What Matters to Us

The strengths and potential of communities

**Report of a community asset mapping project
for ForHousing in Knowsley, Oldham and Salford**

January 2024

Contents

Summary

ForHousing's vision is "to positively impact the lives of our social housing tenants". Its Customer Strategy is to: place the tenant at the centre of everything; listen and act upon the tenant voice; and improve customer experience. This is in the context of new regulation of social housing.

The project was to do asset mapping in Fitton Hill, Salford and Stockbridge Village. It aimed to: support ForHousing to understand its tenants, communities and how best to work alongside them; strengthen and form relationships within communities; and support ForHousing and partners to support communities based on their strengths and potential.

Asset-based approaches start with the gifts of people and their capacity to organise to create the world they want to see. The first step, asset mapping, is a guide to relationship building, and a process for engaging a community to unlock people's talents to make it better.

In summary, our approach was:
1. assess any intelligence available about who is least heard or engaged
2. simple equality impact assessment
3. gather any similar strengths-focussed work
4. initial engagement with respected local connectors
5. develop a plan of action for each area, and go to where people are
6. use multiple modes of participation for learning conversations

As well as this report, we produced an asset map of each area that reflects the strengths, assets and issues people said meant most to them, in terms of: local associations; local institutions (all sectors); physical environments; digital spaces; neighbourhood economy; and culture.

We found not only distinction and clear identities in different communities, but also common themes that ran through every conversation:
- people want meaningful lives, in a place that facilitates and enables this
- a lack of bridging spaces where people from socially or culturally dissimilar groups are able to network and mix
- places where people feel they belong

An ecosystem is the specific environment in which communities and assets exist. Being able to 'grow your own' new assets will help unlock the potential of these communities. Key elements of this ecosystem are:
- community group leaders and social entrepreneurs: capturing skills and practices for the next generation
- infrastructure: adopting a broad understanding of all the things that a community needs in order to function
- cultures changing, whilst recognising local histories: finding connections and building a sense of belonging

What distinguishes a social housing provider is its core purpose and strengths in the development and management of physical assets (land, buildings, houses, shop units, paths, etc.). Community development in a social housing provider should focus on the development of such assets, both as a bridging space and as somewhere to make the organisation more visible and accessible for local people in each neighbourhood.

For an asset-based approach to be effective, the initial asset mapping is only the start of a long-term process by the whole organisation. There are three aspects for its relationship with local people and communities:
- what communities can do themselves
- what communities and agencies can create together ('co-production')
- what communities can advise on and then expect agencies to deliver what only they can

Asset-based working has corporate implications for ForHousing:
- having a single, clear relationship with local people
- seeing people as more than tenants or customers
- having effective communications with diverse communities
- honest reflection on holding, sharing and addressing unequal power
- investing time to create and sustain good relationships with communities that are characterised by respect and trust

Strong themes have emerged that are crucial for future development:
- improving the quality and speed of repairs of properties is critical
- greater effectiveness if local people are perceived in terms of strengths
- using core organisational expertise in asset development and management to develop assets that make sense to communities
- making asset-based engagement (community development) key in the consistent regeneration of neighbourhoods

To help implement the suggested approach, there is a series of general and community/site-specific recommendations to ForHousing.

1.   Challenge and context

Social Housing (Regulation) Act:

The [Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023](#) makes provision about: the regulation of social housing; the terms of approved schemes for the investigation of housing complaints; the powers and duties of a housing ombudsman; and hazards affecting social housing.

The Act makes clear the need for landlords to truly understand who their tenants are, beyond the core of tenants who are already actively involved, and to understand the issues they are facing, so they can deliver services that address the needs of tenants and improve their quality of life. Landlords are expected to play an important role in the communities in which they are based.

The Act gave the [Regulator of Social Housing](#) an enhanced consumer regulation role. A fundamental part of this consumer regulatory framework is the introduction of a revised set of consumer standards that set the requirements that registered social housing providers must meet. These include:
- the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard, which requires landlords to be open with tenants and treat them with fairness and respect so that tenants can access services, raise complaints when necessary, influence decision making and hold their landlord to account; and
- the Neighbourhood and Community Standard, which requires landlords to engage with other relevant parties so that tenants can live in safe and well-maintained neighbourhoods and feel safe in their homes.

ForHousing Customer Strategy:

The ForHousing Customer Strategy outlines how it is a customer-focused organisation. The Strategy priorities are:
- excellent and efficient customer focused services
- investment in front line service delivery to meet increasing customer demand
- meet the diverse needs of customers
- ensure that the tenant voice is heard and influences the customer experience
- effective and easy to access communication channels

<u>Understanding communities:</u>

Asset Mapping supports ForHousing to go into communities and work with tenants to listen to what is important to them, ensuring that the tenant voice is heard and acted upon. ForHousing's aspiration is to ensure that it listens to the diverse range of tenants and communities, working alongside them to support them to get involved in shaping its services and to co-produce initiatives and activities that will support communities to take action, break down barriers and meet local need. Communities will be empowered to take the lead, work together or work alongside ForHousing and other key stakeholders in the area to create change.

2.   Aims

The project aimed to do a detailed Asset Mapping exercise in the local communities of Fitton Hill, Salford and Stockbridge Village. Asset Mapping is a methodology to empower and support communities based on their strengths and potential. Asset Mapping documents a community's existing resource, identify who the community are, the groups working in the community and any anchor institutions that operate there.

The use of the asset-based methodology aims to support ForHousing and partners to empower and support communities based on their strengths and potential.

This is with the aim of strengthening or forming relationships, identifying potential partnerships and tapping into the existing passion and resources within communities to take action, meet local need and help to shape ForHousing's services. It can also serve to identify any gaps and support the community to identify the resources and create the partnerships which can address need.

The project supports ForHousing to understand who its tenants are, the communities they live in and how best to work alongside communities and tenants, by:
- mapping and understanding similar work that has been undertaken in areas, to ensure we do not duplicate and this work addresses gaps
- mapping the 'resources' available in the community - this might be individuals, groups or 'institutions'
- engaging with local communities to understand the key issues faced by communities, the support available and any identify any gaps in support
- understanding the barriers to engagement with ForHousing and supporting the development of ways to better engage and communicate with tenants and communities
- tapping into the existing passion and knowledge of communities to form relationships and to create change
- empowering communities to work alongside ForHousing to identify issues and co-produce solutions

- empowering individual tenants to get involved with ForHousing to influence service development and delivery and hold ForHousing to account

ForHousing also hoped that, through this project, some tenants and communities might want to get involved in its formal involvement opportunities.

3. Focuses

Geographical areas:

The geographical focuses for the community conversations were:
- Knowsley: Stockbridge Village
- Oldham: Fitton Hill
- Salford: Eccles; Irlam and Cadishead; Little Hulton and Walkden; Swinton and Clifton

Communities of focus:

Asset-based community development (ABCD) is an opportunity to engage with a wide diversity of voices, including those groups and people who ForHousing does not normally engage with or hear from. Currently, ForHousing relies on relatively traditional methods of engagement and while it is launching new ways of working and exploring options (such as digital engagement tools), it understands that there is nothing quite like going to where people are and talking with them.

Stakeholders:

There are many different stakeholders that live and work in local communities. ForHousing did some initial engagement with organisations and individuals who it believed would have an important role to play in the project, whether that be by building on work that has already been done, using their knowledge to shape the project, building on their existing relationships and/ or tapping into their expertise.

ForHousing also shared a list of potential stakeholders who it believed would have a part to play, but have not yet formally engaged with.

There were also people and groups who ForHousing had not met. It wanted this project to help form new relationships and partnerships.

4.   Approach and methodology

The project team from Action Together, Unlimited Potential and We Make Places was motivated to do the project because:
- We have a strong loyalty to the communities. We want it to be done right.
- Ongoing nature of the work – although a snapshot, this is only a starting point. We also want to be on the journey.
- Building on our previous work with ForHousing.
- Strengths-based – the way that we work.

We aim for asset mapping to support ForHousing and its partners to empower and support communities based on their strengths and potential.

We researched the theory, experience and evidence about asset-based approaches. References used are listed in the bibliography of this report.

In their book, *Building Communities From The Inside Out* (1993), John Kretzmann and John McKnight laid out the principles and practices of asset-based approaches. In 1995, the authors set up the Asset Based Community Development Institute at Northwestern University's Institute for Policy Research. Since then, the ABCD Institute (now at DePaul University) has developed their approach and produced countless resources to support those wishing to take asset-based approaches.

Everyone has strengths that are needed to produce solutions. Asset-based community development (ABCD) starts with the gifts of people (their strengths and assets) and their capacity to organise to create the world they want to see.[1] Informed by the learning of the ABCD Institute, our approach was based on these values:
- **start with gifts** - Assets and strengths, not deficits and needs, are the true building blocks of healthy communities. Every individual, association and institution has assets that can contribute to community well-being and justice.
- **build relationships for mutual support** - ABCD believes that relationships are the core of flourishing communities. Relationships create trust and activate gifts and power.
- **value small** - ABCD values small, grassroots, resident-driven approaches that use stories as the basis for learning, sharing and acting for change.
- **nurture community-led action** - When people in a community act together, they demonstrate their own power and leadership and can bring about positive change. ABCD values everyone's voice and contributions and prioritizes those who live within a community.

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[1] A glossary of words used in Asset-Based Community Development literature is at https://www.nurturedevelopment.org/glossary/

- **work for equity and justice** - ABCD fosters a world where all people thrive. ABCD helps people use their gifts to work in their communities to disrupt systemic oppression and regenerate power in new, creative and equitable ways.
- **believe in possibility** - ABCD is rooted in hope. People in communities, even in extreme situations, can use their gifts to imagine ways to create change.
- **lead by stepping back** - ABCD shines a light on residents' power to contribute to and make decisions in their communities. The work of institutions is to lead by stepping back to support residents' efforts to create and implement the changes they seek for their community.
- **include everyone** - ABCD does not just invite people to the table but builds a new table where everyone has a true place. ABCD celebrates and values diversity. We are better when more diverse voices are present in shaping who we are and how we practice ABCD.

The essence of asset mapping is to discover, ask and connect. We have discovered strengths in each community, reflecting who they are, existing resources, anchor institutions, and groups and organisations working there. We considered assets in terms of:
- local associations
- local institutions (private, public and VCSE sectors)
- physical environments
- digital spaces
- neighbourhood economy
- culture (customs and beliefs, art, way of life, etc.)

In summary, our approach included these steps:

1. **Assess any intelligence** available about which groups or communities are least heard or engaged, including those most at risk of being forgotten, such as d/Deaf people, carers, care leavers, ex-forces and people who are not fluent in English.
2. Simple **equality impact assessment**, using definitions from the Equality Act 2010.
3. **Gather any similar strengths-focussed work** that has been done with less engaged people.
4. Initial **engagement with respected local connectors** from widely diverse backgrounds.
5. Develop a **plan of action** for each area. **Go to where people are**, not least in engaging with local businesses (static, delivery or mobile).
6. **Use multiple modes of participation** for learning conversations with local people who reflect the diversity of each population, then 'snowballing'.

In practice, this approach was broadly followed, while tailored to suit each locality.

5. Equity, diversity and inclusion

Diversity of participants is a critical factor in generating the highest quality of thinking. There are different types of knowledges and we need to recognise that lived experience is valuable.

We also assessed any **available intelligence** about which groups or communities:

- are least heard or engaged, including those most at risk of being forgotten, such as d/Deaf people, carers, care leavers, ex-forces and people who are not fluent in English; and/or
- whose levels of satisfaction were lower than others' - this was about identifying who is less heard or engaged by ForHousing. We based this upon pilot data of tenant satisfaction measures collected by ForHousing. This pointed us to younger people, parents, disabled people and people from some racialised groups.

To ensure that our approach reflected each of the communities, we cross-referenced the intelligence from ForHousing with data available from the 2021 Census about the demography in each geographical area to identify where these identified groups are.

In addition, we asked for further data held by ForHousing about their tenants, which was received as the engagement with local people was ongoing. We triangulated this with Census 2021 data and the tenant satisfaction measures to ensure those engaged reflected the diversity of the communities.

Informed by this intelligence, we then conducted a simple **equality impact assessment** for each geographical area, using definitions from the Equality Act 2010.[2] This approach considered: age; care experience;

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[2] Equality impact assessments for each area are in Appendix 1.

caring responsibilities; disability; gender reassignment; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; and socio-economic status[3].

The aim of this was make the project as inclusive as possible and to help guide the focus for initial engagement to be with respected local connectors from widely diverse backgrounds, so that the approach ultimately reached as wide a diversity of local people as possible.

Together with our own local connections, and the local knowledge of colleagues such as ForHousing's community development officers and other colleagues, we considered possible starting points.

Engaging with the diverse groups identified became a priority for the project. We aimed to do this by:
- being present in spaces where these groups are welcomed
- approaching community groups or businesses who engage these groups
- engaging local connectors from these identified groups

We recognised that not all residents find the same types of activities accessible. To address this, we used multiple modes of participation that included:
- chatting in groups
- chatting one-to-one
- digital methods from home
- video / audio recording ('vox pops')
- visual prompts
- writing

Examples of consequent activities in each area are:

Salford

In Salford, we were led by the initial equality impact assessment and focused on reaching those who are less heard. We engaged local connectors based on this.

We engaged carers, veterans and a real mix of ages to be local connectors, which resulted in reaching these same groups.

Through a mixture of local connectors, we reached a range of disabled people as well as by being welcomed in groups and spaces that are especially inclusive to disabled people.

We engaged people from a range of Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities that broadly reflected the population data available. Through local connectors, we had learning conversations with

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[3] Social Mobility Commission - https://socialmobilityworks.org/toolkit/measurement/

people from Black communities in Walkden and Little Hulton and the Polish community in Eccles. We also had learning conversations with a number of Muslim (Arab and South Asian) people from across the four areas, but we did not successfully engage a local connector, which limited this work.

We did not manage to reach Trans communities, care leavers and d/Deaf people.

The timescale of the work forced us to focus on diversity, which was helpful but inevitably a limit existed to what was possible. Similarly, introducing the work and engaging local connectors takes time and requires those natural connectors having availability. In some cases, we met the right people at too late a stage.

Stockbridge Village

The demographics of Stockbridge Village are changing (Knowsley Knowledge, 2021) and there are some new communities emerging whose voices we tried to capture.

As Stockbridge Village has a higher proportion of children under 10 years (Knowsley Knowledge, 2021), we engaged a significant number of parents of these children and the children themselves. The children in particular liked leaving us their dreams for the neighbourhood on the tree we took into the community.

Christianity is the most followed religion in Stockbridge Village with 67.5% of the population identifying as being Christian (Knowsley Knowledge, 2021), so we attended church services and congregation meet-ups.

Stockbridge Village is more ethnically diverse than Knowsley (Knowsley Knowledge, 2021). We were successful in engaging with black African and other non-U.K. born residents.

We also engaged with a range of disabled people with learning, physical and sensory impairments and some carers.

We found it hard to engage with significant numbers within the Polish community. This was influenced by the local connector being sick and hospitalised. We also acknowledge that carers are often a hidden group

and targeted engagement would strengthen this. Similarly, although we engaged some marginalised young people, we were able to engage with some young people and parents individually, but there is more scope to engage with them further.

Fitton Hill

As identified in the Fitton Hill equality impact assessment, we engaged with a diverse range of people.

We spoke with a range of young people, young disabled people, young parents/carers, disabled adults, older people and disabled men not able to work.

We engaged South Asian people in the project, though efforts none were ForHousing tenants. Fitton Hill comes under Hathershaw for Census data – though Hathershaw and Fitton Hill are different places. Hathershaw has a 23.5% Asian population. However, during the project, we received data which suggested that less than 0.7% of ForHousing tenants in Fitton Hill are Asian.

In terms of older people, we arranged a focus group with the ForHousing Shelter Scheme Officer but only three people attended. Although we would have liked more to attend, the residents who did provided very rich and detailed local knowledge.

6.   Previous strengths-focussed work

We gathered any **similar strengths-focussed work** that had previously been done in each of the areas (including by the Community Voice groups). We assessed these findings to avoid duplication and to enhance existing intelligence by generating new insights.

Identifying these pieces of work was done in two ways. Firstly, prior to the project starting, ForHousing had spoken to local partner organisations and shared this with project partners. Secondly, any work was identified through the networks of Unlimited Potential, members of the project steering group, and networks on which members of the community development team sit.

The proposal specifically intended to gather similar strengths-focused work done with less engaged people. It was not to produce a synthesis of all engagement and research conducted in the areas of this project – that could be a project of its own.

These pieces of work were identified:

[Peel Park community research project](#):

Commissioned by Little Hulton Big Local, this project was run by The Broughton Trust. The project trained up local people as community researchers to generate evidence to influence the investment in, and direction about the future of, Peel Park in Little Hulton.

This project produced detailed information about Peel Park. In the context of this project, Peel Park represents a single physical asset in one area. The information was useful to inform the write up on the map. It also produced trained community researchers. As a result, we worked with Little Hulton Big Local to employ local connectors for this project. Given Little Hulton Big Local have run community research projects, this influenced our learning conversation with them - ensuring to ask of any findings or themes beyond those published.

[Spreading Our Net](#):

Funded by Salford CVS with support from NHS Salford Clinical Commissioning Group, Spreading Our Net intended to reduce loneliness by identifying and then better connecting local people to community assets in Barton and Winton.

As a new approach to tackling loneliness, the project summary shares information on the approach and how it can further be developed. More specific findings about the assets and local connectors were obtained and a meeting was held with the facilitator who did the work.

This work had huge influence in an almost identical way to the strengths-focused VCSE research: the insight from the facilitator, identified assets, and potential local connectors were shared in the same way.

However, the report surmised that "community and local businesses … are the mainstays of most people's lives." Examples from this work included convenience stores that, as one of few suppliers of particular international goods, enabled local people to connect with those of the same nationality. As a result, cross-referencing with guidance from the ABCD Institute, our questions ensured identification of local businesses that local people really value.

[Strengths of the VCSE Sector in Salford](#):

Research conducted by Salford CVS for Salford City Council to capture the strengths that the VCSE Sector brings to the health and well-being of Salford.

As the work was yet to be published at the point of gathering other similar work, we instead met the researcher conducting the work.

This meeting and conversation had huge influence on the project in two ways. Firstly, the researcher had insight about the strengths of the VCSE sector in each of the areas in Salford which were to be mapped. Secondly, the researcher had found many VCSE organisations that are assets and local connectors within the areas to be mapped.

The insights about the strengths of the VCSE sector in neighbourhoods were used to help plan engagement in each area and in producing the report. The contacts given were all contacted and either interviewed, or interviewed and engaged, as local connectors.

Mapping of young people's assets:

Whilst the work was being completed, ForHousing's community development team learned through their networks that Salford City Council was mapping young people's assets in Salford.

We met colleagues doing this work to avoid duplication and to explore any opportunities for sharing. However, this work was to mapping existing youth assets (groups and places where young people are welcomed) and the information will be used very differently. We were nevertheless able to agree to share information that felt relevant to each other's work.

7.   Local connectors

In each locality, we made initial **engagement with respected local connectors** from widely diverse backgrounds.

Going to corners of communities

ForHousing provided a list of 'community connectors' they were already aware of or working with as part of the project documentation. Our initial meetings with the steering groups in each area also provided similar connections. Whilst these were vital first meetings and conversations from the start, it has been our intention to find and listen to those whose voices are not usually heard in projects like this.

We therefore made sure that we went to the pub, had a cuppa with the window cleaner, went to the church and chatted to people at community parties and events. We tried to be visible and accessible within the communities and asked those we chatted with to spread the word and encourage others to meet with us too.

We **engaged respected local connectors** from diverse backgrounds with appropriate skills, knowledge and relationships, as well as a passion for their neighbourhood. After an introduction to asset mapping, we then developed a plan of action for each geographical area. Through the local connectors having learning conversations with other local people, this started with an initial asset map, which complemented the knowledge from the previous work.

Engaging local connectors and VCSE networks

The equality impact assessments for each area identified who we needed to reach who are less often or not usually heard. In Salford, we aimed to engage local connectors in these groups to conduct the learning conversations themselves. The project would not have produced the same maps without these local connectors. The work is more reflective not only because we worked in this way, but also because the local connectors believed in the project and committed to it. The local connectors who we engaged ranged from young members of church congregations and veterans to carers and diverse community leaders.

Across all areas, we also engaged VCSE networks in communities who matched the ethos of local connectors. Some welcomed us in their space to hold the learning conversations, which meant that we met in gyms, in baby groups and in community centres. Others conducted the learning conversations themselves.

8.   Learning conversations

We developed a **plan of action** for each area, with an emphasis on going to where people are, not least in engaging with local businesses (static, delivery or mobile). We used **multiple modes of participation** for learning conversations with local people who reflect the diversity of each population.

We held **learning conversations** with local people and communities to map the strengths and assets in each community, discovering local gifts and passions. Guided by the equality impact assessments, this was done with individuals and groups that reflected the diversity of each population (especially those who tend to be heard the least). It was then developed through a 'snowballing' approach to spread the gathering of learning.

Holding 'learning conversations' is common amongst the resources about asset-based approaches. These are semi-structured 'interviews' whereby a set of open questions are combined with space to explore themes or answers further.

Guidance from the ABCD Institute does not prescribe a set of questions, but does shares many question ideas across its many resources. Asset-based approaches always start with the gifts of individuals. Those delivering the project and the local connectors are gifted in engaging people. So, those delivering the project pulled together set of questions from published resources to be used as ideas.[4] Engaging people is a gift, so the questions were there as a guide to help understand what information was needed.

Learning conversations about assets within communities

We knew from the beginning that asking people about their favourite institutions would not produce the map needed. A wealth of information, handbooks and guides exist to help asset-based practitioners turn this work into reality.

The project team scoured all the available resources from the ABCD Institute to select the questions that would help the local person think about assets. The project team produced a list of question ideas to help steer conversations and ensure consistency across all communities. However, these questions existed as a steer, as a guide, so that the project team or local connectors could use their skills to reframe and get the most from conversations.

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[4] The questions guide for 'learning conversations' is in Appendix 2.

With support from the named contact from ForHousing in each of the geographical areas, the approach to conversations and happenings were adapted to their local circumstances:

- Knowsley: Stockbridge Village
- Oldham: Fitton Hill
- Salford: Eccles; Irlam and Cadishead; Little Hulton and Walkden; Swinton and Clifton

The approach in each area was informed by the summary feedback from conversations with key stakeholders provided by ForHousing and the opportunities at community events.

Adapting the approach for Salford

The Salford part of the project covered four areas; Eccles; Irlam and Cadishead; Little Hulton and Walkden; and Swinton and Clifton. These towns being part of Salford is relatively recent history. Prior to 1974, each area was governed by its own, separate Urban District Councils (Walkden and Little Hulton under Worsley). These four Urban District Councils were brought together with the County Borough of Salford to create Salford as defined today. They remain distinct towns and retain their distinct identities. Each area was therefore considered separately.

Population estimates (Census 2021) suggest that each of these areas have a population of around 40,000 with the exception being Irlam and Cadishead which has an estimated population of around 20,000. The scale of these communities alongside a short timescale meant targeting engagement.

The initial reflections on who are less heard or engaged and the equality impact assessment focused the work. Priority was always given on engaging those groups who are less heard or engaged (as described in section 5 on equity, diversity and inclusion).

Given a short time scale and a large area, the use of local connectors and connecting organisations was prioritised to broaden the reach of the project and get into all corners of each community. Both within and outside Steering Group meetings, the Steering Group supported finding people where there were gaps.

Local connectors were supported to do the learning conversations using a strengths-based approach. The skill of local connectors is that they are able to engage others. Respecting this gift meant that there was no need to train them on engagement. Instead, the meeting focused on explaining the project and explaining the information that would help the project. This worked, as local connectors were able to garner honest answers from those they met and reported learning more about the community themselves.

Adapting the approach for Stockbridge Village

Stockbridge Village is a self-contained neighbourhood in Knowsley with a population of just over 10,000. The area has a mix of houses, tower blocks and some facilities. Almost 50% of homes are socially rented. The area is surrounded by open green space. Pride in this community is strong – we have heard in working with the community previously that many residents proud to have lived here since the 1960s or 1970s. Stockbridge has a younger age structure than Knowsley overall, with higher proportions of children under 10 years and is one of the most ethnically diverse wards in Knowsley, with defined populations from Africa and Poland and religions including Christianity, Islam and Buddhism (Knowsley Knowledge, 2021).

We Make Places initially spoke to Steering Group members and key 'local connectors' who had been identified by ForHousing. The process widened to include one-to-one conversations with residents, community organisations, families, young people and small businesses working in the neighbourhood. We went to where people are (like the pub, the food hub, the sports centre, church and, more generally, on the streets). We also attended events and purposefully had a visual presence of the 'We Are Stockbridge Village' conversation. We found people were happy to tell us who else it would be good to talk to – particularly when we stressed we wanted to speak to those who are not usually heard or involved in such conversations.

Adapting the approach for Fitton Hill

Fitton Hill is part of the Medlock Vale ward of Oldham South district in the borough of Oldham. It comprises of a mix of private and social

housing. The largest social landlord is ForHousing, followed by Great Places Housing Group.

In Fitton Hill, the work was led by a place-based community development worker with over 20 years' experience who is embedded in the area. This meant that making connections to be in the right places was easier so the focus in Fitton Hill was to be present in community spaces and hold learning conversations there. This was an asset-based approach with members of Action Together going to where people gather or feel comfortable rather than asking them to come to us.

Asset-based questions were used to engage local residents, tenants/owner occupiers, business owners, local voluntary and community organisations and anyone steering group members and residents directed us to.

The project steering group was important in Fitton Hill beyond its impact on the project. These key community partners are not often brought together, but having come together enabled them to collaborate which led to events. This was a real strength.

9. Asset mapping and reporting

The **themes or passions that emerged were assigned** on the asset maps produced, in a way that reflected what people said meant most to them. This consequently reflects not only the strengths and assets in each geographical area, but also the issues that generated the most passion. We have created maps and data in such a way that they can be added to after the project is complete. This requires appropriate training for ForHousing staff in each area, as appropriate.
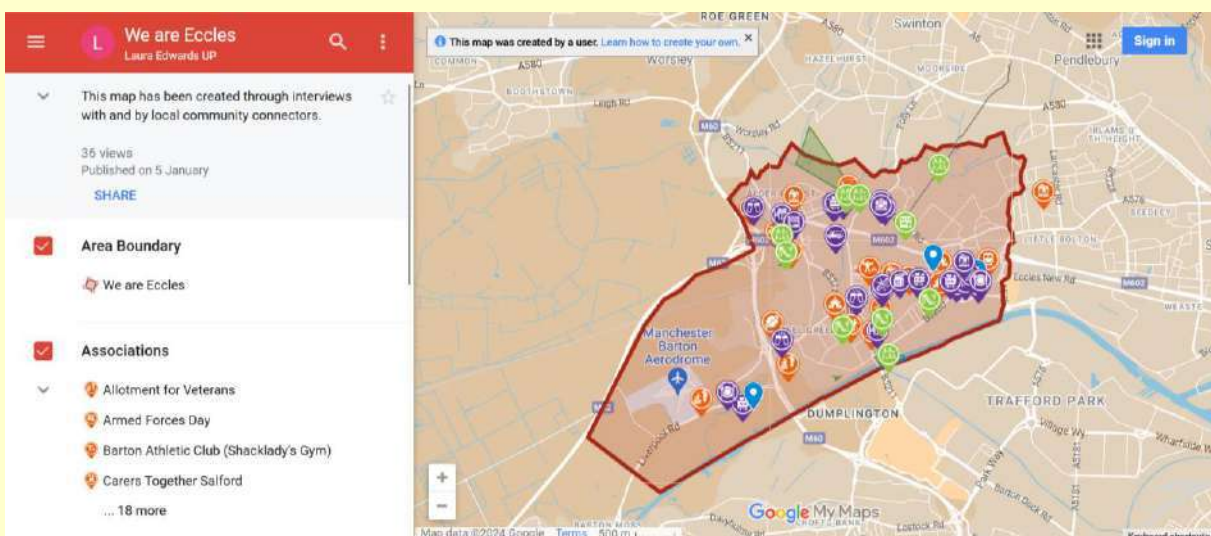
Finally, **we produced a draft report, together with the asset maps**, and shared these initially with the project lead (Head of Communities and

Tenant Involvement) and the three project steering groups for comment. There were also updates or presentations on the draft report and asset maps to the three Community Voice groups and to the Customer Committee. Informed by the feedback, this final report was produced.

10. Improving understanding and engagement of communities

We ensured that our approach provided an improved understanding of communities in a variety of ways. We assumed that the project would engage wider communities in the geographical areas, and was not restricted purely to tenants/customers of ForHousing.

Through asset mapping, communities were reflected and approached primarily in terms of their strengths and potential, rather than in terms of needs and deficits.

There was a review of and report on existing strengths-focussed work that had already been done in each of the geographical areas, some of which might be unknown to the wider system.

By seeking out and engaging respected local connectors from diverse backgrounds, key individuals not yet known to or engaged by the system emerged.

By first starting with local connectors that reflect or are connected to those parts of the population who are least heard or engaged, the assets and issues raised reflect a wider range of knowledges within each community.

The 'snowballing' approach to spreading learning conversations led to learning from people who are heard less often, if at all. This provided a richer picture of each community.

The asset maps that have emerged reflect not only the strengths and assets in each geographical area, but also the issues that generate the most passion amongst local people.

There is now a better understanding of all the assets within neighbourhoods, including those not previously known or recognised in terms of: local associations; local institutions (all sectors); physical environments; digital spaces; neighbourhood economy; and culture.

One common barrier to engagement emerged throughout the project across all three areas. The project did not ask about ForHousing but, in introducing the project, we heard often that people felt that repairs to ForHousing properties do not happen quickly enough or to a good enough standard. This was not always from people who had this experience themselves – just as often we heard the same sentiment from people who

felt that their neighbours, family, or friends were not getting (or had not gotten) their repairs sorted quickly or well enough.

This did not, however, prevent conversation. People care deeply about their home, their community and their local area. Using a strengths-based approach moved the conversation from barriers to possibilities.

By adopting a strengths-based approach during the process, new routes to engagement emerged, whether new local connectors, new networks, new relationships, new spaces and environments, new means of communication, or new styles or approaches. We have used our experiences around these to make recommendations for future processes and leaders in each area.

11. Outputs

The key outputs from this project are:
- A detailed methodology outlining the approach that we took to delivering the project.
- Engagement with key stakeholders
- Marketing and promotional plan
- A series of events/happenings/conversations in the defined geographies
- A summary report outlining the findings of previous or ongoing similar projects and pieces of work with an understanding of the gaps
- Presentation of project progress to the project steering group and formal tenant engagement groups
- A detailed report which outlines the methodology used, summarises the activities and details the key findings.
- An Asset Map
- Presentation of the findings and final report to the ForHousing Senior Leadership Team and the Executive Management Team
- A presentation of the findings and final report to the Customer Committee and the Community Voice panels

12. Themes and local stories

Although this project engaged diverse groups from different towns across Salford, Knowsley and Oldham, we found common themes that ran through every conversation we and the local connectors were having. These were:

People want meaningful lives

Across all communities, geographical and demographic, people want meaningful and fulfilling lives. This transpires into wanting to live in a place that facilitates and enables this – a place that provides what you need as well as what you want. People told us that they want places to meet up with friends without spending much, a place locally where they can treat themselves or people they love, and young men especially want access to an affordable gym. Always having to include transport costs to meet your needs and wants meant people were able to feel fulfilled less often.

A lack of bridging spaces

All communities reported a sense of increasing diversity. We found many examples of 'bonding' spaces in which people can come together around a shared experience or identity. The spaces are deeply important to the people we listened to and range from breakfasts for veterans, to catch-ups for carers, to established organisations supporting communities of identity. People described 'bonding' spaces as being places of understanding, support and belonging.

We also found a real lack of 'bridging' spaces where people from socially or culturally dissimilar groups are able to network and mix. In many cases, different 'bonded' groups report deep respect for one another yet there is still a lack of this 'bridging' space.

Places where people feel they belong

Across all areas there is an overwhelming sense that people want (and in some cases, have) places where they feel they belong. This feeling tends to cover all the asset 'types' that we have been looking at: having the local businesses that you need and can afford (institutions), green space that you can access and provides what you need, or being a member of a digital space just because you belong there. Most people reported the sense of community strengthened during Covid-19 and allowed new assets to flourish – including digital spaces such as Facebook or hyper local WhatsApp groups (sometimes street-based) or new litter picking groups. Conversely, the impact of Covid-19 on some local small businesses is mourned and felt strongly within these communities, especially where they offered that sense of belonging which communities have now lost.

Local stories

We found common ground between communities but we also found distinction and clear identities. We felt it important to share these as findings of their own.

Local stories: Irlam and Cadishead

Separated by mossland and river, Irlam and Cadishead are some distance from most neighbouring towns. Not only physically distinct, these towns have a proud and distinct identity as well as a strong sense of community. The distance, coupled with unreliable public transport that offers limited routes means life here without a car can be isolating.

People in Irlam and Cadishead told us that 'everyone knows everyone'. We heard often that children tend to stay here as adult – and also that 'even if they move, they always come back'. However, we heard from others that it can be isolating if you don't know many people but can tell that others do. In a similar way, where people are disconnected from assets that they need, living here can be isolating. We heard that groups exist to connect people to assets they need and that people are welcoming – but it is the sense of disconnection that can be hard.

People here band together in adversity; from marching for jobs in the 1980s to reversing a proposed closure of a support housing scheme in 2022. People here still feel let down by the loss of what they felt were good jobs and since replacement with an industrial estate that, even with some committed employers, offers lots of low paid work.

Aside from the industrial estate, there is little corporate presence here. Local independent businesses provide what people want and need and people speak highly of the pubs, hairdressers, bars and cafés – often knowing the owners by name. There are some facilities within estates, but most of the offering is lined along Liverpool Road. From new bar and restaurant openings to renovations of existing businesses – people can see it happening and talk positively about this sense of newness.

Local stories: Eccles

Eccles brings together a number of very distinct areas that specific communities call home. Although they are distinct, they all identify as part of Eccles.

The history of Eccles is visible in many ways; the former home of the Borough of Eccles (Eccles Town Hall) is in use today, former Mills are

still standing and rented out, the former Co-op is now a community centre, the old railway is now a loop line and Barton bridge is surrounded with information about its history.

Across Eccles, there are many strong community organisations founded by local people that bond people within those areas. There is a real sense of community leaders being completely in touch with their communities. This reflects in the role that the people of Eccles have played in bringing those historical assets to provide space for the communities of the present.

Despite having a town centre, Eccles is less centralised. In fact, people broadly disliked the town centre and were pleased about regeneration proposals. Though, many individual businesses within the town centre are highly regarded. People in Eccles enjoy the diversity and pride themselves on supporting shops and cafes that offer them something different. Institutions particularly serve the needs of diverse communities well. The lack of centralisation also matches there is a real spread of facilities across Eccles.

An exception to this was Brookhouse, where people told us that they felt isolated due to feeling disconnected from supermarkets and places to meet others (such as cafés and pubs). We heard that this is felt keenly, as assets in one direction are not connected by bus and too far or impractical (with food shopping) to walk. In the other direction, Peel Green roundabout under the M60 motorway (and the lack of signalled crossings on the Brookhouse side) is a barrier to assets that to which people might otherwise walk.

Local people told us that supermarkets and convenience stores reflect the diversity of Eccles. Though we heard that businesses offering something different are popular, cafés and restaurants don't reflect the diversity in the same way. We heard from diverse communities who prefer to travel out of Eccles for takeaways, cafés and restaurants. This presents a business opportunity for local people that would also connect communities in the sharing of culture.

Local stories: Little Hulton and Walkden

Little Hulton and Walkden are two towns with their own identities and histories. They sit side by side.

Only older residents who had lived in the area their whole live spoke of the histories of Walkden and Little Hulton. The history of these towns is less visible than other places.

Walkden Town Centre offers most of the facilities that people need; supermarkets, cafes, charity shops and more. From shops to restaurants to takeaways to coffee shops – there are a lot of chains and corporations in Walkden. Whilst handy if you can easily travel, this centralisation alongside infrequency of buses that go into estates - the things that people need often feel just out of reach. We found a real entrepreneurial spirit amongst people in Walkden and Little Hulton - which contrasts somewhat with the number of corporations present in Walkden town centre.

Little Hulton precinct (and nearby small retail park) offers support and services alongside some facilities such as convenience stores, a café and a chippy. The need to travel to Walkden for the rest brings a cost and frustration to people in Little Hulton. In Little Hulton especially the population has become increasingly diverse. Bonding spaces exist for people who are socially/culturally similar to each other, facilities are emerging, but there are few, if any, bridging spaces for people who are socially/culturally different from each other.

Local stories: Swinton and Clifton

Swinton and Clifton are made up of distinct areas, although to a non-local these distinctions are not visibly obvious.

Though people broadly knew the history of their hometown, they felt disconnected from it. Many people described Swinton as changing and never described demographic change in this.

Swinton's Town Hall now operates as Salford's Civic Centre, people have mixed views of the brutalist Lancastrian Hall and of the demolition of Swinton Lions ground whilst the club plays elsewhere.

We heard the identity of Swinton and Clifton through stories. Local people like living in Swinton. In contrast to other areas, we heard less

examples of community events that build on this identity or ways the community brings people together as a whole town. Those groups and events that do are popular - but it is not as routine and did not examples did not come to people as quickly as they did in other areas.

The role Swinton plays as an administrative centre for the City of Salford makes it a conflicted place. In one sense, local people benefit from having great access to Salford wide services and charities. In another sense, the cohesiveness is lost. In the daytime Swinton Town Centre is a busy hub for support and services but at night it is closed and quiet.

Nightlife does exist thought - in the pubs scattered throughout the town and bars that have recently opened. If you can get to the Town Centre of the East Lancs, Swinton feels a well-connected place. Though some estates rely on single hourly buses.

Swinton and Clifton are also home to many sports and leisure clubs that both children and adults can get involved in. Clifton is a little further out and though people have travel into Swinton for facilities, they enjoy access to country parks, fields and woodland.

Local stories: Stockbridge Village

The strongest theme from the Stockbridge Village conversations was that the community want a dedicated community centre that can be used by multiple groups and not monopolised or owned by one. They specifically want it to also offer youth provision at night as other than sports activities there is no real youth provision in the neighbourhood. There is a strong feeling that anti-social behaviour is worse in the winter due to longer periods of darkness providing opportunity for this to go unnoticed. Whilst young people gathering or riding bikes in groups is generally considered an issue and a perceived threat which contributes to a feeling of a lack of safety or confidence when out and about, there is a universal empathy and acknowledgement that this is little for these young people to focus on or attend. There are a lack of role models and a perception that parenting skills could be supported and developed as part of a strategy to address these issues.

There is sadly a feeling that the community have been asked for their views before and that this has not resulted in change being implemented. Whilst this is definitely true, the impact of Covid-19 and the resulting loss of some local businesses is mourned and felt strongly within these communities.

Local stories: Fitton Hill

Lack of physical community spaces/hubs where people can gather is a pertinent issue for Fitton Hill residents. People would like access to a space which they don't have to pre-book so that they can meet together to reduce loneliness and isolation, carry out activities etc. A space where partner organisations could come together in a place-based way would be incredibly beneficial for the area. A place where additional access to free wi-fi has also been requested. Whilst there is the library, the opening hours mean that this facility is not always available and therefore limits some people.

Having successfully engaged parents, a common topic was improving play areas for young children and families. We heard that St. Martin's Pocket Park isn't maximised as an asset for the community as maintenance was required and anti-social behaviour puts families off using the space. To follow this up, we brought partners together and funding has been identified for improvements. Parents especially wanted their children to be able to play safely.

We heard often that people in Fitton Hill felt underserved by public transport because the only bus route on the estate is a limited route that only comes every half an hour. There are other buses from the main road, but we heard that these can take 10/20 minutes to walk depending on where you live and if you are mobile.

In our learning conversations, we heard that people could name the asset that they were already involved in (usually where we had met them) but not others. Generally we found people lacked knowledge about what was available in the area. The desire for a community noticeboard was mentioned in lots of discussions as not all felt the current social media was working.

13. Ecosystem – 'grow your own'

Understanding the ecosystem of communities helps find a way to move forward in an asset-based way. With this understanding, being able to 'grow your own' new assets will help unlock the potential of these communities. Key elements of this ecosystem are:

Community group leaders and social entrepreneurs

We all found long established community-led organisations and projects. They all offer something different but fundamentally they understand what their communities need and they deliver it like no other. Yet, it is apparent that many of the social entrepreneurs involved in setting up these grass

roots organisations are exhausted. They can point to support they have had to set up, but find they lack support in keeping going or to grow that little bit bigger where they can achieve so much more. Similarly, they lack support in being able to personally move on without the organisation folding.

An opportunity exists to capture the skills and practices of these social entrepreneurs and groups so that they can be used as learning opportunities for a new generation. There is a collective need to nurture the next generation of social entrepreneurs and genuine leaders, encouraging and supporting younger people to take the lead in founding and running projects within their own communities in the future. Equally, support must exist for all stages so that they can emerge, grow and also be taken over.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure is the basic systems, facilities and services that a community needs to operate. The term 'infrastructure' often prompts thoughts of highways and sewage. Yet, the infrastructure of communities is so much more. From local businesses, to opportunities for employment, to places for children to play – we found people could easily identify the things that their community needs in order to function. Whilst we found that some of the infrastructure needed exists across all communities it was never complete.

Adopting a broad understanding of infrastructure and working to strengthen it helps to focus community development. For institutions and associations who form part of the infrastructure, this concept gives them due recognition whilst also cementing the need to support them for the whole community to thrive. Where there are gaps, acknowledging them as gaps in infrastructure gives the impetus needed to repair these quickly. People care deeply about where they live – we found that as quickly as people could name the assets that they rely on, they would propose solutions for what they felt were the gaps.

Cultures changing, whilst recognising local histories

All communities reported a sense of change in their communities. We found examples of cultures changing; be it new cultures emerging as communities become more diverse or new cultures emerging as new generations begin new traditions. Cultures can emerge in the ways that: significant life events are recognised; children are raised; people come together; and new neighbours are welcomed. Recognising local histories is important too.

Another key part of culture is feeling that you belong to the identity of a community. Albeit with some notable exceptions, we spoke to many people who knew little to nothing about the local history of the place that they live. Often, people stated they wouldn't know where to find it. In understanding the local history of a community, people can find their connections in their communities story and build a sense of belonging. It is therefore also important that local histories reflect more recent histories and the diversity of communities.

14. Reflection and analysis

Throughout the project, those delivering the project in the different areas held 'sync' meetings with each other to share findings, learn and support.

Despite the areas in Knowsley, Oldham and Salford being some distance away from each other with their own distinct identities and unique mix of assets, lots of commonalities emerged. These commonalities felt part of a bigger picture that was important to capture. As the project concluded, the project team met to review these wider findings.

The project team developed the idea of an ecosystem: the specific environment in which communities and assets exist. This led to three key findings (as described in section 13 above).

Despite coming to this conclusion, the project team still felt that something was missing and that we had not pushed our insight and learning far enough.

We met again and reflected on how the maps and the work we had done can impact community development. We explored the unique role a social housing provider might have in community development, distinct from, but complementary to that played by other organisations. Specifically, we felt that what distinguished a social housing provider from other organisations who work with communities is assets. By this, we mean assets in the traditional sense of the term: land, buildings, houses, shop units, paths, etc.

We felt that community development in a social housing provider should focus on community development of such assets, because managing physical assets is a core purpose and strength of social housing providers.

Rather than looking to create new assets, community development of assets would mean: making the most of the gifts of local people; making the most of assets owned by a social housing provider; and ensuring that the assets are connected to local people for their potential to be fulfilled. Delegating decision-making about assets to the community development team would facilitate positive responses to the agendas and priorities of local communities.

More specifically, ForHousing should work in partnership with local people to develop or create an asset in each neighbourhood, as centre or hub, with a specific purpose of being a 'bridging space' to enable diverse people to engage on issues of common interest, and to celebrate what different communities offer for wider community benefit. In addition, establishing a place that is publicly accessible for local people to meet ForHousing would make the organisation more visible in each neighbourhood.

This new approach would be and would feel different for both local people and ForHousing. Through this work, we heard how what local people see - loss of assets, opening of new assets, or opening of new assets that are inaccessible – deeply impacts how they feel about their community and their home. Given what is visible has such impact, prioritising the development of a visible asset in each locality demonstrates a new approach and starts to build the sense of newness that not all communities feel.

15. Outcomes

For an asset-based approach to be effective, the initial asset mapping project can be only the start of a long-term process by the whole of ForHousing as an organisation.

Longer-term outcomes expected from asset-based community development, well beyond the life of this initial asset mapping project, are:
- Empowered communities who actively work alongside ForHousing and other organisations to deliver projects and support that addresses need in communities.
- An understanding of the findings of other, similar projects and pieces of work and their findings.

- An improved understanding of who ForHousing's tenants and communities are and any barriers to engagement.
- Improved communication and engagement methods that support ForHousing to work alongside its tenants, including those who are currently under-represented.
- Improved representation of tenants from diverse communities in community groups.
- Improved representation from tenants from diverse communities in formal involvement groups.

The longer-term outcomes might be framed around three distinct aspects to ForHousing's relationship with local people and communities:
- What communities can do themselves: organise, take collaborative action, and spread with others. This includes agencies creating spaces and connecting local people to share their gifts to accomplish something related to an issue for which they share a passion.
- What communities and agencies can create together ('co-production'): creating spaces in which power and decision-making are genuinely shared for local people and agencies to work mutually alongside each other and to produce new social, economic and environmental solutions together.
- What communities can advise on and then expect agencies to deliver what only they can: this might involve individuals or groups getting involved to shape service development and delivery, to focus actively on 'prevention' and to hold ForHousing to account.

16. Risks and considerations

There were a number of potential challenges and interdependencies of which the project team needed to be aware. These included:
- due to the differing sizes of the localities, a different approach was required in different areas
- potential apathy within communities
- the need to manage expectation within the community and with partners
- a number of other projects and programmes that were being delivered in the various geographies and the potential for duplication
- some of the timescales for delivery took place during school holidays
- there was a need to manage differing relationships between ForHousing, partners and local communities
- ForHousing was keen that the resources and expertise in local communities are utilised
- ForHousing was exploring a digital engagement tool that uses QR codes to facilitate artificial intelligence (AI) 'conversations' about key topics via SMS and web chat. It wished to trial it as a method of increasing and diversifying tenant engagement and feedback and believed that, if the proof of concept was approved, it would play a role in supporting the delivery of this project.

These factors suggested the need for flexibility in timings as the project developed.

17. Requirements of ForHousing

This asset mapping project needs to be followed up by the 'community development' aspect of asset-based community development (ABCD).

ForHousing has stated that: "We are open to being challenged and exploring new approaches!"

The project has laid the foundations for building on community assets, improving relationships and empowering and working alongside communities and stakeholders to address need.

Asset mapping is a guide to relationship building, rather than a data collection exercise. It is a strategy to identify assets within a community, but also a process for connecting and engaging the community to unlock the talents of people to help solve problems and build a better community.

Having discovered assets within communities and having asked local people to share their gifts around issues they care about, the next step is to truly connect people with the same passions to act collectively for the common good. The strengthening or creation of such relationships within communities is essential to engender change. This means ForHousing adapting as an organisation for working with local connectors and for future proactive engagement with communities (especially with younger people and those communities where connections are weakest or non-existent).

This has implications for ForHousing as a corporate body.

Effective use of an asset map requires an organisational vehicle capable of making the journey. Crucially, this requires an organisation willing to invest time to create and sustain good relationships with local communities that are characterised by respect and trust, and that unlock the strengths and talents of local people to help solve problems and build a better community.

For the asset mapping to have substantial effect, therefore, required ForHousing to take preparatory action while the project was taking place, so that it would be in the best possible place to receive and to make best

use of the knowledge generated to truly adopt an ABCD approach, including resource allocation.

Most importantly, this approach requires ForHousing to honestly reflect on:
- who holds power (including control of resources)
- how power can be developed and shared
- how unequal power will be addressed (not least with people who are most marginalised)

This does not have to be a 'zero sum game' in which anyone 'loses', but can involve an increase in the total amount of power available to improve things.

For this project to be effective, and to manage expectations of participants and other stakeholders, ForHousing therefore needs to make a clear, explicit statement in public about how it will use the outputs from the project, and what resources have been allocated for future action, including appropriate learning and development on asset-based approaches for all staff at all levels in ForHousing and Liberty, in order to draw on the strengths and skills within local people and communities.

As part of the process, we invited ForHousing to do its own Agency Asset Profile.

The role of the institution becomes one of explicitly working for equity and justice, helping to remove barriers so that local people can become producers of their own and their community's well-being. In practice, this includes ForHousing further nurturing the connections, continuing the developing of the asset maps, and creating spaces for (and removing barriers to) community-led innovation, in which ideas can be tested and learning done, without any sense of 'failure', so that local people can become producers of their own and their community's well-being.

To do this requires partnership working and solution-based steering groups.

> **A single clear relationship with local people**
>
> To achieve the relationships with local people and communities to which ForHousing aspires, it would benefit from giving further consideration to defining what those relationships actually mean. This might be reflected in its framing and description of local people. For example, in the future,

should ForHousing corporately see people primarily as local people, citizens, tenants, customers, residents, communities or something else? Each one suggests a very different relationship from the others, including whether the primary focus is based on strengths and assets or on deficits and needs, and whether expenditure in communities is primarily seen as a cost or as investment.

Effective communications with diverse communities

Good communication is built on insight about what matters to people, how they communicate, and where they communicate.

This work gathered some insight about what matters to people but this work must continue. We connected with diverse communities by engaging members of that community with the skills to engage others. This could be built on. We also found in looking for digital assets that people connect to their community through Facebook groups and WhatsApp groups. We found that communities will use neighbourhood Facebook Groups of over 15,000 people to get messages around about road closures. We also found that communities will use WhatsApp Groups (sometimes up to 500 people) to share important health messages or to organise support for issues of shared concern.

For communities, these platforms which people use and understand are options for communicating with ForHousing. For ForHousing, these platforms are not being used effectively to help share information with those it matters to.

Seeing people as more than tenants or customers

The learning conversations did not specifically ask for views on or about relationships with ForHousing. However, whilst explaining the project to the local people we met, a common view emerged that people feel as though they are perceived by ForHousing as an income stream. Often, the first connection in this relationship happens where either ForHousing or a local person has an issue that the other needs to resolve which reinforces this belief. Asset-based approaches rely on viewing people by their strengths and talents. That in itself goes beyond tenant or customer relationship, so the whole organisation (and contractors) taking this approach will change the way people feel they are perceived. This goes alongside defining a clear, single relationship with local people, as ensuring people know they are more than tenants or customers will help them know that what they offer to ForHousing is more than just rent. Almost always, a community possesses the solution to the challenges that they face.

18. Conclusion

Some strong themes have emerged from the asset mapping project that are crucial for future development by ForHousing.

Improving the quality and speed of repairs of properties is critical. This is an issue affecting the levels of trust and respect of local people for ForHousing, and therefore its reputation. Without this core transactional relationship working well, other relationships and conversations between local people and ForHousing are difficult or stymied.

If local people were perceived in terms of their strengths, it would create a significant opportunity for ForHousing to become more effective. Asset-based engagement (renamed from community development) with local people could be a strategic function of ForHousing that identifies strategic ideas and opportunities.

ForHousing's core expertise lies in the development and management of assets. It should use this expertise to develop assets that make sense to communities. The purpose and focus of the asset-based engagement (community development) team should be about developing assets (of all types) and infrastructure that make sense to local communities, including the social entrepreneurs and genuine leaders within them. The team should be seen and treated as part of the wider ForHousing team in order to develop new and existing assets within communities.

Were asset-based engagement (community development) to become key within the consistent regeneration of neighbourhoods, the reputation of ForHousing would soar amongst local people.

19. Recommendations

In order to relate to communities most effectively, and to deliver on what matters to them, our recommendations to ForHousing (within the themes above) are:

General:

1. Honestly reflect on who holds **power** (including control of resources), how power can be developed and shared, and how unequal power will be addressed - not least with people who are most marginalised.

2. Start with and be receptive to the **agendas and priorities** of local communities – what matters to them, in all their diversity.

3. Keep **asset maps** evolving and consistently updated.

4. Develop all staff at all levels in ForHousing and Liberty, in order to draw on the **strengths and skills** within local people and communities using asset-based techniques.

5. Nurture the next generation of **social entrepreneurs and genuine leaders**, to succeed the current generation and what they have created.

6. Invest time to create and sustain good **relationships** with local communities that are characterised by respect and trust, and that unlock the strengths and talents of local people to help solve problems and build a better community.

7. Adapt as an organisation for future engagement and working with **local connectors**.

8. Understand the ongoing changes in local demographics and cultures, and prioritise **proactive engagement** with younger people and those parts of communities where connections are weakest or non-existent (including those new communities as they emerge), where they feel most comfortable.

9. Review and clarify the purpose and priorities of **asset-based engagement** (community development), to be distinct from that by other organisations, and with delegated decision-making to respond to the agendas and priorities of local communities.

10. Create spaces for (and remove barriers to) **community-led innovation**, in which ideas can be tested and learning done, without any sense of 'failure', so that local people can become producers of their own and their community's well-being.

11. Work in partnership with local people to develop or create an **asset in each neighbourhood**, as centre or hub, with a specific purpose of being a '**bridging space**' to enable diverse people to engage on issues of common interest, and to celebrate what different communities offer for wider community benefit.

12. Make ForHousing visible in each neighbourhood by establishing **a place that is publicly accessible** for local people to meet ForHousing.

13. Develop a long-term vision for the use of **commercial assets** within neighbourhoods for local independent businesses that reflect community wants and needs.

14. Develop **partnership working** with other landlords and other key agencies, and share responsibility for what is planned and happens.

15. Develop **communications** to reflect on what local people actually care about, using relevant media (not just digital) and languages used within communities.

16. Make a clear, explicit **statement in public** about how ForHousing will use the outputs from the project, and what resources have been allocated for future action.

Community / site specific:

Our local recommendations to ForHousing are to work with local people and partner organisations to:

Eccles:

17. Promote local healthy **food provision** that reflects the diverse communities and cultures of Eccles.

Irlam and Cadishead:

18. Build on local community spirit to better engage and support **people who experience loneliness**.

Little Hulton and Walkden:

19. Use commercial assets to **reduce centralisation** and to benefit from the local entrepreneurial spirit.

Swinton and Clifton:

20. Add **texture** to the area by building on local pride and identity, through activities such as firework displays, poppies on lamp posts and Christmas lights.

Fitton Hill:

21. Engage with and create provision for the development of **skills and learning** of local young people towards high-quality employment opportunities.

Stockbridge Village:

22. Allocate budgets for **public space-based improvements** (such as bins at bus stops, seats for older people, CCTV in the shopping centre) and develop partnerships to ensure the delivery of **non-sports-based provision** for young people.

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Appendix 1

Equality impact assessments

- Fitton Hill (Oldham)

- Salford

- Stockbridge Village (Knowsley)

Equality Impact Assessment

The aim of an equality impact assessment (EIA) is to consider the equality implications of your policy, practice, function or service on different groups of staff and students, and consider if there are ways to proactively advance equality.

Any equality impact assessment should first consider the organisation's Equity and Diversity Policy.

1. **Project details**	
Name of the policy, practice, service or function being assessed	Asset Mapping – ForHousing
Locality	• Fitton Hill
A brief overview of its aims and objectives	To engage with communities in the defined localities in order to create Asset Maps for the funding organisation – ForHousing – to them use to inform asset-based community development approaches.
Is it new or existing?	New
Who has been involved in completing the EIA?	Rebecca Chadwick, Nayan Joshi
Date of completion	11 August, 2023

2. **Evidence Gathering and Engagement**	
What **evidence** has been used for this assessment?	• Census 2021 data • ForHousing Customer Satisfaction Report • ForHousing Stock Breakdown • Oldham South District Profile
Who have you **engaged and consulted with** as part of the assessment?	

3. **Impact on Different Groups**	
Specific group to consider	Potential impact on this group, and actions taken to mitigate impact and advance equality, diversity and inclusion.
Age: a person of a particular age group	Oldham South's District age group distribution reflects the Oldham averages with 25% of the population making up the 0-17 year old age group, 59% making up 18 – 64 year olds and 15% being 65+. Oldham South has the third highest number of those aged 65+ within the borough. Oldham South has the second lowest number of 0-17 year olds within the borough. In its tenant satisfaction report, ForHousing notes that the younger the tenant, the less satisfied they tend to be.

	Reaching a diversity of age groups in this project is important to ensure an asset map that truly reflects the whole community. Engaging younger tenants is important given their dissatisfaction with ForHousing. Actions might include: • Asking associations that attract older people if we could host a learning event for them • Offering ways to share learning digitally
Caring Responsibilities: a carer spends a significant proportion of their time providing unpaid support to a relative, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems	Census data suggests that 9.8% of Oldham residents (aged five years and over) provide unpaid care each week. This is not broken down further by community. Effort must be made to engage with carers specifically within all communities. Actions might include: • Exploring assets which might be particularly friendly to carers • Understanding that being a carer requires planning and last-minute cancellations
Disability: a disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment (including severe disfigurement and progressive conditions) that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, without measures to treat or correct it, or if that effect is likely to recur	Census data suggests that 19.9% of people in Oldham are disabled under the Equality Act. It is important to remember that being an accessible project means being inclusive to all people and responsive to the needs of everyone.

	Actions to make the project accessible to all might include: • Ensuring learning conversations happen in accessible venues (access for wheelchair users, quiet spaces) • Ensuring nobody is under pressure to write if they are not able • Including breaks within any workshops • Have learning activities or conversations easily chunked up • Request accessibility feedback and amend throughout Ensuring the final asset map reflects disabled people might include: • Identifying associations specific to disabled people • Identifying assets and institutions that particularly attract or particularly work for disabled people
Gender Reassignment: a transsexual person is someone who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex	Census data focussing on gender has not been released for Oldham. However, the views of trans people aim to be sought throughout the project. Action might include: • Choosing venues for learning conversations that have gender-neutral toilets • Engaging with Trans inclusive associations e.g. Fitton Hill Youth Club Reflecting with the Trans community as to which spaces and assets feel especially safe or inclusive towards Trans people

Marriage and Civil Partnership: people who are married or in a civil partnership	Not applicable
Pregnancy and Maternity: this includes breast-feeding	In looking for assets in the community, it is worth exploring what assets exist particularly to families who are expecting a new arrival. This might be: 1. Associations or institutions for people who are pregnant
Race: this includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins	According to the 2021 Census, the population by race in Oldham is: • White – 68.1% (164,870 people) • Black – 3.4% (8,231 people) • Asian – 24.6% (59,556 people) • Mixed – 2.5% (6,052 people) • Other – 1.4% (3,389 people) Ethnicity varies across the four distinct geographical areas that are to be asset mapped. Reaching these communities might include: • Finding respected local connectors from within the communities • Exploring how race is reflected in the culture and story of the community – culture and stories being an asset
Religion or Belief: religion means any religion with a clear structure and belief system (including a lack of religion); belief means any religious or philosophical belief (including a lack of belief), which is a weighty	According to the 2021 Census, faith populations were: • Christian – 44.9% (108,703 people) • Muslim – 24.4% (59,072 people) • Jewish – 0.1% (242 people)

and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour; it does not include any political belief	• Hindu - 0.5% (1,210 people) • Buddhist – 0.2% (484 people) • Sikh – 0.1% (242 people) Within asset mapping, religion might impact on a community's associations, institutions and culture. This might be: • An association in which local people are joined together based on a shared interest of religion • Institutions that are popular with members of a particular religious community • How religion impacts the exchanges which occur between local people, exchanges being an asset. • How religion impacts the culture of a community.
Sex: male or female	Trying to reach an equal number of male and female members of the community is important to this project. Especially where sex intersects with other equality characteristics to ensure men and women of all communities are represented. It is also important that the map highlights how sex impacts experiences of communities. This might be: • Highlighting assets which particularly work for males or females • Exploring if experiences of some assets are different based on sex, e.g. experiences of parks at night time.

Sexual Orientation: sexual orientation towards people of the same sex, people of the opposite sex, or people of either sex	Ensuring the final map reflects where is felt to be safe spaces for LGB+ people is important. This might be: • Identifying religious institutions which conduct same sex marriages • Identifying if any private institutions are particularly popular with LGB+ people.
Socio-economic Group: occupation; employment status; relative access to financial, educational, social, and health resources	Involvement in this project should not incur any cost to participants. The asset map should also reflect the experiences of all members of the community regardless of socio-economic background. Actions might include: • Meeting people where they are – not expecting anyone to travel • Always arranging to call people – not assuming people have credit to • Understanding that wi-fi, and internet requiring apps e.g. WhatsApp and social media are not something everyone has access to • Reflecting on how class impacts the assets which are accessible to communities. For example, are certain assets less welcoming to people dependent upon their socio-economic group. • Considering the affordability of assets that require some form of payment.

4. **Action Planning**		
Issue Identified	**Planned Action**	**Lead and Timeframe**
Ensuring the learning conversations are accessible to the characteristics listed above.	• Identifying respected local connectors with equality in mind. • Creating an equality based approach, then seeking learning conversations with diverse members of the four geographical communities. • Hosting learning conversations in communities as far as possible. • Using inclusive methods in learning conversations and training connectors to do the same.	• Local connectors – NJ and RC • Equality based approach – NJ and RC • Location of learning conversations – NJ and RC • Methods of learning conversations – NJ and RC
Ensuring the final outputs reflect the communities above.	• Making sure the learning conversations spark debate around who assets are for by planning what is to be discussed. • Reviewing outputs with equalities in mind and amending as necessary.	• Learning conversations – NJ and RC • Reviewing outputs – CD • Making amendments based on CD review – LE/RC/JJ/KS

5. **Monitoring and Review**
How will you monitor the impact of your project once it has been put into effect?
Project review, including with local steering group.
Sign off from Project Manager: Chris Dabbs
Review Date: monthly

Equality Impact Assessment

The aim of an equality impact assessment (EIA) is to consider the equality implications of your policy, practice, function or service on different groups of staff and students, and consider if there are ways to proactively advance equality.

Any equality impact assessment should first consider the organisation's Equity and Diversity Policy.

• **Project details**	
Name of the policy, practice, service or function being assessed	Asset Mapping – ForHousing
Locality	• Eccles • Irlam and Cadishead • Little Hulton and Walkden • Swinton and Clifton
A brief overview of its aims and objectives	To engage with communities in the defined localities in order to create Asset Maps for the funding organisation – ForHousing – to them use to inform asset-based community development approaches.
Is it new or existing?	New
Who has been involved in completing the EIA?	Laura Edwards
Date of completion	11 August, 2023

• Evidence Gathering and Engagement	
What **evidence** has been used for this assessment?	• Census 2021 data • ForHousing Customer Satisfaction Report • ForHousing Stock Breakdown • ForHousing
Who have you **engaged and consulted with** as part of the assessment?	-

• Impact on Different Groups	
Specific group to consider	Potential impact on this group, and actions taken to mitigate impact and advance equality, diversity and inclusion.
Age: a person of a particular age group	Salford as a whole has a lower than average proportion of residents aged 65+ and a higher than average proportion of residents aged 16-65, second only to Manchester across Greater Manchester. However, Salford also has the second lowest proportion of residents aged 15 years and under than the rest of Greater Manchester. In its tenant satisfaction report, ForHousing notes that the older the tenant, the more satisfied they tend to be. Reaching a diversity of age groups in this project is important to ensure an asset map that truly reflects the whole community. Engaging younger tenants is important given their dissatisfaction with ForHousing.

	Actions might include: • Asking associations that attract older people if we could host a learning event for them • Offering ways to share learning digitally
Caring Responsibilities: a carer spends a significant proportion of their time providing unpaid support to a relative, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems	Census data suggests that 9.8% of people in Salford provide unpaid care. This is not broken down further by community. Effort must be made to engage with carers specifically within all communities. Actions might include: • Visiting associations for carers (e.g. Carers Together, Irlam or Humphrey Booth Centre, Swinton) • Understanding that being a carer requires planning and last-minute cancellations • Exploring assets which might be particularly friendly to carers
Disability: a disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment (including severe disfigurement and progressive conditions) that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, without measures to treat or correct it, or if that effect is likely to recur	Census data suggests that 21.1% of people in Salford are disabled under the Equality Act. It is important to remember that being an accessible project means being inclusive to all people and responsive to the needs of everyone. Actions to make the project accessible to all might include: • Ensuring learning conversations happen in accessible venues (access for wheelchair users, quiet spaces)

	• Ensuring nobody is under pressure to write if they are not able • Including breaks within any workshops • Have learning activities or conversations easily chunked up • Request accessibility feedback and amend throughout Ensuring the final asset map reflects disabled people might include: • Identifying associations specific to disabled people • Identifying assets and institutions that particularly attract or particularly work for disabled people
Gender Reassignment: a transsexual person is someone who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex	Census data suggests that between 0.30% and 1.01% of the communities included in this project are Trans. Action might include: • Choosing venues for learning conversations that have gender-neutral toilets • Engaging with Trans inclusive associations e.g. Salford LGBT Youth Groups (Little Hulton, Swinton, and Eccles), Irlam and Cadishead Pride • Reflecting with the Trans community as to which spaces and assets feel especially safe or inclusive towards Trans people
Marriage and Civil Partnership: people who are married or in a civil partnership	Not applicable
Pregnancy and Maternity: this includes breast-feeding	In looking for assets in the community, it is worth exploring what assets exist particularly to families who are expecting a new arrival.

	This might be: • Associations or institutions for people who are pregnant • Identifying if institutions are BOOBS approved (breastfeeding friendly places in Salford and Bury)
Race: this includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins	According to the 2021 Census, the population by race was: • White – 82.3% (222,248 people) • Black – 6.1% (16,473 people) • Asian – 5.5% (14,938 people) • Mixed – 3.1% (8,501 people) • Other – 2.9% (7,762 people) Ethnicity varies across the four distinct geographical areas that are to be asset mapped. Reaching these communities might include: • Finding respected local connectors from within the communities • Working to identify • Exploring how race is reflected in the culture and story of the community – culture and stories being an asset
Religion or Belief: religion means any religion with a clear structure and belief system (including a lack of religion); belief means any religious or philosophical belief (including a lack of belief), which is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour; it does not include any political belief	According to the 2021 Census, faith populations were: • Christian – 47.7% (128,785 people) • Muslim – 5.0% (13,542 people) • Jewish - 3.8% (10,373 people) • Hindu - 0.8% (2,113 people) • Buddhist – 0.4% (1,022 people)

	• Sikh – 0.3% (728 people) Within asset mapping, religion might impact on a community's associations, institutions and culture. This might be: • An association in which local people are joined together based on a shared interest of religion • Institutions that are popular with members of a particular religious community • How religion impacts the exchanges which occur between local people, exchanges being an asset. • How religion impacts the culture of a community.
Sex: male or female	Trying to reach an equal number of male and female members of the community is important to this project. Especially where sex intersects with other equality characteristics to ensure men and women of all communities are represented. It is also important that the map highlights how sex impacts experiences of communities. This might be: • Highlighting assets which particularly work for males or females • Exploring if experiences of some assets are different based on sex, e.g. experiences of parks at night time.
Sexual Orientation: sexual orientation towards people of the same sex, people of the opposite sex, or people of either sex	Ensuring the final map reflects where is felt to be safe spaces for LGB+ people is important.

	This might be: • Identifying religious institutions which conduct same sex marriages e.g. Walkden Unitarian Church. • Identifying if any private institutions are particularly popular with LGB+ people.
Socio-economic Group: occupation; employment status; relative access to financial, educational, social, and health resources	Involvement in this project should not incur any cost to participants. The asset map should also reflect the experiences of all members of the community regardless of socio-economic background. Actions might include: • Meeting people where they are – not expecting anyone to travel • Always arranging to call people – not assuming people have credit to • Understanding that WiFi, and internet requiring apps e.g. WhatsApp and social media are not something everyone has access to • Reflecting on how class impacts the assets which are accessible to communities. For example, are certain assets less welcoming to people dependent upon their socio-economic group. • Considering the affordability of assets that require some form of payment.

• Action Planning		
Issue Identified	**Planned Action**	**Lead and Timeframe**
Ensuring the learning conversations are accessible to the characteristics listed above.	• Identifying respected local connectors with equality in mind. • Creating an equality based approach, then seeking learning conversations with diverse members of the four geographical communities. • Hosting learning conversations in communities as far as possible. • Using inclusive methods in learning conversations and training connectors to do the same.	• Local connectors – LE • Equality based approach – LE • Location of learning conversations – LE • Methods of learning conversations – LE
Ensuring the final outputs reflect the communities above.	• Making sure the learning conversations spark debate around who assets are for by planning what is to be discussed. • Reviewing outputs with equalities in mind and amending as necessary.	• Learning conversations – LE • Reviewing outputs – CD • Making amendments based on CD review - LE

• Monitoring and Review
How will you monitor the impact of your project once it has been put into effect?
Project review, including with local steering group.
Sign off from Project Manager: Chris Dabbs
Review Date: monthly

Equality Impact Assessment

The aim of an equality impact assessment (EIA) is to consider the equality implications of your policy, practice, function or service on different groups of staff and students, and consider if there are ways to proactively advance equality.

Any equality impact assessment should first consider the organisation's Equity and Diversity Policy.

2. Project details	
Name of the policy, practice, service or function being assessed	Asset Mapping – ForHousing
Locality	Stockbridge Village, Knowsley
A brief overview of its aims and objectives	To engage with communities in the defined localities in order to create Asset Maps for the funding organisation – ForHousing – to them use to inform asset-based community development approaches.
Is it new or existing?	New
Who has been involved in completing the EIA?	Kate Stewart
Date of completion	12th September 2023

3. Evidence Gathering and Engagement	
What **evidence** has been used for this assessment?	- Census 2021 data - ForHousing Customer Satisfaction Report - ForHousing Stock Breakdown - ForHousing
Who have you **engaged and consulted with** as part of the assessment?	Understanding our Communities Stockbridge Village Steering Group

4. Impact on Different Groups

Specific group to consider	Potential impact on this group, and actions taken to mitigate impact and advance equality, diversity and inclusion
Age: a person of a particular age group	25.9% of the Stockbridge Village population is aged 0-19 years – this is higher than both the rest of Knowsley and nationally. However, at 16.9%, Stockbridge has a lower percentage of people aged over 65 years than both Knowsley and nationally. In its tenant satisfaction report, ForHousing comments that younger tenants are typically less satisfied than older residents Actions for this project may include: • Approaching organisations and attended events that are targeted at specific age groups • Ensuring that the conversation happens in a number of formats including digitally
Caring Responsibilities: a carer spends a significant proportion of their time providing unpaid support to a relative, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems	In the most recent Census 1,101 Stockbridge residents provide unpaid care, with 487 residents stating that they provide 50+ hours per week of unpaid care. This is the second highest in Knowsley. There is no further breakdown of this by age or other characteristics. It must also be remembered that many informal carers will not identify themselves as such.

	Actions for this project may include: • Understanding that being a carer requires planning and last-minute cancellations • Exploring assets which may be particularly friendly to carers
Disability: a disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment (including severe disfigurement and progressive conditions) that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, without measures to treat or correct it, or if that effect is likely to recur	A quarter of Stockbridge residents consider themselves to be disabled under the Equality Act (17.3% nationally) with an additional 10.43% describing their health as bad or very bad. (5.2% is national figure). Within ForHousing's data on tenants the figure is 2.09% with 2 individuals (0.11%) identifying as being hearing impaired. Correspondingly life expectancy is significantly lower in Stockbridge Village than the national average - 77.1 years for women (83.2 years nationally) and 72.6 years for men (79.5 years nationally). Overall, residents in Stockbridge describe their health as being worse than national averages. Health data shows us that there is higher prevalence of all cancers (especially lung cancer), heart disease and respiratory diseases. It is important to remember that being an accessible project means being inclusive to all people and responsive to the needs of everyone. Actions to make the project accessible to all might include:

	• Ensuring learning conversations happen in accessible venues (access for wheelchair users, quiet spaces) • Ensuring nobody is under pressure to write if they are not able to • Including breaks within any workshops • Have learning activities or conversations easily chunked up • Request accessibility feedback and amend throughout Ensuring the final asset map reflects disabled people might include: • Identifying associations specific to disabled people • Identifying assets and institutions that particularly attract or particularly work for disabled people
Gender Reassignment: a transsexual person is someone who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex	Census data on this is inconclusive and similarly this is not data that ForHousing currently collect. Census data suggests that 0.14% of the Stockbridge Village population are Trans. Action might include: • Choosing venues for learning conversations that have gender-neutral toilets • Reflecting with the Trans community as to which spaces and assets feel especially safe or inclusive towards Trans people
Marriage and Civil Partnership: people who are married or in a civil partnership	30.7% of Stockbridge residents are married or in a civil partnership. (44.7% is the national figure)

	This characteristic does not impact on the work of the project,
Pregnancy and Maternity: this includes breast-feeding	In looking for assets in the community, it is worth exploring what assets exist particularly to families who are expecting a new arrival. This might be: • Associations or institutions for people who are pregnant • Groups focused on delivering for parents with young children

Race: this includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins	Since the 2011 Census, there has been an increase of 81% in the number of Knowsley residents from Asian, Black, Mixed or other ethnic groups. Stockbridge has the third lowest proportion (94.4%) of residents from White ethnic groups within the borough. ForHousing's tenant profile shows 95.48% for this group.
	
	According to the 2021 Census, the population of Stockbridge Village was:
	    • 1.4% are from Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh Backgrounds. (ForHousing 0.28%)
	    • 1.9% are from Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups.
	    • 1.7% are from Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African ethnic groups.
	    • 0.6% are from Other ethnic groups.
	
	Our early discussions with connectors identified that Stockbridge has significant Nigerian communities. In addition, Stockbridge has the largest number of Polish

	residents in Knowsley – FH data shows 63 or 3.56% of tenants citing Polish as their first language. Reaching these communities might include: • Finding respected local connectors from within the communities • Exploring how race is reflected in the culture and story of the community – culture and stories being an asset
Religion or Belief: religion means any religion with a clear structure and belief system (including a lack of religion); belief means any religious or philosophical belief (including a lack of belief), which is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour; it does not include any political belief	The 2021 Census shows the following faith populations: • Christian – 66.9% (FH tenants 60.37%) • No religion – 25.7% (FH tenants 28.21%) • Muslim – 0.6% (FH tenants 0.34%) • Jewish - 0.1% (FH tenants 0.06%) • Hindu - 0.1% (FH tenants 0.06%) • Buddhist – 0.3% (FH tenants 0.11%) • Not answered/other – 6% (FH tenants 10.86%) Within asset mapping, religion may impact on a community's associations, institutions and culture. This might be: • An association in which local people are joined together based on a shared interest of religion • Institutions that are popular with members of a particular religious community • How religion impacts the exchanges which occur between local people, exchanges being an asset. • How religion impacts the culture of a community.

Sex: male or female	Trying to reach an equal number of male and female members of the community is important to this project. Especially where sex intersects with other equality characteristics to ensure men and women of all communities are represented. It is also important that the map highlights how gender impacts experiences of communities. This might be: • Highlighting assets which particularly work for males or females • Exploring if experiences of some assets are different based on sex, e.g. experiences of parks at night time.
Sexual Orientation: sexual orientation towards people of the same sex, people of the opposite sex, or people of either sex	2021 Census data identifies; • 89.79% of those over 16 in Stockbridge Village as Straight or Heterosexual • 1.95% as gay or lesbian • 1.06% as bisexual • 0.2% as other • 7% chose not to answer Ensuring these communities are included in our asset mapping may include: • Identifying if any private institutions are particularly popular with LGBTQ+ people
Socio-economic Group: occupation; employment status; relative access to financial, educational, social, and health resources	Stockbridge is among the 20% most deprived wards nationally based on the indices of multiple deprivation (IMD) from 2019.

	42.2% of children in Stockbridge experience child poverty (17.1% nationally), and 47.7% of older people experience poverty (14.2% nationally).
	Involvement in this project should not incur any cost to participants. The asset map should also reflect the experiences of all members of the community regardless of socio-economic background.
	Actions might include:
	• Meeting people where they are – not expecting anyone to travel
	• Always arranging to call people – not assuming people have credit to call us
	• Understanding that WiFi, and internet requiring apps e.g. WhatsApp and social media are not something everyone has access to
	• Considering the affordability of assets that require some form of payment.

5. Action Planning		
Issue Identified	**Planned Action**	**Lead and Timeframe**
Ensuring the learning conversations are accessible to the characteristics listed above.	• Identifying respected local connectors with equality in mind. • Creating an equality-based approach, then seeking learning conversations with diverse members of the community • Hosting learning conversations in community settings • Using inclusive methods in learning conversations	KS within the time of the project
Ensuring the final outputs reflect the communities above.	• Making sure the learning conversations spark debate around who assets are for by planning what is to be discussed. • Reviewing outputs with equalities in mind and amending as necessary.	KS within the time of the project
Documenting any groups within the characteristics listed above that have remained hard to engage with proportionate to their representation in the neighbourhood	• Reviewing outputs with equalities in mind and documenting shortfalls to advise the client of future action	KS within the time of the project
6. Monitoring and Review		
How will you monitor the impact of your project once it has been put into effect?		
Project review, including with local steering group and ForHousing staff.		
Sign off from Project Manager: Chris Dabbs		
Review Date: tbc		

Appendix 2

Questions guide for 'learning conversations'

Associations	• Can you think of any groups you've heard of or participated in? • Are there any church or religious organisations you're involved with? • Are there other ways that people get together in your community in an informal way? • What do you care so much about that you are willing to do something about it?
Institutions	• Where are the places in our community where people gather or could gather if a welcome was offered? • Which business round here are you a customer of? What do you like about them? • What makes your community a great place to live? • What do you do? What would you like to do more of? • Do you have any ideas or skills that you could turn into a business or self-employment? • Who are the artists and creative people in this area? • What would have to happen here to make people's lives feel fuller? • If you were in charge of your community, what ideas would you have to make it an even better place to live? • What would you recommend to someone who is new to the area?
Physical Environment	• What natural or physical resources do people enjoy in this area? It might be fields, parks, walkways, or waterways.
Digital Space	• Are you a member of any online groups that connect people in your community?
Neighbourhood Economy	• Where do we spend money that stays in the community? • What trades are done in the community that might otherwise cost? For example, do neighbours help each other out with gardening or babysitting?

Culture	- What do people in this neighbourhood create together? - How does our neighbourhood show that we care about each other? - What are the reasons that have gotten neighbours together? - How do we join each other in dealing with limits, tragedy, and death? - How do families spend time together round here? - When do children tend to finish education? - How do you celebrate new life and babies being born? - How do you welcome new people? Do you? - Are there any ways in which culture and differences are celebrated in this community? - What is the history of this town?