

Evaluation Report: Well-being Action Plan Project

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1. Executive Summary

The evaluation has been commissioned by Together for Change (TfC), to support the continual review and evaluation of TfC work undertaken. It will feedback into Pembrokeshire Public Service Board (PSB) planning and delivery work and inform broader wellbeing and community action planning work across Wales.

The Well-being Action Planning Project in Pembrokeshire was initiated in response to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, aiming to empower communities by co-creating Well-being Action Plans that explore and utilise local assets. The Project, funded by the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund, focused on four communities: Crymych, St Davids, Dinas Cross, and Amroth, with the goal of enhancing community engagement and capacity for future well-being actions.

The purpose of this evaluation was to review the development and delivery of the Well-being Action Plan Project, assessing its objectives, methods, outcomes, and the overall contribution to community well-being in Pembrokeshire. The evaluation sought to explore stakeholder experiences and identify successes and challenges within the Project.

Key findings from the evaluation highlighted that while the Project successfully facilitated some community engagement and co-production, significant challenges arose due to time constraints, limited resources, and varying levels of participation. Two out of the four Councils successfully engaged in the process, and while draft action plans were created, they were not finalised within the Project's timeline. The Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach was well-received, yet the reliance on limited staff capacity and resources affected the depth of engagement and relationship-building.

Conclusions drawn from the evaluation indicate a clear need for improved planning and flexibility in Project timelines and objectives, as well as enhanced capacity-building opportunities for Community Councils.

Recommendations for future work include:

- Exploring project feasibility and scope through a structured process
- Develop a ringfenced investment/delivery fund to support future work
- More flexible timelines and objectives to facilitate thorough community engagement

- Strengthening relationships and trust with Community Councils through better communication
 - Ongoing training and workshops to equip Councils and community members
 - Innovative strategies for outreach to ensure diverse community representation, particularly targeting underrepresented groups
 - Integration of existing community action plans to ensure continuity and build on past achievements
 - Implementing follow-up mechanisms to monitor the impact of action plans on community well-being over time.
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2. Introduction

Background and context of the Well-being Action Plan Project

The Well-being Action Planning Project in Pembrokeshire was established in response to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WFGA), which mandates Public Services Boards (PSBs) to assess and address local well-being needs. The act has seven Sustainability Goals and five Ways of Working as a framework for the Welsh Government and PSBs to operate within.

The Project is part of the 'Strengthening Communities' element of the current Well-being Plan for Pembrokeshire's PSB and was funded by the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) as part of the Active Citizenship and Engagement programme by the Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services (PAVS). It was hosted by Together for Change (TfC) and provided capacity for a two days a week (15 hours) Programme Officer position.

The main aim of the Well-being Action Plan Project was to co-create Well-being Action Plans within communities, focusing on community assets and building capacity for future well-being actions. It sought to use a limited amount of funding provided by the SPF and support investment made by TfC to empower communities by enabling them to take an active role in doing this, working with them to develop their well-being plans through collaborative approaches.

The Project was informed by previous work with Pembrokeshire communities, including work by PLANED, funded through previous EU funding which created Community Action Plans around ten years ago. This prior work highlighted the value of community engagement and the importance of local knowledge and networks in enhancing well-being.

Objectives of the Project

The objectives¹ of the Well-being Action Plan Project were to:

1. Co-create community profiles and Well-being Plans in communities representative of Pembrokeshire
2. Explore community assets using Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)
3. Build upon previous work in communities
4. Build capacity in communities to deliver future well-being actions.
5. Learn from the process to inform the future work of the Pembrokeshire Public Services Board (PSB), other organisations, and communities.

¹ Pembrokeshire Well-being Action Planning Project 2024-25 – Final Report, Together for Change, 2025

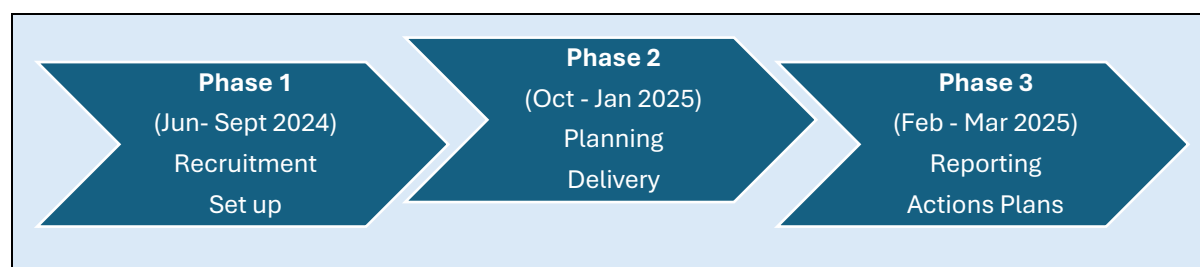
Stakeholders involved

The stakeholders involved in the Well-being Action Plan Project included:

1. **Pembrokeshire Public Services Board (PSB)** - a statutory strategic partnership made up of representatives from a wide range of organisations which deliver public services across the County
2. **Together for Change (TfC)** – a Pembrokeshire-based Community Interest Company (CIC) that aims to bring community groups together to network and provide support for community-led action, focusing on creating a good life for all and sustainable solutions
3. **Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services (PAVS)** – Pembrokeshire Community Voluntary Council (CVC)
4. **Town and Community Councils** - Specifically, four Councils were engaged in the Project: Amroth, Crymych, Dinas Cross, and St. Davids
5. **Community Members** - Residents of the participating communities
6. **Partner Organisations** - Various stakeholders from organisations such as Natural Resources Wales (NRW), Pobl Tir Mor CIC, One Voice Wales
7. **Schools and Youth Groups** - Ysgol Bro Preseli in Crymych and Ysgol Penrhyn Dewi in St. Davids).

Project Timeline

The timeline of the Well-being Action Plan Project spans from April 2024 to March 2025.



Purpose of the evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to carry out a review of the development and delivery of the Well-being Action Plan Project delivered by Together for Change (TfC) in four communities located in Pembrokeshire: Crymych, St Davids, Dinas Cross, and Amroth. The evaluation aims to explore various aspects of the Project, including the application process, Project objectives, methods used, outcomes, and contributions to TfC objectives and more broadly contribution to Wellbeing work across Pembrokeshire.

Evaluation questions

The evaluation explores:

Across all Stakeholders

- The application process and expectations
- Scope and Project objectives set
- Project approach (including method and staff)
- Timescale
- Project outcomes and impact
- Contribution to wider objectives

Local work/Action plans

- Consideration of History/What has already taken place
- Application of Policy (Local/National)
- SPF requirements vs local need
- Community Councils/TfC – relationship, development, and impact
- Workshops – what happened (challenges, what worked)
- Well-being Action Plan Action Plans– sit on the shelf or helpful
- Accessibility/Welsh Language consideration

Who this evaluation is for

The evaluation has been commissioned by TfC, to support the continual review and evaluation of TfC work undertaken. It will feedback into Pembrokeshire PSB planning and delivery work and inform broader wellbeing and community action planning work across Wales.

3. Methodology

Evaluation design

The evaluation was designed to look at the ‘how’ and “why”, to explore the impact of the Well-being Action Plan Project in Pembrokeshire communities. It used qualitative methods to gain insights into the experiences, perceptions, and outcomes of stakeholders involved in or affected by the Project. A qualitative methodology was chosen because it captures detail, experiences and helps make sense of things in real-life situations.

Data collection methods

Methods used include:

- **Document review** – a review of documents related to the Project, conducted to understand planning and review work, activities completed with communities and outcomes achieved.

- **Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders** – to gain an understanding of what key stakeholders think, allowing for open-ended responses while guiding the conversation with specific questions relevant to the evaluation.
- **Appraisal of ABCD/Co-production methods used** - evaluating the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) and co-production methods proposed and used to determine how effectively they engaged the community.
- **Project feasibility review** – an assessment to whether the Project was practical and achievable within its intended scope.

Sampling and participants

Documents reviewed:

- Action logs for specific communities involved in the Project
- Engagement meeting records for specific communities involved in the Project
- Asset lists for specific communities involved in the Project
- Evaluation Plan – Pembrokeshire Well-being Action Planning Project Nov 2024-Feb 2025
- Report of Wellbeing of Well-being Action Planning review v3
- Pembrokeshire Well-being Action Planning Project 2024-25 Final Report
- Crymych CC Well-being Action Plan 2025
- St Davids CC Well-being Action Plan 2025

Interviews held (6):

- Mark John-Williams, PAVS Engagement and Co-production Officer
- Tom Moses, TfC Programme Officer
- Jessie Buchanan, TfC Programme Coordinator
- Crymych Community Council, Cris Tomas (Chair), Bethan Williams (Clerk)
- Amroth Community Council, Anthony Baron (Chair), Kathryn Bradbury (Clerk)
- St Davids City Council, Becky Lloyd (Cllr)

See appendix 9.3 for interview summaries.

Data analysis

All interviews were audio-recorded (with consent), transcribed, summarised and analysed using thematic analysis. The steps involved:

1. **Familiarisation** – Reading transcripts to identify patterns and areas of focus
2. **Summary** – Writing up of notes to create a summary document (approved for use by stakeholders)
3. **Coding** – Systematically coding data relevant to the evaluation questions
4. **Theme development** – Grouping codes into broader themes and subthemes
5. **Interpretation** – Linking themes to evaluation objectives and context.

Coral AI software was used to assist with transcription, data organisation and coding.

Limitations of the evaluation

While the evaluation provided valuable insights, there were some limitations to keep in mind:

- Not everyone was included - a small group of people was spoken to, so the views heard might not reflect what everyone in the community thinks.
- Limited time - there was not a lot of time to collect information, which meant a deeper exploration was not possible.
- Some people were not available - a few key individuals could not take part, so there may have been important feedback and experiences missed.
- Personal opinions – the findings are based on people’s personal views and experiences, which may be influenced by individual circumstances.
- Community specific - the findings are specific to this Project and for the communities that took part, so they might not apply elsewhere.

Efforts were made to balance things out by hearing from a range of voices and checking findings across different sources.

4. Description of the Well-being Action Plan Project

Overview of the Project

The Pembrokeshire Well-being Action Plan Project 2024-25 aimed to support town and Community Councils in Pembrokeshire to co-create asset-based Well-being Action Plans through community engagement.

Timeline

The timeline of the Well-being Action Plan Project spans from April 2024 to March 2025.

June 2024: Recruitment	Recruitment of the PAVS Engagement and Co-production Officer
July 2024: Call out/ Application	PAVS Call out for Engagement and Co-production support. TfC applies to host the Well-being Action Plan Project work
September 2024: Agreement	Agreement on how many Councils would be involved in the Project
October - November 2024: Planning	Initial meetings with Councils to discuss local context, identify relevant assets, and begin action ideas.

November - January 2025: Capacity Building	Identify training and support needs and link communities with existing information.
December - January 2025: Profiles/Review	Work with Councillors and community members to create a community profile and review previous action plans.
December - January 2025: Promotion	Create promotional materials for community engagement and promote workshops.
December - January 2025: Delivery	Deliver Engagement Activity, including school/youth engagement and community workshops focused on visioning and action planning.
February 2025: Reporting	Project report created for SPF reporting requirements.
March 2025: Action Plans	Drafting of local Well-being Plans

Activities

The Programme Officer developed the project with interested communities, working with community/city Councils to plan out and develop work. Work and engagement were logged using engagement meeting records and action logs for specific communities involved in the Project. Governance for the Project was provided through a Project stakeholder group established to oversee the Project, comprising representatives from partner organisations. Well-being Action Plan Project activities with communities include:

1. **Planning** - meetings to discuss local context, potential focus, and to identify relevant assets and responsibilities with Councils.
2. **Capacity building** - Identifying training needs for Councils and community members, and linking communities with support available through partners.
3. **Community profiling**: Exploring assets and creating community profiles using available data and reviewing previous action plan work.
4. **Engagement activities**
 - **Community visioning workshops** - using methods like Lego to stimulate discussion and gather input on community visions and action points.
 - **Action planning workshops** - engaging community members in prioritising actions and setting responsibilities and timescales.
5. **Reporting and Action plan development**
 - Reporting requirements for the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF).
 - Completing Well-being Action plans for two community/city Councils.

Well-being Action Plan Project Components

Opportunity - The Project worked with communities to explore need, areas of interest, and current community activity. It reviewed assets and how the Project could support local work.

Engagement/Coproduction - The Project used asset-based community development (ABCD) methods to involve a wide cross-section of the community. It delivered a series of workshops, utilising tools such as Lego as a tool to stimulate discussion and engagement. These workshops aimed to capture community visions and generate action points.

Collaboration - The Project encouraged collaboration between community members, the Councils, and partner organisations. The included partner organisation offers additional support to community members.

Accessibility - The Project promoted workshops bi-lingually, via post and through social media and community venues, and proposed to offer resources for participation, such as transport and childcare support.

Capacity Building - Training was designed and delivered to Councils and community members to build local capacity in skills necessary for effective Project delivery. This included sessions on the Well-being of Future Generations Act, engagement, facilitation skills, and digital inclusion.

Feedback - The Project included mechanisms for evaluating the workshops and overall Project effectiveness, with feedback gathered from participants to inform future actions.

Stakeholders

The stakeholders involved in the Well-being Action Plan Project included:

- **Pembrokeshire Public Services Board (PSB)** - A statutory strategic partnership made up of representatives from a wide range of organisations which deliver public services across the County.
- **Together for Change (TfC)** – Pembrokeshire-based Community Interest Company (CIC) that aims to bring community groups together to network and provide support for community-led action, focusing on creating a good life for all and sustainable solutions. Project host, applying for funding and facilitating the community engagement processes.
- **Popl Tir Mor** – Pembrokeshire based CIC providing graphic recording for events and activities.
- **Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services (PAVS)** – Pembrokeshire Community Voluntary Council (CVC). Hosted the Shared Prosperity Fund and played a role in Project oversight through the Engagement and Co-production officer.

- **Town and Community Councils** - Specifically, four Councils were engaged in the Project: Amroth, Crymych, Dinas Cross, and St. Davids. These Councils helped facilitate local participation and co-creation of well-being plans.
- **Community Members** - Residents of the participating communities actively engaged in workshops and planning sessions.
- **Partner Organisations** - Various stakeholders from organizations such as Natural Resources Wales (NRW) attended workshops to provide support and resources.
- **Schools and Youth Groups** - Engagement with local schools was significant, particularly in involving young people in the process (e.g., Ysgol Bro Preseli in Crymych and Ysgol Penrhyn Dewi in St. Davids).

Target groups/populations

The target groups/populations for the Pembrokeshire Well-being Action Planning Project included:

1. **Community Councils** - support for Councils to involving their communities in the co-creation of asset-based Well-being Action Plans.
 2. **Community members** – focus on engaging a diverse cross-section of community members from the selected areas to participate in workshops and action planning.
 3. **Young people** - a specific emphasis on involving young people in the process to energise and broaden participation in communities.
 4. **Stakeholders and partner organisations** - bringing together community members with stakeholder organisations to create opportunities for collaboration and support.
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5. Evaluation Findings

Findings are organised around the evaluation questions using proposed methods to explore data, see appendix 9.1 – evaluation question plan.

TfC/Project overall

- TfC application process and expectations
- Scope and Project objectives set
- Project Approach (including method and staff)
- Timescale
- Project outcomes and impact

Local work/Action plan development

- Consideration of History/What has already taken place
- Application of Policy (Local/National)
- Funding requirements vs local need
- Local hosts – relationship, development, and impact
- Workshops – what happened (challenges, what worked well)
- Accessibility/Welsh Language consideration

TfC/Project overall

The application process and expectations

(Data used: Action logs for specific communities involved in the Project, engagement meeting records for specific communities involved in the Project, interviews).

Findings:

- **Community Engagement and Co-production** - Stakeholders anticipated that the Project would facilitate meaningful engagement and co-production, enabling communities to collaboratively develop their well-being action plans grounded in local data and lived experiences
- **Inclusivity and Active Participation** - There was a strong expectation for inclusivity in the engagement process, with a broad representation from community members, particularly those who had historically been less engaged
- **Capacity Building** - Stakeholders expressed a clear need for capacity building to equip Councils with the necessary skills and knowledge for effective community engagement and implementation of the action plans. This involved training sessions and workshops designed to support Councils in their roles
- **Realistic Timelines and Resources** - Concerns were raised regarding the Project timelines, as some Councils felt that the time allocated for discussions and planning was inadequate. The late start for SPF Projects and the late recruitment of the PAVS engagement and coproduction officer impacted Project feasibility and timelines

- **Ownership and Local Context** - Stakeholders highlighted the importance of local context in shaping the action plans, with the expectation that new plans would reflect changes in community needs and priorities, particularly considering events like COVID-19
- **Challenges in Engagement** - Some Councils faced difficulties in meeting these expectations, especially in engaging younger residents and ensuring that diverse community voices were heard without being overshadowed by more vocal participants. This underscored the need for innovative engagement strategies and adequate outreach resources

Project Scope and objectives set

(Data used: Proposed Evaluation vs, Action logs for specific communities involved in the Project, Engagement meeting records for specific communities involved in the Project, Interviews).

Findings:

- **Project Scope** - Scope was broad, targeting communities across Pembrokeshire and focusing on a variety of objectives, including community engagement, training, and the co-creation of Well-being plans
- **Capacity Building** - there was a need for capacity building within Councils to ensure that they could effectively engage their communities. While some training sessions were organised, attendance was low, and some Councils expressed a lack of time or interest in training opportunities
- **Timing and Duration** - The Project timeline was perceived as restrictive, which limited the Councils' ability to fully engage their communities and complete the planned activities. Councils noted that the winter months, especially around the holidays, were particularly challenging for organising events
- **Funding** – The project was funded for two days a week by the SPF fund, this fell short of the support required to deliver the project. To mitigate this Together for Change (TfC) provided extra support and funding to employ the programme officer full time, and invested in the support and management of the programme.
- **Flexibility in Objectives** - The Project objectives were somewhat rigid, and there were suggestions that a more flexible approach could have accommodated varying levels of Council capacity and community interest. For example, offering bite-sized training or workshops that could be tailored to specific needs might have been more effective
- **Community Involvement** - While the objective to create community profiles and plans was clear, the actual involvement from community members was inconsistent, resulting in only two out of four Councils successfully engaging in the process

- **Learning and Adaptation** - The Project did facilitate some learning and feedback, but the rapid pace and tight timeline made it difficult to fully integrate these insights into future planning and actions.

Project Approach (including method and staff)

(Data used: Engagement meeting records for specific communities involved in the Project, Interviews, Final report).

- **Asset-Based Community Development** - TfC's methodology focused on identifying and leveraging local assets rather than merely addressing deficiencies. This approach was evidenced in communities' discussions about listing and utilising community-owned assets
- **Engagement and Co-Production** - TfC focused on creating genuine opportunities for co-production, moving beyond consultation to involve communities in the action planning process
- **Utilising Relationships and Networks** - TfC built on existing relationships, and developed work from previous community engagement work- including action plans
- **Trust** – Some Councils noted that they already had a relationship and trust with TfC staff which helped work move forward
- **Capacity Building** - The Projects included elements of capacity building and explored community assets, although this was primarily through visioning sessions that captured ideas and current assets rather than development of community capacity
- **Support available** – It was highlighted that limitations of the grant funding led to project constraints and a reliance on one member staff which limited Project support
- **Leadership** – Some Councils felt that decisions about the Project were made remotely
- **Time** - time limitations affected engagement with Councils and mobilising community participation effectively.

Timescale

(Data used: Community Action Plan Timeline, Final Report, Interviews).

- **Recruitment** – A delay occurred in filling the PAVS Engagement and Co-production Officer position, which was supposed to be filled in April 2024 but was not filled until June 2024. This delay pushed the Project timeline back by two to three months, compressing what was intended to be a nine-month Project into a six-month Project

- **Planning** - Delays in reaching agreements on participant Councils added to the timeline challenges, and limited time to plan effectively
- **Delivery** - The original Project timeline was set from September to December 2024, but it was extended until February 2025. Participants indicated that the limited time available hindered relationship-building and community engagement
- **Community Engagement** - Community Councils, such as Crymych and Amroth, expressed concerns about the fast pace of the Project, which hindered thorough discussions and led to a lack of momentum and trust
- **Participation** - Councils struggled to balance participation in the Project with their existing responsibilities, the busy civic calendar during the holiday season further complicated scheduling and participation in engagement activities

Project outcomes and impact

(Data used: Final Report, Interviews).

- **Skills** - The Project helped communities learn new skills and understand the importance of spending time on planning and receiving support
- **Involvement** - It used methods that included everyone, which brought out the best in the community and led to new partnerships
- **Ownership** - People in the community felt that they had a say in the ideas created during workshops, which helped strengthen relationships
- **Old Plans** - Community Councils looked at their past plans and noticed improvements. Some formed groups to keep working on recommendations
- **Assets** - While some community assets were identified, there was not enough time to explore how to use them effectively
- **Participation** - There was good engagement at workshops, especially in St David's and Crymych, although some participants felt the process was rushed
- **Time** - Many participants expressed concerns about the hasty completion of action plans, particularly after Christmas, which affected overall participation
- **Draft Plans** - The Project created draft plans from the workshops, which were helpful, but they were not as complete as everyone hoped.
- **Follow-Up** - The success of the Project will depend on how well the action plan is put into action and if it leads to real impact in the community.

Contribution to wider objectives

(Data used: Final Report, Interviews).

Wellbeing – The Project supported communities to co-create Well-being Action Plans that align with the sustainability goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WFGA).

Communities - The Project was part of the "Strengthening Communities" element of the Pembrokeshire Public Services Board's Well-being Plan.

Local work/Action plan development:

Consideration of History/What has already taken place

(Data used: Action logs for specific communities involved in the Project, Engagement meeting records for specific communities involved in the Project, Interviews, Asset lists).

- **Review** – The Project reviewed well-being planning activities locally and nationally across Wales/UK
- **Duplication** - It aimed to avoid duplication and ensure continuity from earlier plans.
- **Action Plans** - Communities recognised relooked at action plans and saw the Well-being Action Plan Project as a chance to build on earlier community action plans from 2008 and 2012
- **Achievement** - Councils reflected on past achievements and communicated this feedback to communities, though it occurred late in the Project timeline
- **Awareness** – The Project's awareness of previous work and the goal to avoid reinventing the wheel.

Application of Policy (Local/National)

(Data used: Action logs for specific communities involved in the Project, Engagement meeting records for specific communities involved in the Project, Interviews, Final report, Action plans).

- **Policy** - The Project utilised and aligns with policies, including the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 (WFGA) and locally the Pembrokeshire Public Service Board (PSB) well-being plan.
- **Well-being Action Plan Plans** – Both plans developed with the participating Councils reflect the sustainability goals of the WFGA and align with the Pembrokeshire PSB Well-being Action Plan (2023-28). Plans explore community involvement and sustainable development, how the community can take an active role in shaping the future, enhancing local well-being, resilience, and equality.
- **Funding** – The Project was funded by the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF), hosted by Pembrokeshire PSB, and links the UK government's Levelling Up /Communities agenda

- **Pembrokeshire PSB** - The Project was integrated into the planning/operational framework of the Pembrokeshire PSB
- **Engagement** - Data collectively illustrates that the Project and plans are not only informed by national and local policies but also aim to incorporate community feedback, engage various stakeholders, and create a framework for future actions that support sustainable development and community well-being. The emphasis is on co-creation and active participation from the community.

SPF requirements vs local need

(Data used: Action logs for specific communities involved in the Project, Engagement meeting records for specific communities involved in the Project, Interviews, Final report).

Constraints - The short-term funding cycle created "stop-start issues" that limited sustained impact and depth of community engagement. This made it challenging to build relationships and engage communities, affecting overall participation and confidence among Community Councils

Engagement - Some Councils expressed difficulty in participating within the tight timescale, especially during busy periods such as Christmas and New Year. The Project's initial timeline was extended, but workload exceeded the planned two days per week, complicating engagement efforts further

Local Needs - While some local needs were addressed, the ability to comprehensively meet diverse local needs was hindered.

Reporting - The constraints related to SPF included reporting to a strategic funding bid that did not fully relate to local need

Community Councils - Community Councils noted feelings of being rushed and insufficient time for meaningful community engagement. Councils indicated that the planning and engagement processes were compromised.

Community Councils/TfC – relationship, development, and impact

(Data used: Engagement meeting records for specific communities involved in the Project, Interviews).

- **Relationship** - The relationship between Together for Change (TfC) and the Councils varied based on the specific Council involved
 - **Crymych Community Council** - The relationship was positive, with the Community Council actively participating in the Project. Prior experience with community action plans motivated the involvement.
 - **Amroth Community Council** - The relationship faced challenges. The Council initially showed enthusiasm for engagement but withdrew from the Project due to time constraints and a sense that the Project was rushed. They expressed concerns about the workshop format not capturing the broader community's needs.

- **St Davids City Council** - The relationship with TfC was described as collaborative and engaging. Prior experience and work with TfC facilitated communication and trust.
- **Participation** - community members participated actively in workshops, sharing ideas which provided a platform for their voices to be heard
- **Schools** - Workshops with schools were held, which supported children and young people present ideas to the wider community
- **Building Trust and Relationships** - participants left sessions feeling a sense of ownership over their ideas. However, challenges did hinder relationship development, leading to one Council withdrawing from the Project due to concerns about time constraints and the perception that the Project was rushed
- **Involvement** - The Project adopted a co-production approach, allowing communities to shape their own action plans and engage in decision-making, which empowered them
- **Difference** - The effectiveness of the Project was varied. While some Councils were proactive and established connections, others struggled with inconsistent participation and engagement levels
- **Impact** - The Project did lead to the creation of a draft community well-being plans for two areas which was viewed as a valuable tool for future development.

Workshops – what happened (challenges, what worked well)

(Data used: Action logs for specific communities involved in the Project, Interviews, Final report).

Challenges:

- **Timeline** - The Project timeline was short, this compressed work, and a limited number of workshops were delivered
- **Engagement** - Some communities were proactive, while others were less confident or hesitant to participate. Inconsistent involvement from Councillors also affected community uptake
- **Knowledge** - Communities had local knowledge, but lacked skills in planning, data analysis, and research
- **Time** - Workshops felt rushed, limiting discussions and the development of ideas. Some participants reported feeling overwhelmed by prioritization exercises due to the lack of time
- **Communication** - feedback indicated that some people were unaware of the workshops or heard about them too late

What Worked Well:

- **Involvement** - Some communities embraced the opportunity to be involved in decision-making, and there was meaningful engagement with schools, with young people contributing positively to discussions

- **Creative Methods** - The use of Lego as an engagement tool was particularly effective, especially with younger participants, as it helped them visualise their community's future
- **Turnout** - There was a good turnout in some areas, even during adverse weather conditions
- **Partnerships** - Unexpected partnerships formed, such as collaboration between the National Parks Authority and One Voice Wales
- **Co-Creation** - There was a noticeable shift from consultation to co-creation, with communities actively involved in planning rather than just providing feedback
- **Awareness** - Discussions around well-being, mental health, and local resources led to increased community awareness

Accessibility/Welsh Language consideration

(Data used: Action logs for specific communities involved in the Project, Engagement meeting records for specific communities involved in the Project, Interviews, Final report).

- **Diversity** – The Project aimed to be inclusive by targeting diverse communities, including Welsh-speaking areas
- **Voices** - There were challenges in engagement, with a need to plan more effectively to reach underrepresented voices
- **Welsh Language** - The Project supported the Welsh language, discussions were held in Welsh to ensure cultural relevance and participation
- **Tables** - Feedback indicated that while translation was available, participants tended to gravitate towards either Welsh or English tables
- **Capacity** - Some Councils expressed concerns about their capacity to engage effectively in both Welsh and English.

Well-being Action Plan Action Plans – sit on the shelf or helpful? *

*Note action plans were not available for use during the evaluation study interviews, and therefore Councils were not able to comment on how they had used them

(Data used: Final report, Action plans).

- **Looks back** – Incorporates previous action planning work
- **Balanced** – Provides a review on challenges and what worked well
- **Useful** - It outlines approaches, community engagement activities, and specific recommendations for enhancing community well-being.
- **Assets** – Explores assets and community needs
- **Policy** – uses the WFGA (Wales) 2015 as a framework to explore wellbeing proposals
- **Specific** - Plans outline specific needs, assets, and proposed actions. Assists Councils in planning their next steps effectively.

- **Guides** - Helps Councils in addressing local issues and utilising community strengths.
- **Helpful** - Helps Councils understand how to better engage their own communities, and how people can be involved in delivering the plan
- **Support** – Provide a comprehensive list of partners and support available.

6. Analysis and Discussion

Interpretation of key findings

The Project demonstrated strong initial support and potential for community engagement and co-production, with stakeholders anticipating that communities would be empowered to create tailored Well-being Action Plans based on local data and experiences. This reinforced the value of inclusive planning that directly reflects community priorities.

However, achieving genuine inclusivity proved challenging, particularly among underrepresented groups like young people and historically disengaged residents. Despite efforts to reach a broad demographic, barriers such as communication, participation fatigue, and timing limited the depth and diversity of engagement.

A major constraint was capacity within Councils, which hindered their ability to engage effectively. Although training opportunities were provided, attendance was low due to time pressures and a lack of perceived relevance or capacity. The compressed Project timeline, largely due to delays in staffing and confirmation of selected Councils, further restricted opportunities for deep engagement. What was initially envisioned as a nine-month Project became a six-month effort, overlapping with winter weather, Christmas, and limiting participation.

Project implementation varied significantly across locations. Councils like St Davids and Crymych engaged actively and benefited from existing relationships and previous planning work. In contrast, other such as Amroth assessed the opportunity but decided not to proceed. These differences highlight the importance of trust, local history, alignment of expectations and the feasibility of a Project.

The Project approach employed by the Programme Officer, grounded in Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD), was widely appreciated for its focus on local strengths and community ownership. Creative tools and methods such as Lego-based visioning and school led presentations were effective in energising participants. However, whilst Together for Change (TfC) provided additional funding to employ the Programme Officer full time, the Project still over relied on one member of staff, this affected consistency and the ability to build deep, trusting relationships. Some

participants perceived that decision making was remote and top-down, despite the co-production ethos.

While the Project did produce Well-being Action Plans, these were completed in draft and not available to Councils until April 2025. Nonetheless, Councils valued the opportunity to build on previous action planning work, avoiding duplication and validating earlier efforts. The well-being plans themselves were viewed as practical tools to help Councils outline needs, local assets, and pathways to support, though their long-term impact remains to be assessed.

The Project increased awareness of well-being, mental health, and local assets, fostering a sense of community ownership and collaboration. However, participants noted that the workshops sometimes felt rushed and suffered from inconsistent attendance—particularly from Councillors and less confident community members lacking planning or data skills.

From a policy perspective, the Project successfully aligned with the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 and the Pembrokeshire Public Services Board (PSB) Well-being Plan (2023–2028), showcasing how community-led planning can support strategic goals. Yet, there was a notable disconnect between short-term SPF funding requirements and the longer-term needs of communities, making it difficult to balance reporting demands with meaningful engagement.

Language accessibility and inclusivity were considered, with bilingual workshops offered where appropriate. However, efforts to engage underrepresented voices and integrate Welsh language discussions were mixed and led to segmented rather than integrated bilingual discussions.

Alignment with original objectives and expected outcomes

Well-being Action Plan Project objectives	Outcome
Co-create community profiles and Well-being Plans in communities representative of Pembrokeshire	The Project aimed to create community profiles and well-being plans with Community Councils located in Pembrokeshire. Actual involvement from was inconsistent. Only Two out of four Councils successfully engaged in the Project. Two plans were completed in April 2025, but no communities managed to complete their plans within the allocated Project time (Sept – February 2025).
Explore community assets using Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)	The Project utilised an Asset-Based Community Development approach, focusing on identifying and leveraging local assets. While some community

Build upon previous work in communities	assets were identified, there was not enough time to explore how to use them effectively. The Project aimed to avoid duplication and build upon earlier community action plans from 2008 and 2012. Communities recognised this opportunity, and Councils reflected on past achievements.
Build capacity in communities to deliver future well-being actions.	There was a clear need for capacity building within Councils to engage effectively with their communities. While some training sessions were organised, attendance was low, and some Councils expressed a lack of time or interest in these opportunities.
Learn from the process to inform the future work of the Pembrokeshire Public Services Board (PSB), other organisations, and communities.	The Project facilitated some learning and feedback, but the rapid pace and tight timeline made it difficult to fully integrate these insights into future planning and actions. The Final report is comprehensive, and it provides good learning opportunities for future work.

Appraisal of ABCD/Co-production methods

Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) was central to the Well-being Action Plan Projects methodology, this was also paired with principles of co-production. Applying these to the planning, delivery of workshops, and creation of actions plans. The Project success in achieving this is analysed against the Co-production Network for Wales definition of 'Co-production'.

Coproduction values²	Well-being Action Plan Project delivery
Value people and build on their strengths	The Project employed an Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach, which focused on identifying and leveraging local assets, thus valuing community strengths
Develop networks that operate across silos	The Project encouraged collaboration between community members, Councils, and partners organisations, which helped to build networks and develop connections across different groups
Focus on what matters for the people involved	The Project engaged communities in co-creating Well-being Action Plans that reflected local needs and priorities, highlighting the importance of community engagement in addressing what matters

² Co-production Network for Wales – <https://copronet.wales/home/coproduction/>

Build relationships of trust & shared power	While the Project experienced some challenges in building trust due to time constraints and varying levels of engagement, it aimed to create genuine opportunities for co-production, allowing communities to actively participate in decision-making
Enable people to be change makers	The Project facilitated community involvement and empowerment through workshops, where participants shared their ideas and co-created action plans, thus enabling them to become change makers in their communities

Project feasibility review

The evaluation explores how feasible the Project was, in its inception, planning and delivery. This has been assessed against a set of decision points which helps organisations explore the viability of Projects and funding work. To aid reflection and the evaluation of the Project success, decision points have been completed from a position of hindsight (!), they are also intended to be an indication, a ‘best-informed answer’. This is intended to support learning and future work. A full example template of the Yes/No bid assessment is included in appendix 9.2.

Yes/No bid assessment		
Opportunity		
Do we know the opportunity? (theme, scope, scale, timeframe, geography)	Yes	Yes, the Well-being Action Plan Project was designed to co-create Well-being Action Plans within Pembrokeshire communities, focusing on local assets and building capacity. The scope included various Community Councils (Crymych, St Davids, Dinas Cross, and Amroth) and aimed for engagement from September 2024 to Feb 2025.
Do we know the funder’s expectations and needs?	Maybe	The Project was funded by the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF), which had specific reporting and accountability requirements. Whilst SPF was administered through a structured process, this involved a number of organisations, levels of governance, and variables existed.
Do we have the capacity to manage a contract/grant of this type, with these terms? (reporting requirements,	Yes	Yes, TfC has a proven track record in managing grants and contracts of this size. Reporting requirements for SPF were provided by PAVS/Pembrokeshire PSB late in Project delivery stage but were manageable and achievable. The SPF grant provides flexibility of use within intended purpose.

conditionality, repayment risks, etc)

Strategic Alignment

Does the opportunity fit TfC's mission and strategy for the relevant service?

Yes

Yes, the Project aligns with TfC's mission to engage communities and support co-creation of well-being initiatives, as it focused on empowering local communities and enhancing their resilience

Capacity

Do we have the capacity to manage the potential service? (staff capacity/skills, service stability)

Maybe

The Project relied heavily on one member of staff which may have impacted overall service delivery. TfC had to provide additional funding to support the Project.

The Project start date was pushed back due to delays in filling the PAVs Engagement and Co-production Officer position. This delay compressed the Project timeline and limited the ability to engage effectively.

Do we have the skills and resources available to develop the bid?

Yes

TfC has a strong understanding and track record delivering ABCD and Co-production work. Projects are routinely evaluated to support continual learning and future work.

Success Analysis

Do we have a competitive advantage as TfC? (External stakeholder analysis)

Maybe

TfC's approach, emphasising Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) and utilising existing relationships within communities, showcased a competitive advantage. However, the success varied across Councils, indicating that while there was potential, not all areas benefitted equally.

Cost

Does the opportunity outweigh the bid development/co financing/cost benefit ration etc?

Maybe

The Project provided costs to support TfC work. The breakdown of funding was unavailable. The Project aimed to create meaningful community engagement and was integrated into existing well-being plans, suggesting that the potential benefits to community well-being may outweigh the costs. However, challenges in participation and the perceived rushed nature of workshops could impact the overall cost-benefit outcome.

Risk

Is the overall risk acceptable?

Maybe

Several risks were evident including time constraints affecting community engagement and the varying levels of Council participation. These risks could undermine the effectiveness of the Project. While the Project did produce drafts Well-being Action Plans, the concern remains about their long-term impact and community ownership. Therefore, the overall risk may be viewed as moderately high given the challenges outlined.

7. Conclusions

While the Project showed effectiveness in engaging some communities and supporting discussions around well-being, the constraints on time and resources, along with variable participation levels, presented significant challenges. The Project was well received in participating communities, however there is a need to think carefully to how Projects are planned, resourced, and to consider the feasibility of funding opportunities, and proposed objectives at Project start. There is a clear indication of the need for extended timelines and continued support to maximise the potential impact of such initiatives in the future.

8. Recommendations

Recommendations for future work include (but are not limited to!)

- **Feasibility** – Complete a Yes/No assessment to explore if the opportunity is viable. (see appendix 9.2)
- **Funding** – Using core TfC funding to support projects needs to be carefully considered. Consider creating a ringfenced investment/delivery fund to support future work.
- **Plan effectively** – Consider using objectives set for projects in the correct order of delivery and relate them to project development, delivery, and recording process (engagement records and meeting logs).
- **Flexible Timelines and Objectives** - Future projects should consider more flexible timelines and objectives to allow Councils and facilitators (TfC) to fully engage their communities. This includes recognising any challenges that may affect participation.
- **Engagement Strategies** – Be innovative, organised, and thorough in engaging communities, to ensure that diverse voices, especially those of younger residents and underrepresented groups, are heard.
- **Capacity Building** - There is a need for ongoing training and workshops to equip Councils and community members with the necessary skills for effective engagement and implementation of action plans. This should include tailored, bite-sized training that accommodates varying levels of capacity and interest.
- **Building Trust and Relationships** - Focus on strengthening relationships with Community Councils and building trust through consistent and better communication. This can help mitigate challenges related to perceived rushed timelines.
- **Integration with Existing Plans** - Future projects should aim to build on and integrate existing community action plans rather than starting anew, ensuring continuity and leveraging past achievements.

- **Work with People** – Consider employing local community members to complete work required. This provides a head start to support engagement and trust, and an understanding of local need.
 - **Resources for Engagement** - Ensure that there are sufficient resources allocated for outreach and engagement efforts, including innovative practice in working with Welsh-speaking communities.
 - **Continuous Feedback** - Establish a mechanism for continuous feedback from community members to adapt and improve engagement processes in real-time.
 - **Post-project Follow-Up** - Implement a follow-up strategy to monitor the application of action plans and to assess their impact on community well-being over time.
-

9. Appendices

1. Evaluation question plan

Aim:

To carry out a review and evaluation of the development and delivery of the Well-being Action Plan Project by Together for Change (TfC) in four communities located in Pembrokeshire: Crymych, St Davids, Dinas Cross, Amroth.

Evaluation to explore:**TfC/Project overall**

- TfC application process and expectations
- Scope and Project objectives set
- Project Approach (including method and staff)
- Timescale
- Project outcomes and impact
- Contribution to wider TfC objectives

Local work/Action plan development

- Consideration of History/What has already taken place
- Application of Policy (Local/National)
- Funding requirements vs local need
- Local hosts – relationship, development, and impact
- Workshops – what happened (challenges, what worked)
- Report format and legacy – sit on the shelf or helpful?
- Welsh Language consideration

Questions/prompts for communities:

- Tell me about the Council...
- Why did the Council get involved (or not)?
 - Key contact/driver
 - The application process
 - Expectation
 - Coproduction
 - Timeline
 - Training offered/completed?
- The workshops
 - What worked well/any magic moments?
 - Challenges?
 - What could be improved?
 - Language
 - Would you do it again?

- The outcomes
 - Did it build on previous action plan work?
 - Were assets explored and was capacity developed?
 - Was work co-created/co-produced? (shared power, working together, trust, change...)
 - Was the time investment made by the Council/Communities worthwhile?
- Anything else to add?

Bid Assessment Phases (Decision Points)

□

3. Interview summaries

Summary of the Well-being Action Plan Project Evaluation – St Davids City Council 17.3.25 (Discussion between Cllr Becky Lloyd & John Hallett)

1. Project Background & Challenges

- St David's City Council operates like a Community Council but with higher-profile responsibilities.
- The Council is modernising, but administrative burdens delayed engagement.
- Timing was a major issue—the Project clashed with the civic calendar and Christmas, making scheduling difficult.
- Becky Lloyd played a key role in getting the Council involved, partly due to her previous work with Tom Moses.

2. Community Engagement & Workshops

What Worked Well?

- LEGO engagement with schoolchildren was a success—kids grasped community asset-building concepts.
- Direct engagement with youth groups (e.g., school, youth club) increased participation.

Challenges & Areas for Improvement

- Workshops lacked clear instructions—some struggled to understand LEGO activities.
- Different people attended each event, leading to inconsistent voting results.
- Sticky dot voting didn't always reflect community priorities.
- Community groups (WI, rugby club) weren't fully engaged due to time constraints.

Future Recommendations

- Simpler, clearer workshops with better planning.
- Less talking—shorter presentations to keep engagement high.
- Target groups in their own spaces rather than expecting them to attend events.

3. Outcomes & Next Steps

- The Project reviewed the 2012/13 Action Plan, tracking progress.
- Only a draft Well-being Action Plan was produced, not a finalised version.
- The Council plans to refine and adopt it, but capacity is a concern.
- Better preparation is needed for future action planning opportunities.

4. Final Takeaways

- The Project was valuable but needed more time.
- Youth engagement was a highlight.
- Co-production was limited due to inconsistent participation.

- Future Projects should have longer timelines and clearer engagement strategies.

Summary of Well-being Action Plan Project Evaluation – Amroth Community Council 17.3.25

Summary discussion between John Hallett and representatives of Amroth Community Council (Kathryn Bradbury and Tony Baron) regarding their involvement in the Well-being Action Plan Project. The discussion explores why the Council initially engaged with the Project, their expectations, challenges, and reasons for withdrawing.

While Amroth Community Council strongly supports community-led well-being initiatives, they withdrew from the Well-being Action Plan Project due to time constraints, lack of preparation, and shifting expectations. Their experience highlights the need for longer lead times, better planning, and clearer structures for effective co-production and engagement. However, they remain willing to participate in future Projects, provided they are given adequate time and resources.

Key Points from the Discussion:

1. Background of Amroth Community Council

- The Council is highly active and has successfully delivered numerous community Projects, including:
 - Clean Seas Project (Bertie the Sea Bass initiative)
 - Playground renovation
 - Historical road signage installation
 - Exercise Jantzen memorial Project (D-Day practice landings)
 - Free public Wi-Fi installation
 - Coastal defences and flood protection collaboration
 - Biodiversity and ecological initiatives
 - Allotments and green spaces
 - Defibrillator installation
 - Village halls, film clubs, and social events
 - Community engagement through newsletters, Facebook, and surveys

2. Reasons for Initial Interest in the Well-being Action Plan Project

- The Council had previously participated in an action planning process with PLANED in 2012 and had implemented many of the identified priorities.
- They saw the Well-being Action Plan Project as an opportunity to enhance community engagement further, particularly with younger residents.
- Their goal was to better understand community needs, increase representation, and ensure a structured and inclusive engagement process.

3. Initial Engagement & Expectations

- They were introduced to the Project through Pembrokeshire County Council and had a positive initial meeting with Tom Moses from Together for Change (TFC).

- Expectations included:
 - A structured engagement process similar to PLANED’s visioning exercises.
 - A well-prepared process to ensure all community voices were heard.
 - Use of surveys, public meetings, and youth engagement strategies.
 - Training for facilitating workshops and designing outreach materials.
 - Sufficient time and resources to reach a diverse range of residents.

4. Challenges & Decision to Withdraw

- Time constraints:
 - The Project was rushed, leaving little time for proper engagement.
 - Workshops were scheduled for January, but preparation and community outreach were not adequately structured.
- Lack of clarity and shifting expectations:
 - Initially, the Council was told funding would cover mail shots, clerk’s time, and outreach but later informed these were not available.
 - Training was scheduled too close to workshops, making it impractical for Councillors to properly prepare.
- Concerns about representation:
 - The Council feared that the loudest voices would dominate discussions.
 - They were not confident that the workshop format would accurately capture the wider community’s needs.
- Co-production concerns:
 - While TFC promoted co-production, the Council felt decisions were being made elsewhere and then revised due to budget limitations.
 - There was a lack of clear structure in planning the workshops.

5. Decision-Making Process

- After several discussions, the Council voted unanimously in December to withdraw from the Project.
- The decision was not taken lightly – Councillors debated pros and cons extensively before deciding.
- Key reasons for pulling out:
 - Lack of preparation and structure.
 - The Project felt rushed and wasn’t meeting expectations.
 - Concerns about genuine community engagement and representation.

6. Key Learnings & Future Considerations

- The Council remains open to trying again if given more time and resources.
- They emphasised the importance of preparation in ensuring a meaningful and inclusive engagement process.
- The experience reinforced the need for a structured approach to community consultation and action planning.

**Summary of Well-being Action Plan Project Evaluation – Crymych Community Council
28.3.25**

Summary discussion between John Hallett and representatives of Crymych Community Council, Bethan Williams (Clerk), Cris Tomas (Chair).

1. Background of Crymych Community Council

- The Crymych Community Council consists of 12 Councillors who serve on a voluntary basis
- Attendance varies: some members are highly active, while others are inactive for long periods
- Councillors can claim an annual £152 allowance (or £500 for the Chair), but most do not
- Improvement plans: Assign specific focus areas (youth work, housing, environment, Projects) to Councillors
- Financials:
 - Precept increased from £10,000 to £20,000 over five years.
 - Compared to Cilgerran (£21,000) and Mynachlogddu (£4,000)
- Key expenditure:
 - Public toilets (taken over in 2014 to prevent closure)
 - Car park maintenance (£3,250 per year to prevent introduction of parking fees)
 - Library funding (£3,000 per year requested by local authority; alternative solutions being considered)
- The Council also supports local community groups (youth clubs, WI, air ambulance) but only funds national charities if they operate locally
- Attempts to hire a part-time grant writer and liaison officer failed due to a lack of qualified candidates or interest
- Future Aspirations:
 - Exploring economic initiatives, such as:
 - Community-run businesses (e.g., saving a local Welsh bookshop)
 - A local charity shop to keep funds within the community rather than donating to national organisations
 - Developing a long-term strategy to ensure Council decisions are proactive rather than reactive
 - Addressing planning issues (high street usage, parking, and local services).

2. Interest in the Wellbeing Action Project

- Introduced by Cris Tomas (Chair) as an opportunity to:
 - Increase grassroots participation in local decision-making
 - Identify well-being priorities that reflect community needs
 - Develop sustainable action plans which build on previous plan work (PLANED)
 - Strengthen collaboration between communities, public services, and third-sector organisations
- Strong initial interest, especially among individuals already involved in community Projects
- Welsh language was key to inclusivity, ensuring discussions were culturally relevant.
- Crymych was one of four communities selected to participate

- Knowledge of Tom Moses (TfC).

3. Community Engagement & Participation

Challenges in Engagement

- Limited participation:
 - Youth engagement was lower than expected
 - Participation was highest among older community members and those already active
- Varied commitment levels:
 - Some were highly engaged, while others participated inconsistently
 - Enthusiasm fluctuated based on perceived long-term benefits
 - The weather and time of year did not help
- Different interpretations of "well-being":
 - Some viewed it as physical and mental health
 - Others saw it as community development, services, and economic stability
 - These differing perspectives shaped the priorities identified.
- Presentation and doing balance
 - The presentations were too long at times and lost the audience
 - Too much focus on Wellbeing Policy, rather than local contexts.
- Lego
 - Worked well for some but not for others
- Action planning tools
 - Some of these were over complicated (bits of paper) and participants disengaged.

Engagement Methods Used

- Workshops & public meetings to discuss key well-being issues
- Informal discussions & drop-in sessions to capture diverse opinions
- Outreach to schools to encourage youth participation
- Lego Play to make well-being planning more accessible and fun.

4. Key Challenges

Planning

- More time needed to plan Projects, to think about engagement strategy
- More involvement of the Council in planning workshops
- A better review of previous work needed – plans from past.

Short Project Timeline/continuity

- Limited time for engagement
- Not a good time of year - weather
- The Project moved too quickly for thorough discussion and refinement

- Some felt the fast pace prevented strong community momentum
- Lack of clear post-Project steps led to uncertainty about maintaining progress
- Too much to complete in two workshops.

Balancing Support & Leadership

- The Project aimed to be community-led and co-produced, but some groups needed more structured guidance
- While autonomy was encouraged, the lack of clear next steps made action difficult
- A balance between independence and facilitation was necessary.

Resources

- Limited resources to complete the Project
- More staff needed to run workshops

Language

- Whilst translation was provided participants gravitated to a 'Welsh' and 'English' tables, translation could have been provided both ways, to encourage Welsh language use for all.

5. What worked well

Wellbeing focus

- Sparked important discussions on mental health, social inclusion, and access to services
- Community members became more aware of local resources and their role in well-being.

Partnership

- Strengthened connections between:
 - Community groups.
 - Partners and service providers who attended the workshops
- New partnerships formed, especially between schools, Community Councils, and third-sector organisations.

Engagement

- Participants felt more confident in taking part, developing ideas and planning
- The Project highlighted the value of local knowledge in shaping well-being strategies.
- Unlike previous top-down well-being initiatives, this Project empowered communities to create their own plans
- Resulted in more relevant and practical action plans.

6. Future Considerations

Invest in Longer-Term Community Engagement

- A longer Project duration is necessary for:
 - Trust and engagement
 - Relationship-building
 - Sustained action.

Post Project support

- Communities need continued support to maintain momentum
- A follow-up mechanism (e.g., community-led working groups) could help sustain engagement.

Strengthen Youth Engagement Strategies

- Tailored approaches are needed, such as:
 - School-based programs integrating well-being into the curriculum
 - Social media campaigns to attract younger audiences
 - Youth-focused events and workshops.

Balance Structure & Flexibility

- Communities should lead their own initiatives, but some structure is necessary
- Providing toolkits, frameworks, and mentorship can empower communities without overwhelming them.

Embed Learnings into Future Policies

- Findings should inform broader Pembrokeshire well-being strategies
- Policymakers should integrate lessons on engagement, empowerment, and sustainability into future planning.

7. Final Reflections

Was the Project valuable? Yes

- Raised awareness about well-being.
- Strengthened local relationships.
- Encouraged community-led action.

What could be improved?

- Longer engagement period – Short-term Projects limit participation
- Clearer post-Project steps – Follow-up structures are needed
- Stronger youth engagement – Future Projects must prioritise younger voices.

Summary of the Well-being Action Plan Project Evaluation conversation between John Hallett and Tom Moses 13.3.25

1. Project Background & Purpose

- The Well-being Action Plan Project was part of a suite of initiatives commissioned by the Pembrokeshire Public Service Board (PSB)
- It was funded through an application by PAVS (Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services) to the Shared Prosperity Fund and sought to align with national and local policies like the Well-being of Future Generations Act.
- The key objectives included:
 - Encouraging co-production and community engagement in shaping local well-being.
 - Supporting town and Community Councils in developing well-being action plans.
 - Exploring asset-based community development (ABCD) to build community capacity.

2. Project Development & Challenges

Application & Selection Process

- The Project was open to all town and Community Councils in Pembrokeshire. Around ten Councils showed interest.
- The selection aimed to achieve diversity, targeting:
 - Coastal, urban, and rural communities.
 - Welsh-speaking areas.
- Ultimately, four Councils were chosen, but two withdrew during the process.

Early Challenges

- Limited engagement from Councils:
 - Some Councils did not respond after initial interest.
 - Some fed back that although they were interested that they could not participate within the timescale and over run up to Christmas.
 - Some clerks did not pass information to Councillors, making outreach difficult.
 - Councils with previous engagement experience (e.g., Co-production Youth initiatives) were more willing to participate.
- Time constraints:
 - The Project was initially planned for September to December, then extended to February and March. Only until end Feb for the funded work
 - The actual workload exceeded the planned two days per week.
 - Councils struggled to balance participation with existing responsibilities and busy community and personal commitments over Christmas / New Year period.

- Co-production expectations:
 - All Councils aimed to renew their previous plans. Although none explicitly expected pre-made plans, some were less prepared for the collaborative, evolving process. In Dinas Cross, the approach details weren't discussed. St Davids had a strong co-creation process, starting with external stakeholders in October. Crymych began too late (mid-December) to effectively co-create.
 - In Amroth, due to past community issues and concerns about losing road access, there were strong views about the Project's scope. They preferred wide community involvement through co-productive workshops, but the distinction between co-creation and coproduction wasn't effectively communicated, highlighting the need for additional Co-Pro and engagement training.
 - Lack of early communication on what co-production entailed caused misunderstandings.
- Health-related delays:
 - Tom faced personal health challenges, affecting report writing and workshop planning.

3. Workshop Implementation

- Format: Each participating Council hosted two workshops aimed at:
 1. Visioning: Identifying priorities and community needs.
 2. Action Planning: Developing specific steps and commitments.
- Methodology:
 - Lego-based engagement was used to spark ideas and encourage participation, particularly from young people.
 - Flipcharts and interactive exercises allowed for diverse engagement.
 - Dot voting & card sorting helped prioritise ideas, but results were inconsistent.

Successes & Highlights

- Lego engagement worked well:
 - Younger participants grasped the concept of community assets quickly.
 - Intergenerational interactions were positive and engaging.
- Strong participation in some areas:
 - Good turnout despite poor weather (storm warnings during workshops).
 - Workshops generated a lot of action point proposals and information on vision
 - Key stakeholders from organisations like PAVS and NRW (Natural Resources Wales) attended.
- Councillor involvement:
 - In the two Councils that reached the delivery stage, multiple Councillors attended and actively participated.

Challenges in Workshops

- Time pressure:
 - Events were too short to allow deep discussion and development of ideas.

- The second workshops rushed prioritisation exercises, limiting community input. Time pressure added to by time required for the many stakeholder organisations to introduce themselves.
- Varying levels of co-production:
 - Some Councils embraced open-ended engagement, while others preferred structured plans.
 - Those with pre-existing relationships with Tom were more engaged.
- Voting inconsistencies:
 - Dot voting results did not always reflect initial workshop discussions. We only got to that stage in St Davids
 - Example: Healthcare and swimming pool issues received high votes, despite minimal discussion in visioning sessions.

4. Project Outcomes & Evaluation

Did the Project Build on Previous Action Plans?

Yes, to an extent.

- Councils reviewed older action plans and identified progress made.
- St David's City Council formed a working group to carry forward recommendations.
- Councils have suggested ongoing review processes (e.g., embedding action plans in meeting discussions).

Were Assets Explored & Capacity Developed?

Partially.

- Assets were identified, but there was little time to explore how they could be leveraged or expanded.
- Training sessions on co-production and facilitation skills were offered, but few Councillors attended.
- Some Councils lacked confidence in engagement and facilitation.

Was the Project Co-Created & Co-Produced?

Mostly, but with limitations.

- The workshops were designed collaboratively, but time constraints limited full co-production / cocreation.
- More early-stage engagement could have strengthened ownership.
- Councils with prior experience in community engagement adapted more easily.

5. Lessons Learned & Recommendations

What Worked Well?

- Lego workshops were engaging and accessible.
- Good mix of Councils and community members.
- Councils showed interest in ongoing well-being action plans.

What Could Be Improved?

- More time for engagement:
 - A longer Project timeline (e.g., six months) would allow deeper community discussions.
 - Early clear communication with Councils:
 - Ensuring all Councillors—not just clerks—understand cocreation / co-production principles.
 - More flexibility in methods:
 - Allowing each Council to choose engagement tools (rather than imposing Lego-based approaches).
 - Stronger prioritisation methods:
 - Avoiding issues where one or two concerns dominate voting, even if they weren't widely discussed.

Final Reflections

- The Project was ambitious and achieved significant milestones, despite time constraints.
- It highlighted the importance of relationship-building and clear expectations for co-production.
- Tom received support from stakeholders but also faced challenges in engagement and execution.
- Moving forward, Councils need sustained involvement and follow-up actions to maintain momentum.

Summary of Well-being Action Plan Project Evaluation.

Interview with Jessie Buchanan (TfC), by John Hallett 17.3.25

1. Purpose and strategic context

The Well-being Action Plan Project was designed to improve community engagement in well-being planning, supporting Pembrokeshire's Public Services Board (PSB) well-being plan. The initiative aligned with the Strengthening Communities priority, which aims to increase local participation in decision-making.

Strategic fit:

- It integrates into Pembrokeshire PSB's operational framework under the Pembrokeshire Strengthening Communities Operational Group
- The Project followed Together for Change's (TfC) principles of community-led action and participatory decision-making
- Funded by the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF), reflecting the UK government's Levelling Up agenda

- It aimed to make well-being planning more accessible and evidence-based using local data and lived experiences.

Identified need:

- Historically, community engagement in well-being planning had been low
- Previous Projects (e.g., PLANED action plan, 2012/13) demonstrated community capacity for self-driven well-being improvements
- The Well-being Action Plan Project sought to offer structured support to communities in defining and implementing their well-being priorities.

2. Project development

- In April 2024, Sue Leonard (former CEO of PAVS) submitted a bid for SPF funding
- Following an open call for tenders, Together for Change (TfC) was chosen to lead the Project
- An advisory group was formed, including:
 - PAVS, Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC), Health Board, National Parks Authority, and PLANED
 - Chaired by Jessie Buchanan
- This group guided Project development and helped select communities to engage with.

Selection of communities

The Project aimed to select five communities based on:

- Diversity in size, geography, and Welsh language use
- Existing engagement levels ("work with the willing").

Selection outcomes:

- 10 expressions of interest were received
- Three communities withdrew due to time constraints
- Three others did not follow up, leading to the selection of four Community Councils by October 16, 2024.

3. Methodology and approach

- Review of previous well-being planning work (reviewed by Tom Moses, Programme Officer) informed the Project approach
- Co-production approach
- Workshops and engagement sessions were held, involving community members and schools
- An iterative, co-created process allowed communities to shape their own action plans

Challenges

- Timeline:
 - The Project originally ran from September to December 2024, with a late extension until February 2025.
 - Limited time hindered relationship-building and deep community engagement
- Varying Levels of Engagement:
 - Some communities were proactive, while others were hesitant or lacked confidence
 - Councillors had inconsistent involvement, affecting community uptake
- Community Capacity Issues:
 - While communities had local knowledge, areas lacked skills in planning, data analysis and research.

- The Project exposed a need for capacity-building in data-driven decision-making.

Lessons Learned

- Pre-engagement & structure matter:
 - More advance planning could have strengthened participation
- Empower communities in decision-making:
 - Future work should support communities to lead, rather than impose an external framework
- TfC had to provide additional funding to support the project:
 - This investment, project scope and delivery needs to be recognised
- Long-term investment is necessary:
 - Short-term SPF funding creates stop-start issues, limiting sustained impact.

What Worked Well?

- Some communities embraced the opportunity to participate in decision-making.
- Effective engagement with schools
- Young people contributed meaningfully to discussions.
- Unexpected partnerships formed
- Collaboration between the National Parks Authority and One Voice Wales emerged.
- Shift from consultation to co-creation
- Instead of merely collecting feedback, communities were actively involved in planning

What Could Be Improved?

- Ensuring broad participation
- While working with the "willing" kept momentum, more effort is needed to engage underrepresented voices
- Avoiding the "hard-to-reach" label
- Communities are not necessarily hard to reach; they may just require different engagement strategies.

4. Strategic considerations for future work

Considerations

- The Project was embedded within the Pembrokeshire PSB operational group, influencing broader county-wide strategies
- Existing governance structures in Pembrokeshire function well, with strong collaboration between partners
- SPF funding provided a set framework for Project outcomes
- Short-term SPF funding limited deep engagement.

Future work

- Participatory (well-being) planning requires multi-year investment, not just short-term grants
- Communities (Councils and groups) need training and support to use data effectively in decision-making
- "Form enables freedom" – A well-defined structure helps communities take initiative while ensuring progress
- The Project's outcomes should inform PSB well-being objectives and future policies
- Future Projects should ensure communities take the lead, rather than simply following imposed structures

5. Final reflections

Was the time investment worthwhile?

- Yes, the Project provided valuable insights to support community-based well-being planning
It strengthened community relationships and cross-sector partnerships
- Helped identify which organisations are best suited to lead this work in the future
- The Project helped identify the level of time investment required for meaningful engagement.
- The learning will inform future approaches to well-being planning