

RSA

**Citizen Power in Peterborough**

A SCOPING STUDY

Sam Mclean

# RSA

The Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce

8 John Adam Street

London WC2N 6EZ

T +44 (0)20 7930 5115

[www.thersa.org](http://www.thersa.org)

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“ . . . in promoting the good of this whole aggregate, the good of individuals is contained and promoted.”<sup>1</sup>

Richard Cumberland, Philosopher and Bishop of Peterborough, 1691–1718

<sup>1</sup> *Treatise of the Laws of Nature*, translated, with Introduction and Appendix, by John Maxwell (1727), edited and with a Foreword by Jon Parkin. Liberty Fund 2005.

# The Citizen Power partnership

**Peterborough City Council** is a unitary authority providing all local government services for the city and surrounding villages. Working through the Greater Peterborough Partnership, its priority is to ensure sustainable development of the city. Its vision is of Peterborough as the urban centre of a thriving sub-regional community of villages and market towns and as a healthy, safe and exciting place to live, work and visit, famous as the Environmental Capital of the UK.

The Greater Peterborough Partnership has identified four priority areas of work: creating opportunities and tackling inequalities; developing strong and supportive communities; achieving the status of Environmental Capital of the UK; and delivering substantial and sustainable growth. Peterborough's Sustainable Community Strategy sets out the plan for the future and will guide the work of all the partners. For more information see [www.peterborough.gov.uk](http://www.peterborough.gov.uk).

**The RSA** is an independent platform for debate on contemporary issues, translating innovative thinking into pioneering social action. It was formed in 1754 by William Shipley, a drawing master living in Northampton. His idea was to award 'premiums' to support improvements in the liberal arts and sciences, and to stimulate enterprise for the common good. From its inception the RSA has been committed to furthering social progress with an open, interdisciplinary and optimistic orientation. At the heart of its mission is the connection of enlightened thinking to beneficial action.

The RSA is an internationally recognised organisation that hosts the UK's most ambitious free lecture series. Through RSA Projects, the organisation aims to encourage positive social change by enhancing the individual and collective capability of people to solve existing social problems, and increase their resilience to future ones. This work is supported by an international network of 27,500 RSA Fellows, influencers and innovators from every field and discipline. For more information see [www.thersa.org](http://www.thersa.org).

**The Arts Council England, East** aims to deliver great art for everyone. It works to support talent and develop creative skills, build world-class arts facilities and raise the profile of the arts. It believes by enabling artists, arts organisations and investment partners in the region to work together it can help the region to offer excellent arts opportunities that engage more people and enhance economic growth.

By 2011 the Arts Council will have supported at least 150 of the region's artists and arts companies in establishing new markets. The Perception Peterborough programme involves creative experts from a range of fields developing a compelling and exciting vision for the future of the city. It will build on the views of local people, engage a wide range of stakeholders and professionals and challenge their thinking with an international panel. For more information see [www.artscouncil.org.uk/regions/east](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/regions/east).

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We are very grateful for the ongoing support from the East of England Development Agency, Anglia Ruskin University and Regional Cities East. Finally, we would like to thank those at the RSA who have supported the development of what is an ambitious and exciting new project and the RSA Fellows without whom none of our work would take place.

## Biography

Sam McLean is Director of Public Participation and Head of the Citizen Power programme at the RSA, leading policy and research on active citizenship and civic action. He joined the RSA from Ipsos MORI where he was Head of the Participation Unit, leading their deliberative and participative research.

Sam previously taught political and moral philosophy at Queen Mary, University of London. He started his career at the public participation research consultancy, Opinion Leader Research, where he worked on high-profile, deliberative research projects.

## Foreword

The RSA has recently unveiled its new strap-line: RSA 21st century enlightenment. This underlines our commitment to an ambitious idea of future citizenship. We believe the challenges and opportunities ahead require us to be a people who are, in aggregate, more engaged, more self-reliant and more pro-social. The question we seek to answer is this: what ways of thinking, forms of action and types of institution can best foster this idea of citizenship?

When the RSA was approached by the Arts Council and Peterborough City Council to explore making these ideas real in the context of a single fast-changing and ambitious city, we leapt at the chance. Our partnership with Peterborough and the Arts Council has many strands and we hope that others will emerge as the relationship matures. But the elements of the current project can be grouped under four headings:

*Developing a shared account of citizens of the future.* Building on the pioneering work of Perception Peterborough, we will develop a debate at many levels about the future for Peterborough and its residents. We aim to show that the way people live and the way they engage with decision-makers is crucial to the health and prosperity of the city. Vitality, this will be an open space project, which anyone in Peterborough can engage with on their own terms.

*Helping to create a vibrant arts and cultural offer.* The Arts Council and Peterborough Council aim to enhance significantly the cultural offer in the city. We believe socially engaged arts and culture can play a major role in breaking down social barriers, mobilising and enthusing people and firing the collective imagination of the city.

*Citizen-led innovation.* We will develop a set of projects that seeks to place citizens at the heart of processes of improvement and innovation. This is the thinking behind projects such as user-designed drug services in which some of the most marginalised local people play an active role in designing the services that will allow them to turn around their lives, or the area-based curriculum based on the idea of the city as a whole taking responsibility for supporting schools in creating a culture of learning.

*A space for ideas and innovation.* The RSA has powerful networks among thinkers and innovators around the world. We aim through our partnership to bring these ideas and these pioneers to Peterborough to engage with local people and their decision-makers.

The Citizen Power project is at the heart of our ambitions for our 256 year-old society. We are proud of this new partnership and are determined that it will deliver valuable insights for the wider policy and research community and real gains for the people of the city.

*Matthew Taylor*  
Chief Executive RSA



# Introduction: Citizen Power comes to Peterborough

Peterborough is looking ahead to a period of severe financial constraint. Irrespective of which political party forms the next government across the UK the public sector is facing between five and ten years of spending restrictions.

Barring unforeseen and dramatic reversals of fortune, year-on-year increases in public spending are a thing of the past: government departments' budgets are likely to fall, on average, by 2.3 per cent a year in real terms between 2011 and 2014.<sup>2</sup> Some public services are likely to be better protected against this downward trend than others. The constraints or cutbacks expected from some services will be more severe than these figures suggest: historically when public spending is reduced, local government and the arts have tended to take a bigger hit.<sup>3</sup>



We're all in it together whether we like it or not

*Peterborough resident*

## New approaches for tough times

We do not underestimate the challenges that this presents or the tough choices that will need to be made, but as well as a cause for concern, the economic climate is an opportunity for market and social innovation, new forms of co-operation and civic ingenuity.

The Citizen Power programme reflects the kind of new and eclectic partnership arrangements that are likely to thrive in these adverse, but opportunity-rich conditions. In a single place it brings together an energetic and ambitious local authority with an influential national arts body and a pioneering, activist think-tank. Peterborough City Council, the Arts Council and the RSA share a desire to revive the notion of place and identity at a local level. Building on the resources and capabilities of each partner, it will pilot ways of cultivating civic behaviour in Peterborough, unleashing some of the latent potential of the city and its residents.

## Background

In 2008 Peterborough City Council and the Arts Council worked in partnership with local and regional cultural development agencies on Perception Peterborough. This brought together international creative thinkers, local luminaries and decision-makers in a series of workshops to develop a vision for the city's future. The process developed new ideas on how to develop future growth in Peterborough and help the city achieve the status of Environmental Capital of the UK. It included investigating local people's perceptions of what they considered to be the area's under-used assets or undiscovered talents.

Perception Peterborough aimed to: 'hold a mirror up to the city and its people, and to see through others' eyes the assets and challenges available to the city, while motivating individuals and agencies to recognise their place in the big picture'.<sup>4</sup>

- 2 Institute for Fiscal Studies. *Budget 2009: Tightening the Squeeze?* Briefing Note BN83. IFS 2009.
- 3 KPMG and Localis. *The bottom line: a vision for local government*. 2009.
- 4 Quote from Haring Woods Studio who facilitated workshops. [www.haringwoods.com](http://www.haringwoods.com).

## Active citizenship at the RSA

The Citizen Power programme is ambitious and its objectives are long term. The programme forms part of the RSA's work on public participation and signals the start of a city-wide collaboration that aims to expand to include new partners as it develops. The hope is that the project will act as a catalyst for building a healthy civic culture in the city: it is based on the belief that doing so will drive improvements in many other spheres, including in education and local enterprise.

The Citizen Power programme is based on the RSA's belief that the character and identity of a place is inseparable from the behaviour of its citizens. More specifically, we view active citizenship as an outcome reflecting the prevalence of certain types of behaviour among local people: for example, high levels of civic engagement, co-operative activity, self-reliance, resilience and creativity.

Our investigations are built on a worldview that is at odds with a powerful consumerist and neo-liberal framing of society in which people are represented primarily as self-serving individualists. The view of people as essentially self-interested consumers is counterbalanced by a view of society that draws attention to people's interdependence and our dependence on social relations. Freedom in this perspective is strongly defined by the capacity of people to shape the society and the communities in which they live, rather than purely their ability to self-actualise.



What you really need to work on is establishing how local people can really influence things in Peterborough. This will be a key challenge for you

*Senior stakeholder*

### Self-defining communities

Redbridge London Borough Council is developing an interactive, ultralocal communications network through the "MyNeighbourhood" application. It will enable citizens to define their own neighbourhood through selection from a list of neighbourhoods, by postcodes or by self-defining their locality. Users will also be able to determine what type of special interest information will be provided. They will also receive email alerts to changes in services and have report back facilities to tell the Council how they are doing.

Source: Ipsos MORI, State of the Nation, 2010.

Experience, evidence and conviction has led the RSA and its partners to believe that people, public services and communities are at their best when working together for a civic and social collective purpose. We argue that this purpose is best met where people share an understanding of the basic characteristics of a good society and where a core characteristic of that society is that individuals have a real opportunity to realise individual and collective ambitions. We believe that the good society is one in which common values match the concerns of individuals in such a way that no member of that community is denied the opportunity to be respected and earn esteem for his or her contribution to the common good.<sup>5</sup>

5 A Honneth. *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts*. Polity Press 2005 and *Disrespect: the normative foundations of critical theory*. Polity Press 2009.

## Experimentation and outcomes

No definition of the active citizen should be entirely fixed and no two definitions will be identical: we fully expect to encounter challenges to our definition and approach throughout this project. The complexity of modern social problems, and of their surrounding social relations make a single and predetermined approach highly inadvisable. Conditions of complexity by their nature imply problems that defy single definition, let alone resolution.<sup>6</sup>

It is humility in the face of such complexity that demands an experimental approach to a project of this kind if we are to discover ways to invigorate Peterborough from the ‘ground up’. Likewise, we should not try too hard to pre-judge what benefits may result from a partnership of this kind, and what innovations may arise. In addition to the project activity itself, we hope that merely by creating an exciting ‘place of possibility’ in Peterborough new local potential may be discovered and harnessed.

} The programme needs to be practical so people get it and understand it. You need to show people how it would benefit them

*Peterborough resident*

## The scoping phase

Inspired in part by Perception Peterborough, a partnership was formed with the RSA with the goal of exploring how this vision could be realised through the encouragement of civic behaviour.

The first step was to undertake scoping research and identify how this civic strategy could be defined and realised in practice within the specific context of Peterborough. This thinking will inform a programme of civic activity which seeks to enhance the ability of people in Peterborough to shape their city into the kind of vibrant, enterprising and co-operative place they say they want it to be.

It was essential that the needs and wishes of Peterborough residents should be placed at the heart of our early investigations and this will inform our approach throughout. Work to date has been led by the newly formed Citizen Power team and specialists in the arts at the RSA and took place in Autumn 2009. This included:

- \* three comprehensive literature reviews. One on citizen engagement and civic behaviour change strategy, one on the arts and social change and a third on Peterborough-specific attitudinal and behavioural data;
- \* five deliberative forums with local citizens and community groups, comprising a diversity of people broadly reflective of the population of Peterborough;
- \* in-depth interviews with 31 senior staff in local public services; and
- \* two workshops. One involved key arts and cultural representatives and explored ideas for the delivery programme. A second involved local community groups and citizens and explored how social media can be used to improve people’s participation in civic activity.

The scoping exercise involved those groups that data has shown to be less likely to engage with community consultation and civic activity.<sup>7</sup> In Peterborough

6 D Snowden and M Boone. “A leader’s framework for decision-making” in *Harvard Business Review*. November, 2007 pp. 69–76.

7 Peterborough City Council. *Place Survey*, 2009.

## Building on-line communities

Northfield Citizens Online (NCO) was formed in 1993 out of a desire by a group of residents to use the internet to strengthen connections between people in the community. In 1996, NCO incorporated as a non-profit organisation. Since the autumn of 2003, the group has directed its energy towards providing citizens with local news and editorial content, encouraging and supporting blogging by citizens and public officials, and organising discussion forums between officials and citizens regarding issues of mutual concern.

The target audience is anyone interested in local community issues. NCO aims to engage citizens in participatory democracy; encourage citizen-source journalism that complements and in some cases competes with local for-profit news organisations; and enable government officials to communicate with constituents more often, more easily and in a more meaningful way.

The website provides news content that includes meeting coverage, photos and updates about ongoing civic issues. Community groups can submit items for a syndicated calendar of events, which has links to supporting organisations.

NCO actively encourages civic leaders and citizens to create web blogs and provides them with support and education by assigning a volunteer coach to each new blogger, and offering community education classes on blogging.

The organisation continues to evolve as a provider of community news and information. It fills needs that are not met by other media organisations and helps citizens gain access to local government.

People who write community blogs and those who read them said they believe that the establishment of an 'electronic commons' has resulted in a more productive exchange of ideas within the community. By providing a new and quick way to access government, citizens and officials are now connected more efficiently.

Source: Involve, *Everybody needs good neighbours: a study of the link between participation and cohesion*. 2008.

these include: ethnic minority populations (for example, Eastern European, Pakistani, Italian, and Portuguese residents); those living in more rural locations; people under 25 or over 65; people with disabilities; and social classes C2, D and E.

## The report

This report will lay down the conceptual foundations for the Citizen Power programme and outline why we have alighted upon particular areas of practice. Its structure aims to flow from the argument that if any society is to make headway it must constantly try to bridge what the RSA has called the 'social aspiration gap'.<sup>8</sup> This is the gap between the way we act now and the society we actually live in, and the way in which we need to behave if we are to create the world we say we want.

} People need a common cause. There needs to be something that binds people together for positive reasons

*Senior stakeholder*

<sup>8</sup> M Taylor. *Pro-social Behaviour: the future, it's up to us*. RSA 2007.

In Chapter 1 we begin to imagine what future active citizenship might look like. This ideal-type model is developed into a measurable framework on which the health of civic behaviour in Peterborough can be assessed and monitored over time.

Chapter 2 looks at some of the factors and behaviours preventing Peterborough from reaching this hoped-for state. Particular focus is placed on improving levels of civic behaviour by tackling issues connected to public participation, cultural cohesion and a lack of identification with Peterborough as a place.

The final two chapters examine how this gap in Peterborough might be closed, or at least diminished. Chapter 3 runs through some of the concepts, theory and evidence of 'what works' to close this gap, while the final and fourth chapter outlines how this thinking is embedded in the practical projects we will undertake in the city over the next two years.

This report is punctuated with comments from some of the people we talked to in our research and some key statistics about Peterborough. Inevitably these focus on the challenges the city faces and we have not been able to do justice to the work taking place on the ground. We have also included a number of case studies, to give a sense of the variety of existing work, which is already trying to engage citizens in new ways. The report sets out the findings from the scoping process and an outline of the proposed Citizen Power programme. It represents the end of the inception and planning phase of the project and the start of the real work: translating theory, research and intent into practice.



Green

# Chapter I

## Towards Sustainable Citizenship

The RSA has set itself the task of developing an approach to social challenges that promotes three types of activity:

- \* active engagement in public decision-making processes;
- \* “other-regarding” behaviour (understood to mean both putting something back into society and responding positively to diversity and demographic change); and
- \* self-reliance with individuals and communities solving their own problems.

The value of these activities reflects the RSA’s centuries old experience of mobilising people in pursuit of social progress and reflects our analysis of the fragility of contemporary civic society and its particular challenges. We contend that a society that cultivates these qualities would be fairer and happier and argue that these are required to respond to shared problems (whether in Peterborough or in the UK at large): problems such as climate change, shifting demographics, declining levels of social and political trust, entrenched inequalities and community fragmentation.

### Shared challenges and aspirations

Responding to the problems posed by climate change, for example, requires citizens and communities themselves to be capable of changing their own behaviours and shaping their environment (both ‘built’ and natural) for the common good. Likewise, a positive response to increasing diversity or an ageing population requires more than government action: it requires people to take personal responsibility and to engage in developing collective responses.

While there is much to be argued over in the detail and delivery, we suggest that there is broad agreement about the kind of society we wish to create: less inequality and strong communities, for example. However, we suggest there may be two major impediments to turning this shared sense of purpose, locally or nationally, into actual progress. First, people may be confused about how we bring change about: we may be looking to the wrong models to deliver.

Second, we may be sceptical about the scope of possible change: we may feel pessimistic or fatalistic about achieving what we want due to our beliefs about how things work or the tools we have at our disposal. Through thinking, action research, encouragement and experimentation, the RSA looks for ways to overcome these obstacles; to design better blueprints for change, and to prove that we can often do more than we think possible. The Citizen Power programme aims to bring this approach to Peterborough.



The environmental agenda is an important way of binding people together. To know that your individual action will have big consequences on the environment should make a difference to how we people behave

*Senior stakeholder*

## Mobilising action

A strategy designed to deliver real social change, something that people can quickly recognise and buy into, requires a clear understanding of the type of society and citizens local people want to cultivate. Social change happens by mobilising local action. This means ensuring people have a vested interest in the outcome of taking action. Having people help determine what a given outcome is and how to achieve it can be a powerful motivation to act.<sup>9</sup> People are significantly more likely to identify with a Peterborough that reflects their ideals and values.<sup>10</sup>



How do you get people to participate when they don't want to? . . . if you can work out a solution you'll be on to a winner

*Peterborough resident*

### Regeneration through asset transfer

The Amble Development Trust was established in 1994. The principle objective of the Trust is to regenerate the former coalmining town of Amble in Northumberland by taking a lead in most aspects of economic, social and community regeneration. The Trust received £2.8m funding from English Partnerships in 1996 and has subsequently taken over and developed a number of assets in the town. For instance, The Fourways, formerly the Station Hotel, was purchased as a derelict property for £1 from the brewery which owned it in 1996: it is now worth £400,000. It houses four tenants, generating £30,000 annual rental income, and provides offices for the Trust itself.

In another example, the town square has been transformed from a previously run-down area of derelict buildings into a major focal point in the town for residents and visitors alike. It is now owned by the Trust and provides income generation from local markets with substantial community use.

The benefits which have accrued to the local community as a result of this asset transfer programme include the creation of jobs in the new facilities; enhanced training opportunities; new private sector investment; and community confidence and civic pride in an improved environment.

Source: Department for Communities and Local Government (2009) Empowering communities to influence local decision-making: A systematic review of the evidence. London: Communities and Local Government.

Achieving consensus around ends, let alone means, is easier said than done, especially in a city as surprisingly diverse as Peterborough. Sustainable, healthy civic life in a place like Peterborough demands a society in which the relationships between different citizens and stakeholders are based on mutual recognition.<sup>11</sup> This presupposes something more than traditionally understood multiculturalism, which affirms the right of people and communities to live different lives according to different values. It assumes active engagement between these differences towards common purposes that benefit the largest possible constituency in Peterborough.

Sustainable, healthy citizenship may require a movement towards a fairer distribution of economic prosperity.<sup>12</sup> However, social struggles of the last four

9 D Halpern. *Hidden Wealth of Nations*. Polity Press 2010.

10 C Cooley. *The Looking Glass Self*. Scribner's 1902.

11 Honneth 2005 op cit.

12 R Wilkinson and K Pickett. *The Spirit Level*. Penguin 2010.

decades make it clear that social justice demands more than economic equality. For even if conflicts over material interests and economic inequality were justly resolved, a society would remain normatively (ethically) deficient to the extent that some of its members were systematically denied the recognition they deserve. As Charles Taylor wrote: “Due recognition is not just a courtesy we owe people. It is a vital human need”.<sup>13</sup>

The complex challenges facing Peterborough today – including unemployment, drug dependency or low levels of trust between different groups of people – are a microcosm of problems endemic to many areas of the UK. Indeed, they are replicated in societies throughout the developed world. Experimenting with alternative ways of pursuing positive social change needs to be designed around the uniqueness of Peterborough but remain open to the possibility of drawing on and being relevant to experience elsewhere.

The nature of these problems tends to undermine the classic liberal distinction between individual behaviour and collective responsibility.<sup>14</sup> The idea of purely individual action becomes something of a fiction. As citizens in Peterborough told us, much of human behaviour is ultimately relational and interdependent: individual behaviour has consequences for others because we live in communities not in isolation. A growing body of social, political, psychological and behavioural theory has explored this dynamic and its implications.

### The ‘greening’ of Peterborough

When we look at individual behaviour concerning energy efficiency and consumption this interdependence becomes clear.<sup>15</sup> There is an increasing recognition that consumption can no longer be seen as a matter of personal preference but a pressing problem for all people. The consequence is not to subordinate the individual freedoms of citizens in somewhere like Peterborough but to generate effective ways of linking together individual and collective actions that have positive outcomes for the many.

Political philosophers have designed new models of civic responsibility better adapted to an active, sustainable citizenship agenda. Many view civic responsibility as an obligation on the part of all people to act in sustainable ways in their everyday lives. This can have the effect of binding people together with their environment bringing benefits for individual and community alike.<sup>16</sup>

In Peterborough this means residents coming together to determine ways in which each individual can contribute to meeting the city’s aspiration of becoming the Environmental Capital of the UK whether that is through increased recycling rates or living more energy-efficient lifestyles.

This is the domain of what Giddens calls “identity politics”, which emphasises the capacity of people to reflect on their behaviour and shape a future course of action around which an identity can be formed.<sup>17</sup> Thinking around identity politics and sustainable citizenship suggests that citizens can learn to become more sustainable, civic-minded citizens by critically reflecting on their behaviour, recognising that their own actions have an impact on other people, and incorporating civic and pro-environmental action into their sense of self-worth.

At the moment the agenda [of] becoming the ‘Environmental Capital of the UK’ is seen as something not really to do with them. Somehow we need to make it meaningful to them so they see their behaviour in these terms

Senior stakeholder

13 C Taylor. “The politics of recognition” in *Multiculturalism, Examining the Politics of Recognition*. Princeton University Press 1994.

14 M Sandel. *Public Philosophy: Essays on Morality and Politics*. Harvard University Press 2005.

15 J Porritt. *Liberty and Sustainability: Where One Person’s Freedom is Another’s Nuisance*. Mill Institute 1995.

16 R Goodin. “Making Moral Incentives Pay” in *Policy Sciences*, 12. Elsevier 1980.

17 A Giddens. *Beyond Left and Right: The future of radical politics*. Polity Press 1994.

The idea of pursuing overall objectives through a focus on pro-environmental behaviour is strong on the ground among stakeholders and partners in Peterborough. Indeed, this goes to the heart of what we mean by sustainable citizenship: people working together for the wider benefits of the environment and society.<sup>18</sup>

## Sustainable citizenship

Sustainable citizenship is more than a traditional notion of citizenship understood as a formal relationship of rights and responsibilities.<sup>19</sup> It is a form of citizenship that is practical in nature, based on relationships between individuals and their political, social, economic, and natural environment, not just abstract principles of rights.<sup>20</sup>



I think you need to focus on the environmental angle because it's already a well-developed and supported agenda in the city. Focusing on getting those who aren't very good at recycling more involved is important . . . this can be used as your way in to improve engagement more generally

Senior stakeholder

In order to meet the objectives of the Citizen Power project, partners agreed that an underlying theme is needed to provide the delivery programme with coherence and a framework for delivery. That conceptual and practical structure is what we call sustainable citizenship. This links together sustainable behaviour in the form of pro-environmental action with a wider project of cultivating civic culture in the city.

Why focus on the green agenda? First, there is a growing literature showing that improving sustainable behaviour is an effective way of influencing civic behaviour more generally.<sup>21</sup> Second, environmental sustainability is already a key strategic objective for Peterborough and levels of recycling, for example, are already relatively high.

## A strong record on the environment

Local organisations are already working together to create a cleaner and more environmentally friendly area and good progress is being made. More people are recycling and composting waste.

This has been partly achieved through good joint working with other councils in Cambridgeshire through RECAP, Recycling in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. These new initiatives are encouraging local people and businesses to recycle more and Peterborough continues to get cleaner. Following consultation and feedback from residents extra cleaning and targeting of specific areas is resulting in a better local environment.

Partners in the city are effectively promoting the use of sustainable travel and reducing the carbon footprint of Peterborough. More people are changing the way they travel around the city: greater numbers are cycling, walking and using public transport while the amount of people using their car has been steadily decreasing. This has been achieved through local initiatives such as the Your Footprint Counts campaign, which provides people with information about carbon reduction activities at roadshows and other events.

The Citizen Power programme will build on the well-developed pro-environment drive in the city geared towards helping Peterborough achieve its ambition of becoming the acknowledged Environmental Capital of the UK. This ambition

- 18 R Lister. "Inclusive Citizenship: Realising the potential" in *Citizenship Studies*, 11 (1), pp. 49–61. Taylor and Francis 2007.
- 19 B Parekh. *Re-thinking Multiculturalism*. Harvard University Press 1997.
- 20 W Kymlicka. *Multicultural Citizenship*. OUP 1990.
- 21 Brook Lyndhurst. *Bad Habits and Hard Choices: In Search of Sustainable Lifestyles*. Brook Lyndhurst Ltd 2008.

is already driven by a mature and committed partnership (Peterborough Environment City Trust) comprising all sectors. The city already boasts:

- \* the largest cluster of environmental businesses in the country with their very own eco innovation centre;
- \* the highest recycling rate for any unitary authority in the country;
- \* a Carbon Challenge site which will deliver 450 dwellings on the city's south bank;
- \* a plan to make all homes sustainable, environmentally friendly and zero carbon rated; and
- \* recognition by way of the "Best City for Anglia in Bloom" competition winning a silver gilt award in 2008. The BBC selected Peterborough as a Breathing Places city which aims to connect people to their local environment and make space for wildlife.

### Building on success

All this gives the Citizen Power programme a solid base for galvanising local people because cutting down on energy usage is already a prominent issue for many residents. Like public services, the quality of the physical environment impacts on everyone. This provides a normative and practical incentive for collective action.

Our model of sustainable citizenship is dependent on the types of capability local people in Peterborough possess and demonstrate in their behaviour, and is defined by the outcomes it delivers. Our hypothesis – to be tested and evaluated in the course of this research – is that sustainable citizenship is dependent on people being:

- \* engaged in civic life;
- \* other-regarding in their attitudes and behaviours towards the environment and other people;
- \* self-reliant and capable of helping to resolve community problems; and
- \* resilient in their capacity to respond to complex or unexpected challenges or setbacks in a creative, co-operative and experimental way.

The centre-piece is the work being done on becoming a more environmentally sustainable place to live. This is the one area I would say most progress has been made in the city

*Senior stakeholder*

This hypothesis is supported by much of the literature surrounding active citizenship and the evidence presented in this report. The sub-sections below document some of the important findings.

### Engagement

Citizen engagement is a fundamental dynamic of civic life and sustainable citizenship.<sup>22</sup> Engaged citizens benefit from an increased sense of power and influence; closer relationships with those who share their hometown, city or village; and create civic spaces and public services which better reflect

22 G Mulgan. *Good and Bad Power: the ideals and betrayal of government*. Penguin Press 2006.

their wants and needs.<sup>23</sup> Engagement benefits communities as a whole in at least three ways. First, it bridges differences between citizens and reduces the likelihood of conflict.<sup>24</sup> Second, high levels of citizen engagement help to strengthen local economies and third, it instils a sense of social responsibility among residents.<sup>25</sup>

I feel like Peterborough always views itself in the shadow of Cambridge. That needs to change. We need to be distinctive in some way . . . what you're suggesting is something we can be proud of in the future

*Peterborough resident*

## Other-regarding

Research on what is called the 'economy of regard' makes a powerful case for including other-regarding behaviour as a key component of sustainable citizenship. The economy of regard concerns the myriad ways in which people help, show affection, care for and support each other in everyday life. Examples of this include someone caring for an elderly relative or looking after a neighbour's children. The related literature – most notably the work of the economic historian, Avner Offer and the political theorist David Halpern – demonstrates a strong connection between other-regarding behaviour and the wellbeing of both individuals and communities.<sup>26</sup>

The stronger the economy of regard in a place is, the higher it scores on measures of civic health such as social trust, civic engagement and the overall levels of happiness. As this suggests, harnessing the potential of other-regarding reciprocal relationships between people is a precondition for sustainable citizenship. It is also a driver of economic growth. Examples include the buying of presents for friends and relatives or even loyalty to workmates in delivering work that generates capital.<sup>27</sup>

## Cultivating community safety

West Yorkshire Police Authority's BeatCrime local crime information portal is a good example of local public services empowering local people through dynamic and transparent information sharing.

Launched in 2005, BeatCrime was a joint initiative spearheaded by a working group of Police Authority and police force representatives designed to strengthen community safety by providing local people with an accurate picture of crime. Despite the decline in crime levels both locally and nationally, the dominant perception was that crime was on the increase. By informing people about the extent and nature of crime in their locality, the portal helped to reduce fear of crime, particularly among groups of people from less deprived areas. It was hoped that the authority could present a message of reassurance by breaking down barriers to public access to data. A web-based portal was chosen so that information could be provided in a dynamic, accessible and locally specific manner within a small budget. The site received 40,000 hits in the first twelve months, and on average now receives around 3,500 visitors per month. The Home Office has identified the site as best practice and incorporated this work into the policing green paper. WYPA now sits on the committee for the delivery of crime information at the Home Office.

Source: Policing Green Paper, Home Office, 2009.

23 Involvement. *Participation Nation*. Involvement 2007.

24 R Putnam. *Bowling Alone: the collapse and revival of American community*. Simon and Schuster 2000.

25 Demos. *At Your Service: negotiating the future market in health and social care*. 2009 and NCVO. *Voluntary Action Meeting the Challenges of the 21st Century*. NCVO 2005.

26 A Offer. *The Challenge of Affluence: self control and well being in the USA and Britain since 1950*. Oxford University Press 2006. Halpern op cit.

27 *ibid.*

## Self-reliance

The capacity to be self-reliant is central to a model of sustainable citizenship that affirms the value of localised power and the distribution of influence to local people, communities and front-line staff in public services and other organisations.<sup>28</sup> At an individual level, self-reliance refers to a person's capacity to resolve their own problems with the use of their own capabilities, judgement, resources and independence. An example of individual self-reliance might be an individual with a chronic health problem who manages their own treatment through a personal budget.<sup>29</sup>

Self-reliance also operates at a collective level. One such example is the capacity of a community to resolve anti-social behaviour in their area through community contracts. This emphasises mutual obligations to tackle anti-social behaviour where it appears, rather than relying on the local police force or Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.<sup>30</sup>

## Resilience

Any model of sustainable citizenship should aim to develop individual and collective resilience. Resilience can be thought of as the capacity of people (individually and collectively) to bounce back from setbacks and respond proactively to substantial changes in their lives.<sup>31</sup> Resilient people and places are highly resourceful. They are also innovative, independent and tend to view problems and difficulties as challenges. Resilient individuals tend to share three specific traits:

- \* a pragmatic attitude to challenges;
- \* a sense that life is meaningful; and
- \* an exceptional ability to improvise.<sup>32</sup>

These traits can be just as easily applied to a place: being resilient is a particularly important capability for communities and individuals in places and periods of time where economic, social and demographic change and instability is prominent.<sup>33</sup> Recent work on 'the power gap' in British society has identified resilience as a key capability of powerful people: those individuals who feel they have control over the direction of their lives in the 'face of shocks, the arbitrary power of others, and limited power to shape the social world'.<sup>34</sup>

## Creativity

Resilient places and people tend to be creative in their responses to the challenges they face and experience and creativity has clear benefits for individuals and society as a whole. Indeed, individuals, communities and organisations all need novel solutions to the challenges posed by the increasing dynamism and complexity of the 21st century landscape.

Creativity is the first step in the formulation of novel solutions to overcome the demands of new situations.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, creativity is a catalyst for the development of novel and innovative solutions that individuals, communities and society at large

28 P Blond. *The Ownership State*. ResPublica 2009.

29 M Home and T Shires. *Co-production in public services: a new partnership with citizens*. Prime Minister's Strategy Unit 2009.

30 Communities and Local Government. *An Evaluation of the Community contracts pilot programme*. CLG 2010.

31 R Coutu. "Catastrophe and Community Empowerment: the group formulations of Aberfan survivors" in *Journal of Community Psychology*, 17, 236–248. Wiley and Sons 1989.

32 *ibid.*

33 Communities and Local Government. *Communities in Control: real people, real power*. CLG 2008.

34 Demos 2009 *op cit.*

35 M Runco. "Personal Creativity in Creativity from Childhood through Adulthood" in *New Directions for Child Development*. Jossey-Bass 1996.

require in order to face ever-changing and dynamic social problems.<sup>36</sup> Of course, although innovation and creativity are not the same, they very often go hand in hand.<sup>37</sup>

TABLE 1: Indicators of sustainable citizenship based on citizen capability

Sustainable citizenship capabilities	Example behaviours	Example indicators
Engaged	People involved in civic activity on a regular basis. For example someone who sets up a community website to facilitate local debate on the future of their community.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Proliferation of community engaged social media.</li> <li>2. Increased voter turnout in local elections.</li> <li>3. More younger people and ethnic minorities trying to become elected officials (councillors).</li> <li>4. Strong citizen representation in neighbourhood councils.</li> </ol>
Other-regarding	People who contribute positively to the lives of others in their community. For example, someone who supports a neighbour with a physical or learning disability by helping with shopping.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increased levels of volunteering.</li> <li>2. Improved levels of neighbourliness and trust.</li> <li>3. Increased levels of recycling.</li> </ol>
Self-reliant	People capable of helping resolve collective problems in their area. For example, those who come together to tackle community cohesion issues in their area by setting up an intra-cultural dialogue network.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Redistribution of public service delivery to frontline staff and local people.</li> <li>2. Establishment of social enterprises run by local people.</li> </ol>
Resilient	People who respond positively to complex, seemingly intractable and chronic problems, multiple deprivation, unexpected problems or constant setbacks. For example, a young person from a deprived background who looks after him or her self and becomes academically successful.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improved emotional wellbeing of local people.</li> <li>2. Strengthened user-centred services (for example, drug services).</li> <li>3. Improved academic performance of under-performing socio-demographic groups.</li> </ol>
Creative	People who think creatively innovate. For example, someone who wins an 'ideas bank' award for a practical idea for making their neighbourhood area more energy efficient.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establishment of an arts infrastructure in the city.</li> <li>2. Number of ideas bank awards presented in 2010/2011.</li> <li>3. Citizen-led solutions for delivering quality services at a reduced cost.</li> </ol>

## A typology of sustainable citizenship

The capabilities discussed above form a typology of sustainable citizenship, which begins to enable us to measure its presence, absence and fluctuations. This is represented in Table 1, which outlines the components of sustainable citizenship in Peterborough in more detail. The Citizen Power project will be evaluated on this basis.

36 Runco op cit and D Pink. *Drive: The surprising truth about what motivates us*. Cannongate Press 2010.


37 T M Amabile. *Creativity and Context*. Westview Press 1996.

We have begun to develop practical examples of each capability type. It should be noted, however, that it is not the objective of our work to directly influence every indicator, for example, improved voter turnout at local and national elections. Beyond the scope of the Citizen Power programme they will be important indicators of levels of sustainable citizenship, which partners in Peterborough can use in the future.

By identifying and developing these capabilities, the Citizen Power programme hopes to be able to gradually create the kind of civic culture that is described in Peterborough's future vision for itself. Looking forward to 2020, a Peterborough grounded in a future model of sustainable citizenship could be measured against six core outcomes that the Citizen Power strategy aims to deliver (see Table 1).

Having set out a framework for developing an 'ideal' set of capabilities needed to increase sustainable citizenship, in the next chapter we outline some of the challenges that Peterborough and its citizens will need to overcome.

Before we do so, it may be helpful to pause and consider some of the potential broad outcomes of this work. While we talk here about the importance of theory in helping us think through new approaches, the shared aim of Peterborough City Council, the Arts Council and the RSA is to make positive change happen. Later on we note specific changes that each project aims to deliver. On the strategic level, the programme aims to contribute to Peterborough's civic health by encouraging: active participation in civic life; strong and robust public dialogue; resilient communities; citizen-centric public services, pro-environmental behaviour and partnership working.



Some people don't care but everyone is here tonight because we want to be part of what you are doing. I am a little sceptical because there is always a lot of talk and not much action. But this time, if I can get involved and have some influence then I want in

*Peterborough resident*



# Chapter 2

## The Challenge for Peterborough

We believe that Peterborough has the resources and determination to radically improve civic health in the city; unlocking and harnessing this latent potential is the goal of the local authority and its partners. Indeed, we hope that the Citizen Power programme will play a significant part in developing more sustainable forms of citizenship and a stronger shared identity within the city and its surrounding areas.

We have argued that sustainable citizenship is comprised of a number of key indicators, which provide a picture of civic health. In this chapter, some of the key challenges and indicators of civic health facing Peterborough in 2010 are explored. Here we begin to assess the civic health of Peterborough by judging performance against a combination of categories and indicators derived from the model of sustainable citizenship outlined in the previous chapter. In Table 2 we apply this model to Peterborough to ascertain a top-line understanding of civic health relative to the indicators used. This provides a framework with which to develop the Citizen Power strategy going forward and which is summarised in the final two chapters of this report.

Despite impressive levels of pro-environmental behaviour in the form of above average levels of recycling, the overall quality of civic health in Peterborough is relatively low. Places that have poor civic health share many of the characteristics that hinder the development of capabilities needed for sustainable citizenship.

Some of the key indicators are high levels of poverty and inequality, low levels of citizen participation in civic life, weak levels of social capital and what we call an ‘attachment gap’ between citizens and place: when people do not identify with where they live and do not reflect the values of that place in their behaviour. Some of the key barriers to sustainable citizenship include: engagement, crime, trust, drugs and education. Peterborough is working hard to improve levels of crime (particularly drug related crime), the educational attainment of young people and the place of learning within the wider community.

### Motivating people to get involved

Sustainable citizenship is dependent on vibrant public spaces comprised of engaged citizens. Engaged citizens are those who feel they belong to, have a stake in and influence over the decision-making of their area. Feelings of belonging, attachment and identification with a place are represented in the civic behaviour of its citizens. As national and international survey data shows, cultivating civic behaviour is far from an easy task.

This is no less true for Peterborough where performance on issues of public participation is average. Ipsos MORI analysis of Place Survey data shows the performance of Peterborough City Council on 13 out of 18 national indicators were not significantly different from most other unitary authorities.<sup>38</sup>

Peterborough has average levels of both civic participation (12.9 per cent compared with average of 13.6 per cent) and volunteering (23.3 per cent compared with average of 22.8 per cent) compared with other unitary authorities.<sup>38</sup>

38 All stats used here that are not given individual sources, are drawn from Peterborough's Place Survey data of 2009 other than crime statistics which are drawn from the British Crime Survey, and schools data, which is from Peterborough's Comprehensive Area Assessment data of 2009.

39 *Understanding People, Perceptions and Place*. Ipsos MORI 2009.

TABLE 2: Sustainable citizenship in Peterborough

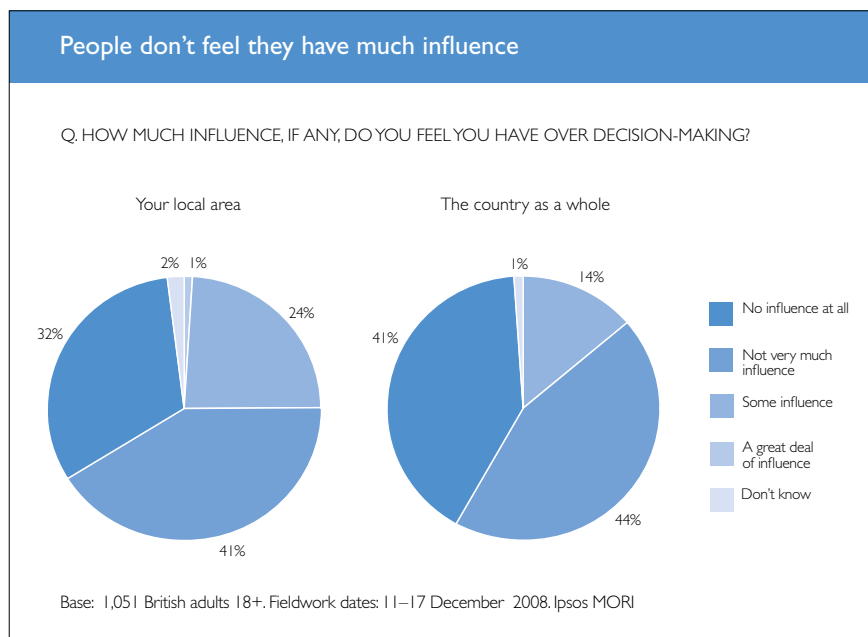
Category	Summary of performance	Performance in relation to UK average
Active participation in civic life	Average	Peterborough has average levels of civic participation (12.9% compared with average of 13.6%) and volunteering (23.3% compared with average of 22.8%) compared with other unitary authorities.
Resilient communities	Poor	Peterborough performs significantly worse than other unitary authorities against NI 1 'percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area' (67.8%, compared to an average of 75.8%).
Strong public dialogue between different ethnic groups	Poor	Peterborough is significantly worse than the average unitary authority in respect to NI 23 'perception that people not treating each other with respect and consideration is a big problem' (35.3%, compared with average of 27.5%).
Pro-environmental behaviour	Very good	Peterborough is performing very well. Levels of recycling are 48% above the national average. The target is to raise this to 65+% by 2020.
Other-regarding (levels of trust and belonging)	Poor	Peterborough performed poorly on NI 2 'percentage of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood' (52.8%, compared to an average of 57.2%). The city has high levels of crime, particularly those related to drugs.
Strength of arts infrastructure in the city	Poor	The Arts Council currently has no 'regularly funded organisation' based in the city. The arts infrastructure is poor, numbers of arts based funding applications are low and the level of arts engagement, as shown by the Active People Survey, is below the national and regional average (at 40.8%, reg. average is 46.6%).

This data highlights specific behavioural and attitudinal challenges connected to levels of public engagement and civic behaviour facing the city. Despite real progress reflected in the introduction of neighbourhood councils, local people still feel relatively unable to influence local decision-making in Peterborough.

This reflects a national trend in the UK. Despite recent focus on community empowerment and citizen engagement in public services, the latest Citizenship Survey paints a rather grim picture.<sup>40</sup> Indeed, 73 per cent of people still feel unable to influence local decision-making, with 88 per cent of people feeling they cannot influence national decision-making as shown in the chart below.

You can't hide away from the fact that Peterborough is a place full of different groups of people that live completely separate lives . . . you need a realistic way of putting that right . . . it's possible but it won't be easy

*Peterborough resident*



### Innovative ways of citizens influencing policymaking

The Since Sliced Bread project was launched in 2004. The purpose of the project was to generate interest and new ideas around policymaking amongst the general public, particularly those who are not traditionally participants in policymaking.

The project included an American Idol-style policy competition. The idea being that any American with an idea could submit it to the competition, and then any American could vote on the best idea. The best idea would then win a \$100,000 cash prize. It was billed to the public as a competition asking the question "What's your common sense idea?" Over 22,000 ideas were submitted – most of those were unique entries.

People could vote for others' policy ideas and rate them on a star scale. The public cast 41,081 ballots from every state across the US during two rounds of voting. They could then also comment and review the various policy ideas. 48,000 reviews were submitted, there were 22.5m hits, and 125,000 unique visitors to the site. All of this interest and participation was initially generated without a publicity campaign – solely on word of mouth.

Source: Since Sliced Bread, Common Sense Ideas from America's Working Families, US: SEIU

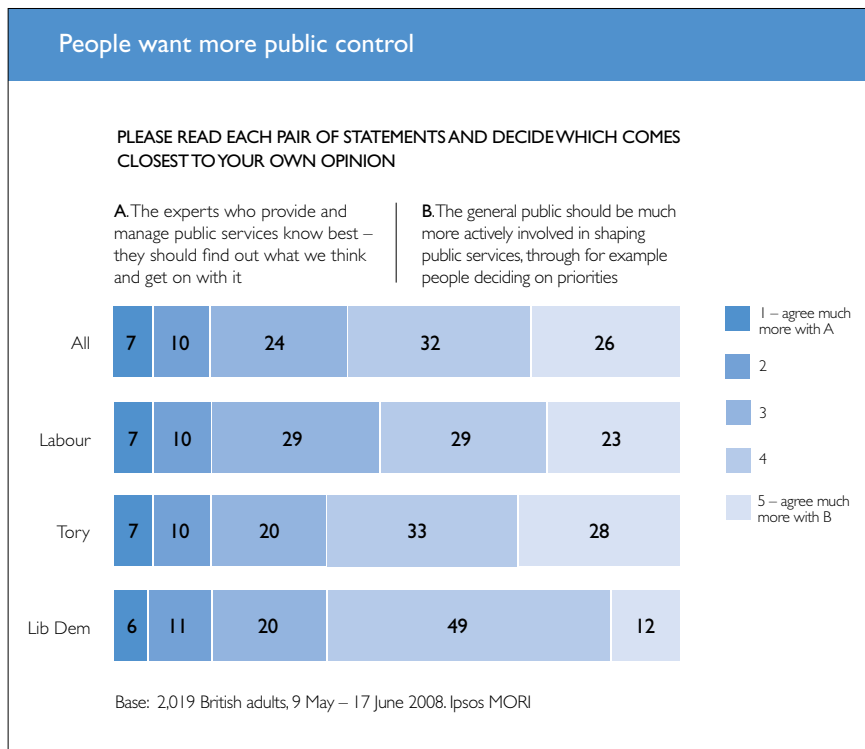
Feelings of disempowerment among local people were voiced in the deliberative research conducted as part of the scoping phase. This was particularly true for those who demonstrated a clear interest in being more engaged in local decision-making. The people involved in our research did express a strong desire to be

<sup>40</sup> Peterborough City Council. *Citizenship Survey*, 2009.

involved in shaping the direction of their local area but only if they feel listened to and are offered the opportunity to actually influence the kind of decision-making that will affect their lives. This desire for more public control, particularly over decisions related to local public service delivery, is reflected in broader national trends as demonstrated in the chart below.

Maybe I'm wrong, and I know a little controversial, but I feel like Peterborough is getting too big. That's why I like it being slightly out in the sticks

*Peterborough resident*



### Engaging young people in civic decision-making

In May 2008, 139 young people attended a participatory budgeting event in Newcastle to cast a 20 per cent vote in the procurement of services for the city's £2.25m Children's Fund. This is the latest in a series of events in the city's Udecide participatory budgeting programme specifically targeted at young people aged five to 13 who were most at risk of low self-esteem, poor school attendance and entry into the criminal justice system.

In total, 450 'hard to reach' young people in 39 different settings including pupil referral units, additional resource centres, special schools, a young carers group and a number of BME youth groups were given the opportunity to influence the allocation of the city's Children's Fund.

Many of these groups and individuals had not participated in Udecide before and the key elements in achieving reach in this example originate from: working with participants on their own 'turf', giving preparatory sessions to boost their confidence in their own abilities, transparent decision-making (including electronic 'ask the audience' type voting systems), a strong identity for the project in the city as a whole, and a competitive edge to the outcomes of the process.

Source: UDecide, [www.participatorybudgeting.org.uk/case-studies/the-childrens-fund-newcastle/](http://www.participatorybudgeting.org.uk/case-studies/the-childrens-fund-newcastle/)

Harnessing this desire for more power and involvement over how public services are run and what their communities look like is at the heart of the Citizen Power work. This is vital if the social aspiration gap in Peterborough is to be diminished.

In order to cultivate the model of sustainable citizenship outlined in the previous chapter, the Citizen Power programme will need to experiment with different ways of getting more seldom-heard groups of residents engaged and involved in civic life. These include the different cultural and ethnic communities in Peterborough, young people and particularly hard-to-reach groups such as drug users. Challenges presented by each of these groups and the related barriers to cultivating sustainable citizenship are described on the previous page.

Peterborough is performing significantly worse than the average unitary authority in respect to NI 23 'perception that people not treating each other with respect and consideration is a big problem' (35.3 per cent, compared with average of 27.5 per cent).

### The trust deficit

Sustainable citizenship requires strong bonds and trust between people. Without this a culture of engaged people and civic vibrancy is impossible. Our research shows that increased population size can have a negative impact on levels of social capital, including strength of social bonds and trust.<sup>41</sup> This is particularly relevant to Peterborough: recent research undertaken by ONS predicts that the population of Peterborough will grow by 21 per cent between 2007 and 2021 to a total population size of 204,000.<sup>42</sup>

**TABLE 3:**  
Cambridgeshire County Council Research Group population forecasts for Peterborough

Age group	2001	2007	2011	2016	2021	% change 2007–21
0–4	10,300	11,900	13,300	13,500	13,400	12.61%
5–10	13,200	13,200	14,300	16,800	16,900	28.03%
11–15	10,800	10,800	10,900	11,800	13,900	28.70%
16–19	7,900	8,500	8,300	8,600	9,100	7.06%
20–24	9,700	10,600	11,000	11,100	10,800	1.89%
25–34	24,800	22,300	22,600	24,700	24,500	9.87%
35–44	23,200	25,800	25,800	24,800	24,400	-5.43%
45–54	20,300	21,700	24,300	27,200	27,400	26.27%
55–64	15,000	19,300	20,890	22,300	25,200	30.57%
65–74	12,100	12,700	14,500	18,400	20,400	60.63%
75–84	7,700	8,700	9,500	10,300	12,100	39.08%
85+	2,400	3,200	3,800	4,800	5,800	81.25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>157,400</b>	<b>168,800</b>	<b>179,300</b>	<b>194,300</b>	<b>204,000</b>	<b>20.85%</b>

This finding is reflected in broader research findings. Robert Putnam has shown how population increase is often accompanied by a reduction in the level of trust between citizens.<sup>43</sup> Compared with smaller towns, cities tend to possess a more diverse occupational structure, a higher population density, a faster life rhythm, and a greater sense of anonymity.

41 Fukayama defines social capital as the "shared norms or values that promote social cooperation, instantiated in actual social relationships" in F Fukayama, *Social Capital and Development: the coming agenda*, SAIS Review, vol xxii, No 1, (Winter-Spring, 2002).

42 Peterborough facts and figures. [www.peterborough.gov.uk/pdf/community-factsfigures-population-forecast.pdf](http://www.peterborough.gov.uk/pdf/community-factsfigures-population-forecast.pdf).

43 Putnam 2000 op cit.

Places with higher population density tend to produce shallower and shorter social relationships and interactions among citizens.<sup>44</sup> This makes forming deep and reliable knowledge of each other more difficult, which increases the risks associated with trusting others. The more risky trusting someone is perceived to be, the less likely it is for citizens living in cities to trust others.<sup>45</sup> This link between population size and trust is related by some local citizens to what they describe as an ‘urban-rural’ split in Peterborough. Citizens living in surrounding villages were far more likely to talk of having ‘strong relationships’ and ‘being friends with my neighbours’.

Our research shows levels of immigration to Peterborough have had a negative impact on community cohesion and trust. This is consistent with wider research showing new immigrants to a society typically expressing lower levels of trust in comparison with the native-born population, which is related to an attempt on the part of new cultural communities to protect themselves from the strangeness of their new environment.<sup>46</sup>

Drawing on social psychological theories of social identity and inter-group conflict some political commentators and academic scholars have drawn quite pessimistic conclusions about the effects of ethnic diversity on community cohesion and the provision of public goods.<sup>47</sup> Putnam’s recent work documents the negative consequences of ethnic diversity on both inter and intra-ethnic trust in the US, he contends that ethnic diversity causes people to “hunker down . . . to withdraw from collective life, to distrust their neighbours, regardless of the colour of their skin”.<sup>48</sup>

While some of the conclusions drawn from these analyses are rather more circumspect than Putnam there is nevertheless a growing consensus in the scholarly literature that, “high levels of racial and ethnic heterogeneity are accompanied by lower levels of trust and other civic attitudes”.<sup>49</sup>

While ethnic minorities tend to demonstrate lower levels of trust in others, it does not mean cultural and ethnic diversity in Peterborough (or any other community) will automatically lower levels of trust in that community. The most recent large-scale study on ethnic diversity and social capital shows ethnic diversity may actually raise trust levels.<sup>50</sup> This is also reflected in our deliberative discussions with local citizens.

Putnam and Halpern both entertain this possibility, arguing that people who join civic associations and come into contact with others of different backgrounds are more likely to develop what Putnam calls ‘bridging social capital’.<sup>51</sup> In which case, the cultural diversity of Peterborough might equally be viewed, as we do, as an asset for building civic behaviour and community cohesion, not a barrier.

The literature on the link between cultural diversity and social capital has important implications for Peterborough, which has a rich tradition of cultural diversity. Recent ONS data estimates that the non-white population in Peterborough increased to 17.4 per cent of the total population between 2001 and 2006, with increases in the proportions of all ethnic minority groups, except Pakistani – which remained stable as a proportion – and a particularly large proportionate increase in black groups.<sup>52</sup>

To be honest I don't speak with people where I live. We don't even speak the same language

Peterborough resident

44 R Putnam. “Pluribus Unum: Diversity and community in the twenty-first century” in *Scandinavian Political Studies*. 2007.

45 *Social Capital and Ethnicity*. EU Working Paper. European University Institute 2008.

46 S Soroka. “Measuring and Modelling Trust” in F Kay and R Johnston (eds) *Diversity, Social Capital and the Welfare State*. University of British Columbia Press 2006.

47 L Bobo. “Group Conflict, Prejudice, and the Paradox of Contemporary Racial Attitudes” in PA Katz and D A Taylor (eds) Plenum:1998. See also A Alesin, and E La Ferrara. “Who Trusts Others?” in *Journal of Public Economics* 85:207–234; 2002. D Costa and M Kahn. “Civic engagement and community heterogeneity” in *Perspectives in Politics* 1:103–111 2003; J Delhey, and K Newton. “Who Trusts? The Origins of Social Trust in Seven Societies” in *European Societies* 5:93–137; 2003. D Goodhart. “Too Diverse?” in *Prospect* February 30–37, 2004.

48 R Putnam 2007 op cit.

49 See D Stolle, S Soroka, and R Johnston. “When does diversity erode trust?” in *Political Studies*, 56, 57–75; 2008. Alesina and La Ferrara op cit; S Knack. “Trust, Associational Life and Economic Performance” in *The Contribution of Human and Social Capital to Sustained Economic Growth and Wellbeing*, HRDC and OECD, 2001. S Knack and K Phillip. “Does Social Capital Have an Economic Payoff?” in *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 112:1251–1288, 1997.

50 Sturgis et al 2009. “Does Ethnic Diversity Erode Trust?” Putnam’s hunkering down theory is considered in paper presented at UPTAP-GOS-Scotgov Seminar, Feb 2009.

51 In *Bowling Alone* Putnam defines this type of social capital in the following way. “Bridging social capital can generate broader identities and reciprocity between different groups of people . . . bridging social capital provides a sociological WD-40.” op cit: 22–23.

52 Peterborough facts and figures, op cit.



Strengthening positive interactions between cultural groups is an important ingredient of sustainable citizenship which the Citizen Power work must address. However, this requires leadership and opportunities for people to engage across different groups.

### Creating strong and supportive communities

Despite high levels of crime in the city anti-social behaviour is perceived to be less of a problem by local people who think local organisations are dealing with it and recent actions to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour locally are having some impact. Local events such as ‘Weeks of Action’ and ‘Treat Your Streets’ are delivering improvements for local residents. The police are targeting the most active burglars in the city and the number of burglaries is reducing. Vehicle crime is also reducing following a new approach by partners.

Efforts to challenge re-offending by young people in Peterborough are working and re-offending is lower than in similar areas. The number of first time entrants to the criminal justice system has reduced over a quarter since 2006/07 to 303. Furthermore, in order to cultivate a greater sense of belonging and participation in civic life, local organisations in Peterborough are encouraging local people to take pride in their area. A total of 196 street leaders and 26 community crime fighters have been recruited.

As the latest Comprehensive Area Assessment of the city highlights, Peterborough has a history of high crime levels and the numbers of thefts, robberies and burglaries are higher than in similar areas. Overall, crime has reduced but progress is not consistent and the average rates in similar areas are reducing much faster.

I know everyone in my village . . . everyone. But that sounds very odd compared to most of you who don't even speak to your next door neighbour . . . it's a city centre thing . . . the closer you are to the city centre the less neighbourly we seem to be

*Peterborough resident*

### Community wardens: localising community governance

Manchester City Council has developed an empowering system of ward coordination since 2000. Despite its evident economic prosperity, the city had some of the country's highest levels of social deprivation. The Index of Multiple Deprivation ranked 27 of Manchester's then 33 wards among the most deprived 10 per cent in the country. The remaining six wards fell below the national average in relation to most aspects of quality of life. Only a tough approach to neighbourhood renewal across the city could counter these statistics.

The council recognised that area-focused working was key to improvement. This is where mainstream services and partnership working are focused on the needs of individual neighbourhoods. High quality public services are central to reducing deprivation in Manchester. These must be focused on local needs. The emphasis is on the issues that most affect residents' quality of life and the areas where change is most urgently required.

An essential part of area-focused working is encouraging residents to take a pride in, and responsibility for, their neighbourhoods. Consulting residents, community and voluntary groups about local issues must take place at all levels, but especially at the neighbourhood level. All public services must develop appropriate community engagement skills.

Four key principles were identified in determining how ward coordination could be developed. These were: putting residents at the heart of improving local services and making neighbourhoods safer and more attractive; promoting the role of local councillors as community representatives and leaders; ensuring all public service agencies and partnerships take responsibility for the part they play in creating successful neighbourhoods; and integrating public service improvements in the area regeneration programmes.

Each of Manchester's wards has a ward service coordination group (WSCG). These are made up of council officers, representatives from the local community and other public agencies, and three ward councillors. The group's role is to identify issues that most concern local people and to develop and carry out action plans to address them.

Each WSCG is charged with providing a forum for the planning and coordination of local services, and for addressing issues that affect the ward. They need to develop action plans to improve the way services are delivered at a local level, communicate to their local ward, and hold council departments and other agencies to account for meeting the objectives set out in the plans. They are also charged with monitoring performance against local targets for service delivery, using the ward action plans to monitor progress, and take proactive steps to improve the condition of neighbourhoods and give local residents a better quality of life.

Every ward has its own ward coordinator who is supported by a ward coordination support officer. The council currently have 27 ward coordinators and 17 ward coordination support officers, as some cover more than one ward. They work closely with residents, councillors and other parties with an interest in the area.

Source: IDeA, [www.idea.gov.uk](http://www.idea.gov.uk)

No factor undermines levels of trust and solidarity in a place more than crime.<sup>53</sup> However, crime is as much a matter of perception as reality.<sup>54</sup> Two-thirds of Britons think crime is rising, yet official crime figures show crime fell by a third between 2001 and 2009.<sup>55</sup> Any strategy working towards a healthy civic Peterborough must address this.

One way of doing this would be to look at ways of reducing particular types of crime in the long term. For example, cultivating civic behaviour and forms of active citizenship among those who commit the specific crimes that must be tackled as a matter of priority, would be one approach. Drug-related crime provides a good case study, given that in Peterborough it is a particular problem in comparison with the national average (see Table 4).

} Crime is the number one problem. I've been burgled by local junkies three times this year

*Peterborough resident*

53 J Braithwaite. *Crime, Shame and Reintegration*. Cambridge University Press 1989.

54 Ipsos MORI. *Closing the Gaps*. Report for Home Office 2008.

55 *British Crime Survey*. Home Office 2009.

TABLE 4: Crime rates in Peterborough

	Peterborough council	English average
Population	164,000	–
Households	71,000	–
Violence against the person	21.9	15.0
Robbery	2.4	1.0
Burglary	9.5	4.3
Theft of a motor vehicle	4.0	2.3
Theft from a vehicle	16.2	6.3

Note: Crime statistics are per 1,000 of the population within the local authority area

It might be argued that crime and drug dependency are both extreme but logical reflections of an ‘attachment gap’ between place and individual.<sup>56</sup> Drug users are one of the most socially excluded groups of people who often experience little sense of attachment or belonging to their environments. Levels of crime are often related to weak levels of collective solidarity. As the Scandinavian model shows us, the stronger the civic and collective commitment is, the less crime there tends to be.<sup>57</sup>

Look, Peterborough has real and substantial issues with certain types of crime. But progress is being made in key areas including reductions in vehicle crime and anti-social behaviour in problem areas

Senior stakeholder

Places lacking collective solidarity tend to have higher levels of multiple deprivation. Indeed, it is the people who live in such places who are most likely to engage in and be the victims of crime.<sup>58</sup> They are also far more likely to become drug and/or alcohol dependent.<sup>59</sup> Drug-related crimes are typically known to include acquisitive crime, such as shoplifting, burglary, vehicle crime and robbery, which fell nationally by 55 per cent between 1997 and 2007.<sup>60</sup> Recent research by Drugscope shows that well over half of all acquisitive crime is drug-related and that the market value of goods stolen involved could be £2–2.5bn each year.<sup>61</sup>

Tackle drug addiction and you automatically target crime. This is reflected in the Home Office Drug Strategy 2007, which identifies a strong link between drug dependency and crime. In fact, around three-quarters of crack and heroin users claim they commit crime to feed their habit.<sup>62</sup> Drug intervention programmes are a key element of the strategy to tackle drug-related crime. They offer offenders whose crimes are drug-related the support they need to kick the habit.<sup>63</sup> There is clear evidence that treatment works: for every £1 spent on treatment, at least £9.50 is saved in criminal justice and health costs.<sup>64</sup>

The ultimate test of a sustainable citizenship strategy is the capacity to reach and affect the behaviour of socially excluded groups. By developing and strengthening user-centred drug services in Peterborough, the Citizen Power programme hopes to play a part in developing sustainable, active, and capable citizens among some of the most vulnerable and socially excluded in society. Most crime in Peterborough is tackled locally by the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP), involving the police, local authorities and other organisations whose aim is to tackle crime and disorder on a local level.

56 Social Exclusion Unit. *Community Self Help Policy Action Team Report No 9*. ODPM 2006.

57 N Pearce and J Margo. *Politics for a new Generation*. Palgrave Macmillan 2008.

58 J Margo. “Make me a Criminal: preventing youth crime” in *Public Policy Research*. IPPR 2008.

59 Centre for Social Justice. *Breakdown Britain*. CSJ 2006.

60 Home Office. *British Crime Survey 2008*.

61 Drugscope, 2004, <http://drugscope.org.uk>.

62 *Tackling Drugs, Changing Lives*. Home Office 2007.

63 RSA. *Drugs – facing the facts*. 2009.

64 Department of Health 2008. [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime-victims/reducing-crime/drug-related-crime](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime-victims/reducing-crime/drug-related-crime).

We believe taking a new approach could become part of a long-term strategy in Peterborough for tackling drug-related crime and therefore the civic health of the city.

### Untapped potential in schools

As the latest Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) of the city shows, children in Peterborough get off to a good start in nursery schools. An above average proportion of primary schools are good, or better, when compared with similar areas and nationally. But children in Peterborough do not get as good test and examination results as children in similar places.

The educational performance and aspirations of young people are key indicators of civic health. The first Comprehensive Area Assessment of Peterborough provides us with a good basis for identifying the education and learning of young people as a key priority. Although pupils are doing better year on year in the very early years of school, Peterborough's pupils are still not performing as well as pupils in similar areas.

At 11, fewer children in Peterborough achieve as well as children in similar areas or nationally. The 2005, 2007 and 2008 results were worse than the average for similar areas, and Peterborough is not improving its position in relation to the national average. However, local data for 2009 shows an increased number of children achieving five or more A\*-C grades, including English and mathematics. And some improvement for children aged 11 years.<sup>65</sup>

Secondary education provision is variable with only four of the ten secondary schools judged to be good. This is below similar areas and national figures. The proportion of good sixth-form and college provision is below that found elsewhere. However, persistent absence rates at secondary schools continue to reduce and are better than the national average. Provision in special schools, pupil referral units, and an independent specialist college is almost always good.<sup>66</sup>

By 16 significantly fewer children achieve five or more A\*-C grades at GCSE than in similar areas. For children from black and minority ethnic groups results are worse than those of white children. The difference in performance of children and young people whose circumstances make them and their peers vulnerable is reducing and outcomes for this group are better than those of similar councils.<sup>67</sup>

Peterborough has higher rates of youth unemployment (16 to 18 year olds) than in similar areas or nationally. This number is increasing in contrast to similar areas. There are, however, promising changes for the future. Leadership of children's services in Peterborough is effective and local organisations are clear about what they want to achieve for the children and young people of Peterborough.<sup>68</sup>

If you can  
have community  
engagement at the  
heart of schools  
you will get some  
of the way towards  
achieving the  
objectives the city  
has for itself

*Senior stakeholder*

65 Peterborough City Council.  
*One Place*, 2009.

66 *ibid.*

67 *Change for Children and Young People in Peterborough*. Peterborough's Children and Young People Plan 2008-2009.

68 *One Place* op cit.

## Mainstreaming civic behaviour: employee volunteer placement scheme

North Tyneside operates an employee volunteer placement scheme. The proposal to link council officers to local community and voluntary sector organisations through an employee volunteer placement scheme was made through the staff suggestion scheme.

The aim of the employee volunteer placement scheme is to increase civic capacity within the third sector and to increase the support the council offers to local people. It gives the volunteers an opportunity to develop a greater understanding of the work undertaken by those working in community organisations.

Every member of the senior management team (28 people) is linked to a local community or voluntary sector organisation. Each council officer (volunteer) commits to spending 12 days (90 hours) of council time over a 12-month period working for the scheme. Qualitative data gathered from volunteers and organisations suggests that the scheme has helped to build capacity within local community and voluntary sector organisations and raise the profile and benefits of volunteering.

Source: IDeA, [www.idea.gov.uk](http://www.idea.gov.uk)

Improving the educational attainment of young people and raising their aspirations for the future will not happen overnight and no single initiative will provide all of the answers. Making education and learning of young people a collective priority for the city will help.<sup>69</sup> This involves thinking of education and learning as part of the wider social ecology of how people relate to one another and act.<sup>70</sup> Bringing schools and communities together to deliver the best possible outcomes for young people is a recipe for success.<sup>71</sup>

There are some really good schools around here. But being a parent myself I know that GCSE results are not great in Peterborough generally

*Peterborough resident*

Peterborough must look beyond just exam results in its aspiration for its young people, and recognise that cultivating civic behaviour among young people is essential for long-term sustainable citizenship in the city, as well as ensuring that they fulfil their potential. The Citizen Power programme needs to investigate different ways of situating the voice of young people at the centre of the city's surge to close its social aspiration gap. Encouraging civic behaviour among young people is both challenging and vital for the civic health of local communities and the country as a whole.<sup>72</sup>

A thriving higher education presence is part of the solution and central to developing the untapped potential of the city and its young people. Having recently acquired a 'university centre' via collaboration between Anglia Ruskin University and Peterborough Regional College, Peterborough aims to create a large university campus at its heart within the next decade.

## Cultivating sustainable citizenship in Peterborough

The civic health of Peterborough will be partly determined by the capacity of the city to meet the challenges of cultivating sustainable citizenship outlined above. Our research has highlighted cultural diversity, feelings of belonging and trust, and a strong arts sector as potentially key assets for cultivating civic health, and

69 J Sebba. *Youth-led Innovation*. NESTA 2009.

70 D Halpern. *Behaviour Change*. Prime Minister's Strategy Unit 2006.

71 Department for Children, Schools and Families. *Building on the Best: final report and implementation plan of the review of 14–19 work related learning*. DCSF 2007.

72 Communities and Local Government. *Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities*. CLG 2007.

therefore ultimately sustainable citizenship, among the groups of people discussed in the previous section.

## Cultural diversity

It is a core argument of this report that cultural diversity represents something unique about Peterborough that needs to be embraced and enhanced. Evidence shows that Britain has successfully managed a relatively high rate of immigration and that this has brought some real benefits in terms of economic prosperity and improved the diversity of our communities and cultural life.<sup>73</sup> This has happened without the kind of significant racist or xenophobic backlash that we have seen in other countries, and as recent survey evidence shows, the British people are more tolerant, liberal and supportive of cultural diversity than at any time in the past.<sup>74</sup>

This positive view of cultural diversity broadly reflects that of the majority of senior stakeholders and local residents in Peterborough who we spoke to. Despite genuine concern among local citizens regarding the impact of immigration on community relations, there was an overall perception that as one local resident put it: “. . . having lots of people from different backgrounds might bring short-term problems but in the long-term I think it can improve how people engage with those who are different from what they are used to”. This positive view of cultural difference and ethnic diversity came through very strongly in the interviews we conducted with key stakeholders from the public services and the arts.

Peterborough performed significantly worse than other unitary authorities against NI 1 'percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area' (67.8 per cent, compared to an average of 75.8 per cent).

The big problem with Peterborough is that people don't say they are from Peterborough. They always say this village or this town

Senior stakeholder

## The power of belonging

By establishing strong public discourse and engagement practices in which different cultural groups living in Peterborough can collectively work together, the Citizen Power programme aims to work towards improving civic health in the city. For this to happen, it is vital to begin cultivating feelings of belonging and attachment between people and place in Peterborough. This is a key requirement for building civic capacity and it requires people to actively identify with the hopes and ambitions of Peterborough.<sup>75</sup> Without this, all sense of attachment and belonging, which are vital for generating civic behaviour, is undermined or made impossible.

The collective identity of Peterborough – like any city, town or neighbourhood – is defined to a large extent by the actions of local people and their perceptions of themselves and their relationship with their lived environment, including other groups of people and their physical and social world. While the issue of place-identity is complex and tacit in nature it is a strong motivator of our actions and, more importantly, our civic actions.<sup>76</sup> Our sense of place encompasses past and present memories, networks and interactions, all of which are intertwined with those around us and firmly rooted in our physical environment.<sup>77</sup>

At the heart of our psychological structure is an innate and inherent need to belong. An emotional attachment to an environment serves to satisfy this need and to maintain and develop our identity, especially our identification with where we live.<sup>78</sup> Strong networks, memories and knowledge of our environment are all harbingers of trust and cohesion and are therefore key elements in encouraging civic action and behaviour.<sup>79</sup>

73 B Rogers and R Muir. *The Power of Belonging*. IPPR 2007.

74 Ipsos MORI 2008. "Searching for the impact of empowerment" and P Gooby-Taylor, *Reframing Social Citizenship*. Oxford University Press 2007.

75 M Taylor 2007 op cit.

76 H Proshansky et al. "Place-identity: Physical world socialisation of the self" cited in J Dixon and A Durheim. "Displacing place-identity: a discursive approach to locating self and other" in *British Journal of Social Psychology*, British Psychological Society 2000.

77 M Lewicka. "Place attachment, place, identity, and place memory" in *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, Vol 28, Issue 3, P209–231, 2008.

78 K Korpela. "Place Identity as a product of environmental self regulation" in *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 9, 241–256. Elsevier 1989.

79 R Forrest and A Kearns. "Social cohesion, social capital and the neighbourhood" in *Urban Studies*, Vol 38, no.2. Sage 2001.

Building stronger attachment and belonging in Peterborough among local people and communities provides people with a stake in their surrounding environment and creates a strong incentive for engaging in civic behaviour.

As the political philosopher Charles Taylor points out, collective behaviour is a reasonable expectation from any individual who has shared prior bonds with others, and in this case, their environment.<sup>80</sup> It is this type of deep-rooted loyalty and altruism found at the heart of place-identity that instils within us a genuine desire to partake in civic action within our community. This is supported by empirical research undertaken in several European cities.<sup>81</sup> It shows how a sense of place can be an 'important non-material resource' called upon by people in their struggle to cope with the precariousness and material degradation of their environment. People were able to draw strength and resolve from their place-identity and, more specifically, their collective memories of the past, to come together and clean the public areas outside their homes and collectively challenge drug dealers.<sup>82</sup>

### The civic value of arts and culture

The role of arts and the arts sector in promoting and cultivating civic behaviour is under-explored. Harnessing the creativity of cultural diversity and building a sense of belonging between place and people is something a strong and vibrant arts sector can help deliver. Approaches to arts and culture that focus on making social change happen offer a different approach to civic engagement and are an important part of the Citizen Power programme. The emphasis of such an approach on creative exploration and enjoyment has the potential to unlock civic capacity and behaviour among people in Peterborough who are more likely to be disengaged, particularly young people.<sup>83</sup> At present, Peterborough lacks an infrastructure of high quality arts. Peterborough has been identified as a priority place for an improved arts offer within the East of England because of this.

High quality, civic-based art will provide Peterborough with a unique identity, bring creative thinking to the strategic problems the city is facing, and create new possibilities for tackling complex social policy problems such as community cohesion in an experimental way.<sup>84</sup>

Our research shows that studies of social change have neglected the role of the arts and culture in building civic capacity and tackling public policy problems including community cohesion for too long.<sup>85</sup> The Taking Part survey shows, for example, that those participating in cultural activities were 20 per cent more likely to know 'many people' in their neighbourhood and around 60 per cent more likely to believe that 'many of their neighbours can be trusted'.<sup>86</sup>

By responding to this need, the Citizen Power arts programme will be 'place defining'. Addressing the lack of high quality arts on offer in the city, it will provide a basis for developing a significant long-term arts presence in Peterborough for the first time. The project will make links with the activity that the Arts Council has already initiated in Peterborough. This includes encouraging touring theatre companies, Eastern Angles and New International Encounter, to build a relationship with and develop work in the city, and working with the city's diverse population to understand their stories and how they came to be Peterborough citizens.

Peterborough needs a high quality arts infrastructure. The Arts Council currently has no 'regularly funded organisation' based in the city. The arts infrastructure is poor, numbers of arts based funding applications are low and the level of arts engagement, as shown by the Active People Survey, is below the national and regional average (at 42 per cent, reg. average is 46.6 per cent).

Art is very powerful  
... it has the ability to  
shift perception and  
open up new ways  
of seeing things. But  
demonstrating this in  
a rigorous way is a  
real challenge

Senior stakeholder

80 C Taylor. *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity*. Harvard University Press 1989.

81 M Corcoran. "Place attachment and community sentiment in marginalised neighbourhoods" in *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, vol 11, no.1. Institute of Urban Studies 2002.

82 *ibid.*

83 Lowndes V and H Sullivan. "Like a horse and carriage or a fish on a bicycle" in *Local Government Studies*, Vol 30 No 1, pp 51-73, Taylor and Francis 2004.

84 *Arts Manifesto*. National Campaign for the Arts. 2004.

85 V Lowndes. *Locality Matters: Making participation count in local politics*. IPPR 2006.

86 Department for Culture, Media and Sport. *Taking Part*. 2006.

This will provide a creative space to explore the specific experiences of ethnic minority groups. By doing so, a better understanding of how to engage with and cultivate active citizenship among these different groups will be enhanced. Collaboration with the Museum, Libraries and Archives Council will facilitate this emphasis on people's connection with place identity and collective memories of the past.

In the next chapter, we look in more detail at how these key assets for cultivating active, sustainable citizenship can be enhanced through the Citizen Power programme and how the barriers explored in this chapter might be lowered and the social aspiration gap in Peterborough reduced.



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# Chapter 3

## Closing the Gap

Experimenting with different means of getting people to act in more civic ways is a crucial part of the Citizen Power strategy aimed at closing the social aspiration gap in Peterborough. Earlier we suggested that a potential barrier to progress is the very human tendency to adopt approaches to change without necessarily understanding whether they are the right model to bring about a particular solution. In this chapter, we outline the various models of change that will inspire the Citizen Power programme activities. We do not pretend that we are any less fallible than others, but try instead to share our thinking and some evidence, which underpins the approaches we have developed.

### Building capability, shaping behaviour

Establishing active, sustainable citizenship requires practical ways of mobilising local people and communities to behave in more pro-civic and pro-environmental ways to establish the types of community and environment people say they want: safe, clean, enjoyable and supportive places that they have helped to create and sustain. We have argued that achieving this means fostering specific capabilities (at an individual and collective level) conducive to building sustainable citizenship in Peterborough. This includes fostering in people and communities the ability to engage, be other-regarding, resilient, self-reliant and creative.

The neighbourhood councils are a great idea. It shows that they mean business in giving local people a real say over things

Senior stakeholder

Developing such capabilities in Peterborough means understanding how to turn models of behaviour change from theory to practice. This requires a sophisticated understanding of human behaviour which draws on social psychology, behavioural economics and neuroscience, many of which counterbalance the (arguably) dominant discourse of ‘economic man’ as primarily self-serving, rational and instrumental.<sup>87</sup>

The best theory suggests that our approach must be informed by an awareness of the complex social ecology of a place like Peterborough and the socio-economic, institutional, cultural and psychological forces, which shape civic behaviour.<sup>88</sup> Traditional interventions aimed at encouraging civic behaviour – financial incentives and legislation – can influence civic behaviour but only as a part of a more subtle approach to what Matthew Taylor calls ‘person-shaping’.<sup>89</sup>

More practically our approach needs to act on the external structural factors which shape the choices people make (what Gerry Stoker et al call ‘facilitating conditions’) and the internal decision making processes that we all use (‘orientations and dispositions’). Both can profoundly influence civic behaviour.<sup>90</sup> Below, we follow Stoker’s model and provide a summary of some of the key contexts that influence civic behaviour and need to be taken into consideration in any programme design.

### Facilitating conditions

Facilitating conditions are structural factors which shape the choices people make. They can be split between material, institutional and cultural facilitating factors.

87 J Lehrer. *How We Decide*. Mariner Books 2009.

88 D Halpern, C Bates, G Mulgan, et al. *Personal Responsibility and Changing Behaviour: the state of knowledge and its implications for public policy*. Cabinet Office 2004.

89 B Frey. “Motivation Crowding Theory: A New Approach to Behaviour” for Roundtable on Behavioural Economics and Public Policy. 2007.

90 G Stoker and S Greasley. “The Case for an Experimental Approach in Applied Research.” IPEG Paper 2005.

- \* Material factors are the socio-economic factors/demographics of a neighbourhood in which a person operates.
- \* Institutional factors refer to the way in which public agencies structure their efforts to engage in civic behaviour. This includes (a) the level of opportunity people have to demonstrate civic behaviour in their environment, for example the number of volunteering opportunities, possibilities to attend meetings, join groups, and make comments; and (b) the depth of the types of civic behaviour that these opportunities offer.
- \* Cultural factors refer to the set of values, attitudes and expectations that citizens associate with civic behaviour (is the culture conducive to or antithetical towards civic behaviour?). Cultural factors include having an understanding of an overarching commitment to tolerance, fair play, free speech, and other basic rights and freedoms that facilitate the practices of civics and citizenship. They form part of the overall environment within which people act as citizens.

I'm impressed that you are trying to speak to so many people. I've had four meetings this week and they have all mentioned the RSA and you. This is great because if it's going to be more than a research project it needs to harness the energy and interest of all relevant parties in and around Peterborough

Senior stakeholder

## Orientations and dispositions

As Stoker et al argue, civic behaviour is influenced by the internal decision-making processes people have – what they think, feel and process – which shape levels of civic behaviour:

1. *Consequential reasoning*: A form of instrumental reasoning based on a calculation of the perceived costs and benefits and likely outcomes of civic activity. It includes an understanding of short and long-term cost-benefits and outcomes to individuals and the collective, ie. enlightened self-interest.

This type of reasoning requires citizens to have sufficient information on which to base their calculations. In considering why citizens behave in the way that they do the simple rational-choice model posits that individuals will act in accordance with the results of a personal cost-benefit analysis in order to maximise their own utility. Social psychological research supports this: a recent report suggests that there is a greater likelihood of someone doing something if they believe that their action will have a public impact. For example, among those who think turning appliances off rather than to standby can make 'a lot' of difference, over half (54 per cent) actually do this 'all of the time'. In contrast, among those who don't think it would make much difference, only one in five habitually turn appliances off.<sup>91</sup>

In general, the more effect or control people feel they can exercise on an outcome the more people feel motivated to behave in a civic way (although car use is a notable exception: those who recognise that making fewer journeys would make a big difference to the environment are in fact no more likely to drive less).<sup>92</sup> Many policy interventions have sought to provide the citizen with information to encourage autonomous, responsible choosing. However, merely supplying information or expanding available choices can reduce the amount of control or effect that citizens feel they have in their lives.<sup>93</sup>

2. *Moral reasoning*: based on injunctive personal norms and internalised moral principles: 'the right thing to do'. It includes the extent of identification with

91 G Stoker. *New Localism, Participation and Networked Community Governance*. IPEG 2007.

92 *ibid.*

93 E Dawney and H Shah. *Behavioural economics: seven principles for policymakers*. New Economics Foundation, 2005.

and acceptance of the values of wider society, and the cultural principles of citizenship, for example to behave responsibly or to behave morally and ethically. As individuals, each of us has expectations regarding our own behaviour that are consistent with our own values and attitudes.

3. *Roles and self-concept*: sets of behaviours that are considered appropriate for persons holding particular positions in a group. Self-concept is the idea that a person has of themselves in relation to the goals they pursue and the behaviours they engage in.
4. *Social norms*: part of the individual's modelling of their 'cultural' environment. This element of the model includes an individual's perception of the expected and accepted behaviours and values in their local environment. This includes their perceptions of the norms and behaviours of citizens and institutions, and therefore includes trust in institutions as well as fellow citizens.<sup>94</sup>

You can't expect people to be told 'these are the rules, get on with it'. If you want people like us to get involved we need to have some say over what the priorities are

*Peterborough resident*

An individual's perception of the social norms in their area potentially affects civic behaviour, for example, if someone feels that other people in their neighbourhood would help out if someone was being threatened, they may be more likely to help out themselves. The idea is that people will factor what they feel is generally expected or accepted behaviour into their own decisions to act.

As individuals, each of us has expectations regarding our own behaviour that are consistent with our own values and attitudes. We also have perceptions about how other people see us. So peer norms or pressure could have an impact. Sometimes when citizens find themselves doing something that is inconsistent with their values and attitudes they may well change them to justify what they are doing.

However, once citizens have publicly expressed their values and attitudes – for instance in a neighbourhood meeting – it becomes more difficult for them to be modified and their behaviour is less likely to change. When people make a commitment they are more likely to stick with doing something even without rewards or punishments.<sup>95</sup>

5. *Habits*: individual behaviour is, for the most part, highly routine and embedded within social norms rather than explicit acts of decision-making.<sup>96</sup> Habits are now recognised to be important in relation to behaviour in two respects. First, people do many things without consciously thinking about them; habit helps us to cut down on the amount of decision-making we have to do. When I shop in the supermarket, the habit associated with the routine speeds up the experience. If I go to a different shop, my habit is disrupted and shopping takes longer. In busy lives this cognitive efficiency gives us important shortcuts to decisions.<sup>97</sup>

Secondly, habits make individual behaviour hard to change.<sup>98</sup> Even when we consciously think about what we do, it can be difficult to change our behaviour. Perhaps I think it is a good idea for people to use public transport, but I don't know where the bus stop is or when the bus runs. I think I should find out, but I don't know how, so I continue using my car. The rewarding

94 Taylor 2007 op cit.

95 Dawney and Shah 2005 op cit.

96 J Gronow and A Warde. *Ordinary Consumption*. Routledge 2001.

97 M Holdsworth and P Steedman. *Sixteen Pain-Free Ways to Help Save the Planet*. National Consumer Council 2005.

98 Dawney and Shah 2005 op cit.

feeling – my journey by car was easy and hassle free – reinforces my old bad habit.<sup>99</sup>

As sustainability expert Tim Jackson states, a habit ‘interferes substantially with the ability of the individual to make decisions in his or her own best interests’.<sup>100</sup> Indeed, behaviour embedded in habits can act to reverse the transaction costs of rational deliberation: Jackson argues that a distinct cognitive effort is now required to overcome habitual behaviour, even where the new behaviour carries substantial benefits to the individual concerned.<sup>101</sup>

## Localising power

The Citizen Power programme will examine the most effective ways of putting these insights into practice. Enabling civic behaviour and delivering sustainable citizenship should also incorporate a strategy for localising power. Greater citizen power and participation in devolved decision-making is the most effective way of engendering a sense of belonging and responsibility among people and communities towards the future of Peterborough.



Why don't you get those involved to come together and help decide between them some incremental steps. If everyone recycles we will get to the target we want

*Peterborough resident*

As Stoker has argued, localism is the most practical way of addressing complex problems, including community cohesion and civic disengagement.<sup>102</sup> At a local level, people can more easily hold public services and organisations to account for their decisions, are more capable of influencing local decisions and more likely to identify with their environment.

People are far more likely to identify with something they helped to develop. Attempts to impose an identity or process on people and places will always lead to resistance and increased levels of distrust among citizens. One way of overcoming this is to have collective targets and goals built into the Citizen Power programme.<sup>103</sup> Collective agreements and pledges to achieve collective goals (for example, meeting Peterborough's target of recycling 65 per cent of all household waste by 2020) generates a sense of purpose that binds people together thereby feeding civic behaviour.<sup>104</sup>

Achieving this means experimenting with new and more effective ways of linking local people and place and deepening civic behaviour at a local level.<sup>105</sup> A radically different approach to policymaking is needed to make this happen. This should include two shifts in policymaking. First, policymakers need to localise power and see local people and communities as problem-solvers, which means giving people and places the confidence and support to intervene in and manage their own affairs. The second is a shift from prohibiting ‘bad behaviour’ (for example anti-social behaviour) towards the promotion of ‘positive behaviour’ (for example how communities can come together to tackle anti-social behaviour in their area).<sup>106</sup>

Conditional rights and responsibilities (‘I get this’ and ‘I give this back in return’) linked to actions and behaviours shown to benefit society and the environment is another policy option deserving of greater attention. This is because localising power needs a fair system for rewarding certain types of behaviour. Rewarding young people for voluntary community service by giving them concert tickets, setting up community credit schemes that reward local groups who come up with innovative proposals for improving energy efficiency, and reducing the

99 Dawney and Shah 2005 op cit.

100 T Jackson. *Prosperity without Growth*. Earthscan 2009.

101 *ibid*.

102 G Stoker. *New Localism, Participation and Networked Community Governance*. IPEG 2007.

103 R Cialdini. *Influence: The psychology of persuasion*. New York Press 2000.

104 M Leigninger. “Enlisting Citizens: Building Political Legitimacy” in *National Civic Review*, vol 91, no 2. 2002.

105 T Brannan, P John and G Stoker, (Eds.) *Re-energising Citizenship: Strategies for Civil Renewal*. Palgrave Macmillan 2006.

106 Halpern 2010 op cit.

council tax paid by disadvantaged people who demonstrate a real commitment to improving the civic health of their communities, are all examples of possible strategies for incentivising civic behaviour at a local level.

### **Citizen power through participatory appraisal**

South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council has a long-standing commitment to localism, innovative forms of civic engagement and social innovation. South Tyneside is currently piloting an innovative programme of neighbourhood appraisal and action plan development. It is piloting a participatory appraisal approach to this work in three neighbourhoods.

Participatory appraisal is a community-based approach to consultation and action-research. It prioritises the views and attitudes of local people, as experts in their own neighbourhood. The developing approach and model is designed to enable local people to identify solutions to issues facing the community. It provides a mechanism for them to establish positive relationships with key service providers. It allows them to remain actively involved in the planning, delivery and monitoring of these solutions.

This continues a legacy of innovative approaches to building civic capacity in South Tyneside. In 2003 the council established an area coordination team to develop its approach to area and neighbourhood working. In 2004 the council and local strategic partnership (LSP) also piloted neighbourhood action planning in six priority neighbourhoods. A Joseph Rowntree Foundation grant was secured to pilot a participatory appraisal approach in three of these. All neighbourhoods are in the worst 10 per cent for deprivation. Two members of the team attended training arranged by Northumbria University's Participatory Evaluation and Appraisal in Newcastle upon Tyne (PEANuT) project. A partnership involved the council, PEANuT and the South Tyneside Resource for Initiating Development of the Economy (STRIDE). This partnership developed the proposals for taking forward the pilot work.

The devolved neighbourhood working structure has: improved coordination of services and partnership working by encouraging cross-service approaches; improved quality of decision-making by using the skills and expert knowledge of the people who know the neighbourhood; targeted services that are based on the different needs within neighbourhoods rather than a 'one size fits all' approach; helped to focus on those neighbourhoods that require most attention; and increased value for money by pooling resources, reducing duplication and promoting greater cost effectiveness.

Source: IDeA [www.idea.gov.uk](http://www.idea.gov.uk)

### **Strong local networks**

Durable civic behaviour requires the establishment of collective spaces and strong social networks facilitating attachment between local people and Peterborough. The identity of Peterborough as a distinctive place is dependent on active citizens who reflect the positive new identity of Peterborough in their actions and practical



commitments, whether that is joining citizen forums or housing association groups, becoming a school governor or helping an elderly neighbour with their shopping.

Indeed, the strategy for delivering sustainable citizenship needs to be built upon the collective endeavour of local partners in Peterborough. This should include as many public services, third sector organisations (for example, arts organisations) and private companies (particularly the wealth of companies working in the field of sustainable technology) as possible. This is essential for ensuring the long-term legacy of the Citizen Power programme in Peterborough.

The Citizen Power programme can learn from a Joseph Rowntree Foundation study published in 2008.<sup>107</sup> It brought together a diverse group of participants in four areas in West Yorkshire, comprising people active in community groups, voluntary sector bodies, businesses and frontline public sector workers. The aim was to improve neighbourhood networking, support and information sharing for active citizens. The project enhanced networking in local communities, built knowledge and improved understanding of the local area and how it works. Participants felt better informed as a result. They learned the value of diversity within their community, seeing the world through others' eyes and breaking down barriers.

## Building confidence

A key test of the Citizen Power programme is its capacity to empower groups of people who are typically less likely to get involved in civic activity. Indeed, for the braver public services committed to redistributing power and influence to citizens, the challenge is how to tackle its unequal distribution. Halpern makes this point very clearly:

*“It is said that ‘liberty is power cut into small pieces’, but the pieces are by no means evenly distributed in the Britain of today, and on some measures have become less so. While levels of voting may have fallen modestly, levels of alternative political engagement have risen dramatically. These activities are strongly skewed to the more affluent and more educated.”<sup>108</sup>*

In the UK today, one in five people have absolutely no engagement in political life at all and this minority is overwhelmingly dominated by citizens most lacking in financial and social capital. As Halpern rightly argues, the signs are that this gap is only going to increase in the future.<sup>109</sup> This threatens the representativeness of our democratic institutions and points to the failure of public consultations to provide more than a talking-shop for citizens who already recognise and actualise their capacity to influence change.

Achieving this significant task requires building the confidence of marginal voices to become actively engaged in civic life. A report by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation based on the testimonies of women from black and minority ethnic communities actively engaged in Birmingham and Wolverhampton found that a lack of confidence, not skill or desire, was the major barrier to civic engagement.<sup>110</sup>

Linking people together through new media like the community websites you're talking about is a good idea provided local people end up owning and running them

*Peterborough resident*

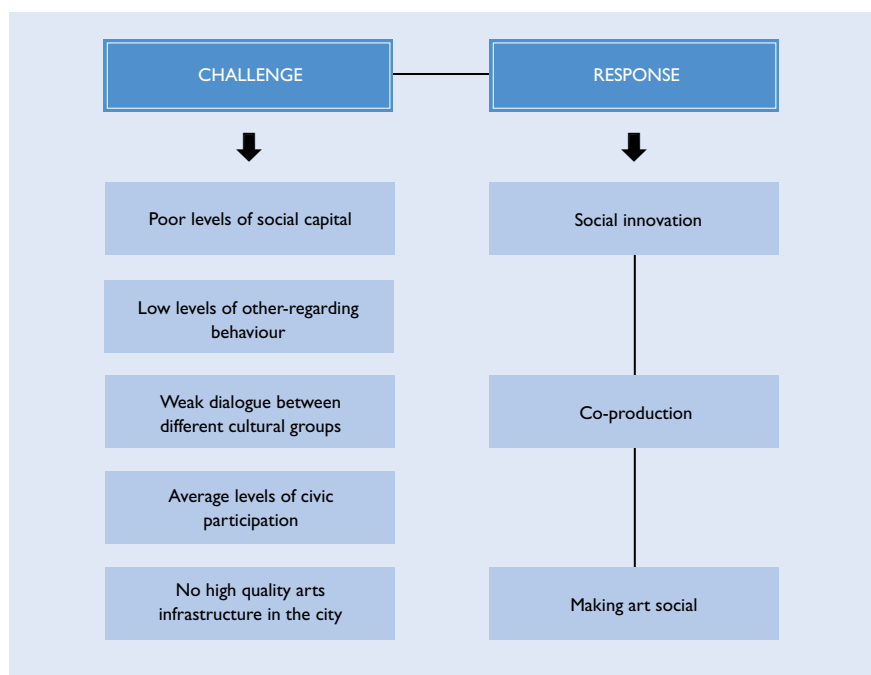
<sup>107</sup> S Hay. *Local Links: active networks in local communities*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2008.

<sup>108</sup> Halpern 2009 op cit.

<sup>109</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>110</sup> S Rai. *Routes and barriers to citizen governance*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2008.

## Problem solving



The Citizen Power programme is dependent on a core approach to problem solving. This is comprised of social innovation, co-production and making art social. Traditionally, innovation is understood to be a process of pure creativity that may or may not have positive consequences for society or the environment. Social innovation is a qualitatively different type of innovation: it is innovation whose fundamental purpose is to deliver positive social and environmental outcomes for local people and communities.

The best way of solving problems is a partnership approach. Ordinary people working with local organisations to solve mutual problems

*Senior stakeholder*

This notion is central to the Citizen Power programme and embodied in each of the projects. The only legitimate response open to the public sector in the current economic context is one of relentless purposive innovation. In practical terms for Peterborough this means working out how best to cultivate the capacity of people to solve the problems they and their communities face and strengthen citizen-centric public services in the city that better meet the needs of local people.

### Co-production

One method for applying social innovation is co-production. Co-production is a partnership between local people and community groups, public services, third sector organisations and local business in Peterborough to achieve positive outcomes based on four clear values: first, that everyone has something to contribute; second, that reciprocity is important; third, that social relationships matter; and fourth, that social contributions (rather than financial contributions) are encouraged.

Such partnerships go beyond 'community participation' and 'user involvement'. They empower citizens to contribute more of their own resources (time,

## Supporting citizen governance

An area containing council-owned tower blocks and maisonettes was regenerated in the late 1990s in a process facilitated by the local authority and a social housing provider. After widespread consultation, a partnership arrangement was agreed between the major stakeholders in 1998 and all residents in the area became members of the Community Housing Association (CHA).

Residents established a steering group and worked with councillors and various professionals to tackle strategic and day-to-day housing and neighbourhood management issues. With citizen governance at the heart of the project they found ways to work together to manage the different estates in the area and complete a range of land, property and planning deals. Training and support for residents who expressed interest in the work of the board led to a sense of empowerment.

Residents also retain the largest block of seats on the board, although not an overall majority. The CHA has invested in the creation of various opportunities for citizen governors all of which emphasise a respect for local knowledge. This project also demonstrates the importance of continuing professional support in building governors' confidence to contribute their own ideas to the future development of the area.

Source: M Barnes et al. Designing citizen-centred governance, JRF 2008.

will power, expertise and effort) and have greater control over decisions and resources.<sup>111</sup> There is mounting evidence showing a co-production approach to problem-solving has a big impact on outcomes for citizens and service users, while delivering real value for money for public organisations, with the economic benefits outweighing the costs.<sup>112</sup>

*“Our experience in Denmark shows us that if you have service users at the heart of the public design process you can improve the economic efficiency of a service by up to 40 per cent.” – MindLab 2009*

Nurse-family partnerships in healthcare are a good example of the value of co-production in public services: they involve trained nurses visiting first time young mothers throughout pregnancy and the first two years of a child's life. They usually offer a combination of health advice and support (for example around breastfeeding, childhood illnesses), practical support and coaching (for example life skills) and addressing psychological issues (for example motivational interviewing). Three random controlled trials have been conducted in the US with positive results: improved pregnancy and birth outcomes, more sensitive and competent care of children, reduced child abuse and mortality, improved outcomes for the parent.<sup>113</sup>

The benefits of co-production are not specific to social care. Growing evidence gathered through the scoping phase of our research shows that related models for devolving more money/power to citizens have similar potential. Evaluation of parenting support and intervention programmes in the US provides two standout findings: they result in 48 per cent reduction in abuse and neglect and 59 per cent

People should have the option to decide what treatment they get . . . and the best people to advise the public are frontline staff not the government

*Peterborough resident*

111 Prime Minister's Strategy Unit 2009 op cit.

112 MindLab 2009.

113 K Billingham. *The Family Nurse Partnership Programme*. Cabinet Office 2007.

reduction in arrests, and for every \$1 spent save \$4.25 in lower crime alone.<sup>114</sup> Furthermore, community budgets such as the Youth Opportunity Fund and user-centred drug strategy also demonstrate a real capacity for co-production to improve the quality of public services and the outcomes they deliver for individuals and communities alike.<sup>115</sup>

## Making art social

### User-generated engagement

Litchfield District Council is developing a 'local consultation hub'. This brings together all local online consultations with petitions and forums, plus new engagement tools such as "Shape It" – which will allow citizens to suggest ideas for improvement to be voted on by others, and "Report it" – which links to the council's CRM system to allow residents to report issues and receive updates.

Source: Ipsos MORI 2010

For too long, studies of social change have neglected the role of the arts and culture in building civic capacity. As this report makes clear, the arts have an important role to play alongside policy-focused interventions. They offer a creative way of bringing people together to explore common goals and address complex social problems, including those of community cohesion and intra-cultural dialogue.

The arts and social change strand of the Citizen Power programme will provide an underlying platform of creative engagement for the entire project with the aim of exploring to what extent such processes can strengthen social networks – particularly those linking people from different communities. It will also strengthen the self-efficacy of individuals who would not normally be involved in traditional public engagement initiatives.

The creative, experimental and experiential approach of the arts forms a core part of the Citizen Power programme. The emphasis on addressing social problems constitutes a significant element of the RSA approach through its Arts and Ecology project. This is based on a belief that the arts sector needs to demonstrate that the arts can meet three specific challenges if they are to have a role in processes of social change: inclusiveness, relevance and impact.

First, they need to show the power of art to be inclusive: can they empower those not typically interested in art? Second, they need to demonstrate their relevance to contemporary social issues: what can the arts tell us about sustainable living, community engagement and intra-cultural dialogue? Third, the arts need to show they can have a real impact on society: can the arts influence civic behaviour?

In the last five years there has been a significant shift of emphasis away from capital building projects for galleries, (for example Tate Modern in London, 2000, The Lowry in Salford, 2000, the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art in Gateshead, 2002), towards arts practitioners (artists, curators, art educators)

There is certainly the perception among lots of people that the arts are for middle class liberals who rather like navel gazing. This can be true but real art, the art I value needs to have a social value . . . it needs to contribute to the important debates of our time, such as individualism and climate change

*Senior stakeholder*

<sup>114</sup> Communities and Local Government. *Empowering Communities to Influence Local Decision-making*. CLG 2009.

<sup>115</sup> Home Office 2008 op cit.

directly engaging local communities in arts participation and projects that employ the arts to establish place-making. This increased activity in arts participation comes, in part, from arts institutions seeking to engage more directly with their local communities, for example Liverpool '08 (Liverpool Biennale), The Street (Whitechapel Gallery in London 2008–2010) and Disassembly (Serpentine Gallery in London, 2006). These projects are usually framed as site-specific, education or outreach projects as they deliberately seek to work with different demographic groups than would normally attend arts institutions.

These projects have developed along with artists' interest in socially-engaged practice, which has proliferated since the 1990s. This form of work is motivated by a desire to intervene in real life, rather than representing real life, and is concerned with the process of making art, rather than the production of objects or formal performance. The approach to art embraced at the RSA is socially informed arts that aim to influence pro-civic thinking and behaviour by generating a better sense of identity and belonging for people in Peterborough and constructive engagement between its diverse communities.

Socially informed art offers a unique approach and perspective for meeting the challenges facing Peterborough. Led by local people and artists in Peterborough, the arts open up the potential to generate shared meaning, identity and collective behaviour. For many, the arts have a direct role to play in social change processes more generally.

A recent government report on the relationship between cultural activities and urban renewal, social inclusion and community cohesion, argues that arts have the capacity to strengthen social capital.<sup>116</sup> This is supported by an Austrian study which concludes that in addition to benefits normally expected from participation in the arts (artistic, economic and educational), long-term social benefits included: strengthened community networks of ongoing value; raised public awareness of a social or community concern; improved understandings of different cultures or lifestyles; lessened social isolation for individuals and groups; and developed community identity or sense of itself.<sup>117</sup>

In this chapter, we have outlined some of the ideas underlying the Citizen Power investigations. We now go on to outline how this thinking will be embedded in practical projects that the RSA will help deliver in the city over the next two years.

} The arts have a special role to play I think. What does Peterborough mean to those who live there? An approach that focuses on creative expression can explore this as effectively as any sociological study

*Senior stakeholder*

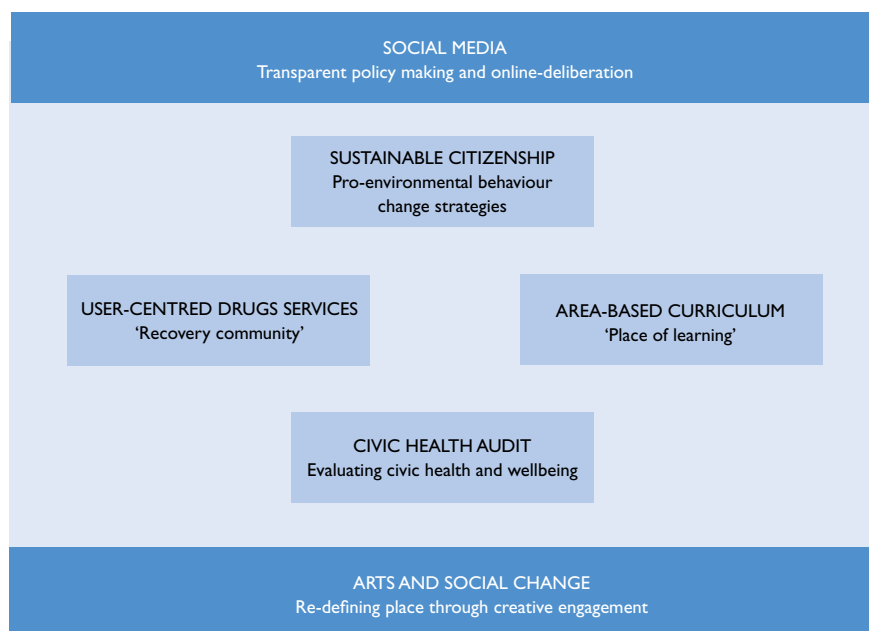
<sup>116</sup> Department for Culture, Media and Sports. *Bringing Communities Together through Sport and Culture*. DCMS 2004.

<sup>117</sup> D Williams, *Creating Social Capital, A study of the long-term benefits from community based arts funding*. Community Arts Network of South Australia 1996.



# Chapter 4

## The Citizen Power Programme



The purpose of the Citizen Power programme is to explore different strategies for generating active, sustainable citizenship in Peterborough. This means establishing the conditions necessary to cultivate people and communities which are more engaged, altruistic, resilient, self-reliant, resourceful and creative. Only by doing this will the untapped potential of the city and its people be realised.

The Citizen Power programme will contribute to this process by building on the progress already under way in the city and outlined in the recent Comprehensive Area Assessment. The *practical outcomes* we hope to help deliver through this approach are summarised below:

- \* generate a more distinctive identity for Peterborough built around and through the civic behaviour of active, empowered citizens;
- \* ensure the delivery programme adds value to existing strategic objectives in Peterborough and amplifies the exciting work already underway in the city;
- \* deliver practical insights and behaviour change practices that help Peterborough move towards the ambition of becoming the 'Environmental Capital of the UK';
- \* establish a legacy and infrastructure of high quality art in the city; and
- \* provide a framework and set of practices for harnessing sustainable citizenship beyond the duration of the Citizen Power programme itself.

Given the complexity of the issues being explored, we argued earlier that the Citizen Power investigations need an underlying narrative and that this should be

developed around the concept of sustainable citizenship. This is an agenda which focuses on building active citizenship and collective behaviour that will have a positive long-term impact on the civic and environmental health of the city.

Below we set out what is effectively a plan of action for delivering the Citizen Power programme. It is both complex and ambitious in scale including as it does six projects.

1. A sustainable citizenship project to encourage pro-environmental behaviours through public deliberation and behavioural economics.
2. User-centred drug services to build sustainable citizenship among socially excluded groups and develop a recovery community to support drug users.
3. Arts and social change projects using creative forms of public engagement to re-define the relationship people have with where they live and strengthen community cohesion.
4. Area-based curriculum in Peterborough to build networks of learning across the city and new ways of cultivating active citizenship among young people.
5. Social media project to render the policy and research processes of the project transparent and to enable local people and community groups to shape the direction of and get involved in each of the projects.
6. Civic health audit tool developed to evaluate levels of civic health and well-being in Peterborough. This will draw on a multi-disciplinary methodology bringing together quantitative survey analysis, social network analysis and exploratory qualitative research.

## **Citizen Power in Peterborough**

This is the first publication of the Citizen Power programme. We have outlined the framework and ideas behind our account of sustainable citizenship and how the projects informed by this will seek to address some of the particular challenges facing Peterborough.

Peterborough is a diverse, fast-growing and environmental city and it wants to become a centre for social innovation, community empowerment and sustainable excellence. It does, however, have some major challenges to overcome before it can achieve these goals. Some of these challenges are driven by national issues, for instance pressure on public services in the face of spending cuts. Others arise from more local circumstances, including a low level of trust between citizens and a problem with drug-related crime. This combination of vision and challenge makes Peterborough an ideal place to begin experimenting with ways to unlock people's potential and tackle national and local problems through a new sense of citizenship.

Here we have set out a vision for people and places. One where we respond to collective challenges such as cuts to public services, climate change, an ageing population and social fragmentation, with optimism, using these pressures as opportunities to rethink local public services and deliver a fairer, happier and

more sustainable society. We argue that to achieve this we need to revive a sense of local identity, and to create active citizens who want to shape where they live and their local public services and to be more innovative in their responses to social challenges.

Saying this is one thing, achieving positive change is another. What we have tried to do here is to argue for the kinds of attitudes, behaviours and capabilities that will be needed if people in Peterborough are to rise to the challenge.

This report signals the beginning of a lot of hard work on the ground, from our partners in Peterborough, from the RSA and from local people as the Citizen Power programme starts to put some of the ideas here into practice. The range and scale of approaches varies but the focus remains around work that will enable citizens to participate more in their communities; to develop strong attachment to the city and where they live; and to tackle social problems in innovative ways.

What I find so exciting about what you're planning is that it will get different partners in the city to up their game

*Senior stakeholder*

## Capable citizens

We argue for a civic rather than an individualist or consumerist approach to tackling national and social challenges and realising the potential of people.

Our understanding of citizenship places a great deal of emphasis on the types of 'civic capability' people possess and demonstrate in their behaviour. The actions of people define, to a large extent, the character and identity of a place. It is because of the intimate connection between people and places that we consider it so important to identify what factors are most likely to foster human capabilities.

Our hypothesis, to be tested and evaluated in the course of the Citizen Power programme, is that the type of citizenship society needs in order to realise the potential of people and rebuild civic life is dependent on us being more:

- \* engaged in local community life;
- \* altruistic and caring towards other people and the environment;
- \* self-reliant and able to resolve local problems in co-operation with other citizens;
- \* resilient in the face of unexpected challenges or setbacks; and
- \* creative in how we respond to social problems.

It is our view that all approaches to civic engagement and social change need to encourage these kinds of behaviours and deploy them.

## The power of people

The view of sustainable citizenship and civic capability put forward in this report is important for three reasons.

*Attachment:* First, we need to be and feel more attached to place and start tackling the increasing sense of disconnection that people have from where they live. There is a simple but powerful contention running throughout this report:

places flourish when people have a shared understanding of what they want their place to be.

We are all members of communities and social networks. These relationships (or lack of them) shape and inform so much of what we are and can be and mean we all have responsibilities to the people and places around us. Our behaviour has consequences for others and we are all dependent on each other to a greater or lesser extent. Because of this we need to develop a shared sense of place and work together to realise it.

*Participation:* Second, we need to participate more in civic life. People feel they have less not more power over their lives. Turning our view of citizenship from principles to actions is important because it will help us realise our own potential. Sometimes we know what we aspire to, but we are not sure how to achieve it or doubt our own ability to effect change. Finding ways to empower citizens and helping them to use their experience and expertise to make places and services better will help us all develop the confidence and tools to start achieving the things we want, both collectively and individually.

*Innovation:* Third, innovation needs to be an operating principle for everything we do. The automatic retreat into existing patterns of thinking and doing things is something we need to constantly avoid. Some pressing issues require us to start thinking and living differently. Developing a new sense of citizenship has an important role to play in making this happen. For instance, the threat of climate change and the need for communities to adapt to a low carbon society requires us to find new ways of engaging and working together to lower our emissions, change our consumption patterns, innovate in our local economies and develop a sense of pride and respect for our local environment.

Each project is summarised in more detail below. In these project summaries we outline how each investigation aims to foster sustainable citizenship and civic capabilities in practical ways which will have a direct impact on different groups of citizens in Peterborough at a local level.

} Peterborough has so much untapped potential and creativity. The problem is that most people don't seem to know it and even if they do, you certainly wouldn't know it by the way they talk

*Peterborough resident*



# I. Sustainable citizenship

## Create innovative approaches to civic and environmental behaviour change

Peterborough has the ambition to become the Environmental Capital of the UK. This project will look at how effective different creative and innovative approaches to civic and pro-environmental behaviour change can be. The project will:

- \* cultivate attachment, participation and innovation in the city; and
- \* develop an Innovation Network. This will comprise of each Neighbourhood Council leading different strategies for improving levels of environmental behaviour and sharing and embedding the best practice identified. This will involve local people and communities working together to determine what the behaviour change challenge should be (i.e. the nature of the project) and co-producing the strategy to meet that challenge.

The project will include:

- \* each behaviour change project adopted by the Neighbourhood Council using pledgebanks to galvanise and record public commitment to the cause they have decided to tackle (for example increasing levels of recycling or living more energy efficient life-styles);
- \* establishing an ideas bank (which will be situated on the project Ning site for people to contribute to whenever they wish) to empower individuals and groups of people across the Neighbourhood Council localities to come up with their own innovative and creative proposals for how to improve the environmental sustainability of the city; and
- \* a city-wide competition with the most effective behaviour change strategies and innovative proposals – determined by a team of recognised experts in this field – being rewarded and recognised in different ways (for example free use of community assets to support community and environmental action).

The success of the Innovation Network established and the behaviour change strategies developed will be measured against the following criteria:

- \* level of commitment reflected in the number of people who sign up to the Pledgebank in their area and actively participate;
- \* quality of the behaviour change strategies developed and proposals submitted to the ideas bank as reflected in (a) the number of rewards awarded and (b) expert evaluation based on level of innovation and likely effectiveness in improving environmental behaviours;
- \* stronger attachment between people and place by an increased understanding of and respect for the local environment; and
- \* improved levels of subjective empowerment (i.e. how capable and empowered people feel as a result of being involved in the process).



## 2. User-centred drug service and recovery community

### Build the civic capacity of socially excluded groups

Peterborough has a long-term problem of drug dependency and low recovery rates. The project will aim to create an expansive recovery community in the city, which will support the long-term recovery of drug users.

In order to do this, the project will provide the opportunity for these residents to:

- \* develop a stronger sense of attachment to place among some of the most socially excluded people by using their experience to develop local services that work;
- \* participate by working together with local public services to develop a strategy for improving user-centred drug services in Peterborough; and
- \* innovate by undertaking cutting-edge research to design local drug services.

The project will build on the work already undertaken by the RSA's Connected Communities programme and harness the support of RSA Fellows. This means refining and applying the exploratory qualitative and ethnographic research methodology used to good effect on previous RSA drug projects.

The project will be evaluated against the following criteria:

- \* leaving a lasting legacy by creating an expansive recovery community in the city, which will support the long-term recovery of drug users;
- \* providing formative and (initial) summative evaluative evidence on the effectiveness of a user-centred approach to drug services; and
- \* reducing social exclusion and stigma. The project will aim to recast drug users in a different light, as users of public services like any others, with assets, aspirations and ideas to meet their needs.

### 3. Area-based curriculum

## Place school and active citizenship of young people at the heart of the community

The relationship between local schools and community life in Peterborough needs to be stronger if the potential of the city and its young people are to be realised. The aim of the Peterborough area-based curriculum is to establish schools as part of a broader community of learning in a local area. The project will:

- \* generate a sense of attachment between young people and their community;
- \* increase levels of participation in civic life among young people; and
- \* empower young people to come up with innovative solutions to local problems (for example how to make Peterborough a more carbon-friendly place to live).

The methodology will focus on a network of local schools co-producing their own curriculum. But in order to situate the learning and education of young people at the heart of the community, the project will create new networks and relationships between schools, parents, young people and institutions beyond the school, all committed to the same goal of increasing levels of civic action among young people.

The project will be evaluated against the following criteria:

- \* how embedded the Peterborough area-based curriculum is in local schools (the long-term aim is to have this in as many schools as possible);
- \* the strength of networks of learning across the city; and
- \* the levels of active citizenship among young people.



## 4. Art and social change

### Forge new ways of building social networks and subjective empowerment

The arts and creative industries are in need of development in Peterborough.

The aim of the arts and social change project is to begin establishing the city as a place of creative engagement. High quality arts and culture will be used to build:

- \* attachment and trust between different communities;
- \* participation in cultural and civic activity to shape the identity of the city; and
- \* innovative ways of increasing subjective empowerment (feelings of self-efficacy).

The approach will employ two methods.

- \* Multi-disciplinary cultural events exploring the cultural heritage and potential of the city.
- \* Action-research through a variety of creative methods that will always include co-creation and mutual inquiry between local people and professionals.

The success of the project will be measured against the following criteria:

- \* the capacity of the arts and creative engagement to tackle public policy challenges such as local levels of social trust;
- \* the extent to which local people can creatively contribute to developing active, sustainable citizenship in Peterborough; and
- \* the capacity to build the profile of Peterborough as a place for creative inquiry by working with world renowned artists from outside Peterborough.

## 5. Social media

### Ensure transparent and user-generated policy-making

The social media project will have a cross-cutting role. The aim of the project is to turn the Citizen Power programme into a 'glass-box project'. This means it will be a uniquely open-source, transparent project with every relevant output and communication related to the project accessible to all. The social media project will support the broader programme of work in the following ways:

- \* increase attachment by building a new online community;
- \* encourage greater levels of participation through online deliberation; and
- \* experiment with innovative ways of local people shaping public policy.

The social media strategy is being developed on an ongoing basis. At the heart of our social media strategy will be a project Ning site. This will have the following core elements:

- \* online space to share project documents and communications with anyone interested inside and outside Peterborough; and
- \* debatagraph. This will be used to assess and evaluate how important a particular issue is. It will do this by analysing the frequency and content of all user-generated content fed into the site. This will form part of the basis for determining the civic issue the sustainable citizenship project will tackle in the second year of the project.



## 6. Civic health audit

### Evaluate the civic health of Peterborough and measure impact

Peterborough is a place of low civic health. As part of our programme of work, we aim to develop a bespoke RSA civic health audit to evaluate the effectiveness of our interventions and generate a detailed picture of civic health in the city. Our civic health audit model will form part of the legacy of the project, providing Peterborough with an innovative and robust methodology for assessing levels of particular indicators, including attachment, participation, trust and levels of innovation.

While the precise details of the model are being designed, the civic health audit will be comprised of the following methodological framework:

- \* detailed secondary/quantitative analysis of civic health based on key RSA civic indicators (for example levels of participation, trust, political engagement, belonging and attachment). This will build on data analysis undertaken but will go down to a neighbourhood level and will be broadly based on the Florida Index used in the US;
- \* social network analysis of local connections between people and organisations to underpin our quantitative and qualitative research. This will involve using a set of tools including resource generators and name generators to effectively gauge levels of social capital as well as locate and identify where stocks of social capital are most prolific; and
- \* social infrastructure analysis as a way of garnering information on the places where residents formally and informally gather. This data would then be utilised to map and locate the intensity of social activity and reveal where strong social infrastructure lies.

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