatre**

**Type:** Interact

**Speakers:** Sarah Donohoe and Beth Lazenby (Local Trust)

Not to be missed! London's Brass sensation: Das Brass band will kick off the final celebrations with a performance and singalong and we invite you to join in. We will also premiere a special film made for Connects featuring Big Local areas, plus winners of the raffle will be announced.

**12.55pm-2.30pm**

**Buffet lunch**  
Banqueting Hall

**Coaches to Nottingham train station from 2.30pm**