



RSA

Projects

**Citizen Power
in Peterborough:
one year on**

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July 2011

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The **RSA** in
partnership with



“Policymakers should read this report and learn from RSA’s Citizen Power work in Peterborough: its focus on mobilising people to work together and support themselves is bold and impressive”

David Halpern, Head of Behaviour Insight Team, Number 10 Policy Unit

The Citizen Power partnership

According to the National Office of Statistics, Peterborough’s population in mid 2009 stood at 171,500 people. Peterborough has an ethnically diverse population and this continues to change disproportionately compared to the picture nationally.¹

Peterborough City Council is a unitary authority providing all local government services for the city and surrounding areas. Working through the local strategic partnership – the Greater Peterborough Partnership (GPP) – its vision is of Peterborough as the urban centre of a thriving sub-regional community of villages and market towns and as a healthy, safe and exciting place to live, work and visit, famous as the Environmental Capital of the UK. GPP is developing a Single Delivery Plan: a five year plan to transform public services, within which the Citizen Power programme will be embedded as a vehicle for delivering change with residents.

The RSA is an enlightenment organisation committed to finding

innovative practical solutions to today’s social challenges. Through its ideas, research and 27,000-strong Fellowship it seeks to understand and enhance human capability so we can close the gap between today’s reality and people’s hopes for a better world. Citizen Power is one of the RSA’s most ambitious programmes, all of which put enlightened thinking to work in practical ways. By researching, designing and testing new social models, RSA projects aim to encourage a more inventive, resourceful and fulfilled society.

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

Citizen Power Peterborough was launched in 2010 and is a partnership

between a pioneering think tank (RSA), an ambitious local authority (Peterborough City Council) and an influential arts body (Arts Council England). It represents a new approach to exploring how the renewal of civic activism and community action might improve attachment and networks between people, build local participation and cultivate public service innovation.

1. Quoted in *Safer Peterborough Partnership Adult Drug Needs Assessment 2010/11*, Safer Peterborough 2011.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to Peterborough City Council and Arts Council England, whose investment in local citizen-led change and social innovation has made the Citizen Power programme possible.

Thanks also to those organisations who have provided valuable support for the programme, including the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, the Tudor Trust, the Department for Communities and Local Government, and Cross Keys Homes.

Thanks to the Citizen Power team and RSA staff and Fellows, whose initiative and commitment underpin the Citizen Power programme.

Most importantly, thanks to those individuals, groups and organisations who are leading the citizen power transformation on the ground in Peterborough.

Foreword

As well as being a great place to live, work or visit, Peterborough faces some tough choices in the coming years.

Peterborough City Council must rise to the challenge of reduced public spending, while continuing to provide a wide range of well regarded services to those that live in the Peterborough area. In common with other cities, we must tackle many entrenched problems, from anti-social behaviour to increasing levels of obesity, at the same time as rising to newer challenges such as climate change and the increased pressures on social care.

But we do have options. We could provide limited services, become inward looking and risk losing confidence in our ideals while we wait for business to ‘return to normal’ again. Or, we could try to do things very differently; bring new thinking and sources of funding to the city as we look to work more closely with our communities and the individuals living within them.

We have decided to play to our strengths and chosen the latter. We have

developed a five-year strategy – the Single Delivery Plan – to help us respond to the challenges ahead. This will have clear priorities for action, embrace innovation and tackle the root causes of some of our main issues. Working in partnership will give us a much stronger chance of success.

Citizen Power speaks to all of these elements. It brings new thinking and ways of working and is focused on permanent culture change. By building stronger partnerships with local people, the aim is to help them solve the issues that they care about in their own neighbourhoods.

As a local authority we must change too. If we are to help people to use Citizen Power to successfully tackle the issues that affect them, then we need to think and act differently too.

This was the challenge the RSA set us. How do we enable people to do more, giving them the skills and resources to act? A year in and we are not just beginning to answer some of these questions, but we are also

placing Citizen Power at the heart of how we carry out the business of local government.

We welcome the opportunity this report provides to look at our successes and share our long-term aims more widely. For us personally however, this is about long-term change in the culture of our city and about civic pride. We believe that even though times are hard for many people, we were right to embrace new thinking and seek new ways of engaging local people. We hope that in a short space of time, other cities will look to Peterborough as a shining example of how ordinary people were able to embrace ‘citizen power’ and have a much bigger say in the running of their city. A very bold ambition for any local authority.

Gillian Beasley, Chief Executive,
Peterborough City Council

Marco Cereste, Leader of the
Council, Peterborough City Council

“Citizen Power is one of the best projects on civic renewal to have emerged in recent years. Unlike a lot of think tank work, Citizen Power is creating change rather than only talking about it”

Peter John, Professor of Governance and Co-Director of Institute for Political and Economic Governance, University of Manchester

Citizen Power

Public’s help needed to stop street boozier

Police are urging Peterborough residents to help them tackle a chronic street boozier they have branded a “persistent public menace”.

[A local PC] said: “... We have done all we can to get him away from this damaging behaviour. We have tried to put him onto alcohol treatment programmes, we have found him somewhere to live and worked with Peterborough Streets to find a solution but nothing has worked.

“We need the public to let us know what he is doing. If we could get readers’ opinions on how he should be dealt with we would be happy to hear from members of the public as to how they feel he should be treated.”

Peterborough Evening Telegraph,
21 June 2011

This extract is from a news story that appeared in Peterborough’s *Evening Telegraph* in late June 2011. The local

police and other agencies, having run out of options, turned to Peterborough residents for local intelligence about the man’s movements and their views on what should be done. Interventions – involving health, housing and criminal justice services – have not worked. The £1 litre bottles of cider do not help. The cost of responding to the string of complaints to police, the 46 calls for ambulances that have been made in the last year by concerned members of the public, the failed accommodation and treatment must run into thousands of pounds.

So the 25-year-old man – a father, homeless person and public nuisance, who appears to suffer from chronic alcohol addiction and mental health problems – has his name and picture carried on the front page of his local paper. This approach to public engagement raises serious ethical concerns; not least of which is the potential additional risks

that this young man could now face. His story also throws into sharp relief some of the broader issues that inform the Citizen Power programme; it raises important and difficult questions about the limits of public services and citizens’ role in responding to the more intractable and major challenges facing our communities.

The online discussion that followed the article ranged from the cruel to the compassionate, interspersed with ideas for practical action. There was outrage that taxpayers money was being spent on services to respond to this young man’s needs, and outrage that the police have asked local people for help when, as one person put it, ‘It is not the job of the public to get involved’.

The Citizen Power programme aims to instigate a change in culture and behaviour so that Peterborough residents see it as their job to get involved, understand that the local

state and services cannot go it alone, and take an active part in civic life. Whether tackling anti-social behaviour or substance abuse, encouraging greener habits or participation in schools, or strengthening the city's cultural life, Citizen Power is working to increase the capacity of Peterborough residents to play a bigger part in shaping the future of their services, city and neighbourhoods.

Citizen Power has leveraged in nearly
£700,000
to Peterborough

Mid-project, this report takes stock of progress to date; it is not intended to be a formal review. It aims to summarise the activity that has taken place, highlight some of the challenges that the programme has encountered and outline its next steps. It is based on the programme's written outputs to date and a series of discussions with some of the key people involved.

Since 2010 Citizen Power has been a working partnership between a pioneering think tank (RSA), an ambitious local authority (Peterborough City Council) and an influential national arts body (Arts Council). It represents one of the most ambitious and complex projects in the RSA's 257-year history, aiming not just to be transformative for Peterborough but to develop evidence and models that can be replicated elsewhere.

The RSA is committed to finding innovative practical solutions to today's social challenges with an emphasis on understanding and enhancing human capability, in order to close the gap between today's reality and people's hopes for a better world. The Citizen Power programme provides an exciting opportunity to take some of the RSA's best ideas and projects and apply them all in one city.

There is a range of different ways for local government to respond to the difficulties of meeting the immediate

needs of people and tackling longer-term threats such as climate change at a time of austerity. Peterborough City Council has opted for a strategy that sets clear priorities, emphasises innovation, seeks to tackle the root causes of the city's problems and facilitates partnership working.

Underpinning all of this is a commitment to using the city's resources more efficiently and effectively. In focusing on the responsibility of the citizens to play their part and the state's role in enabling them to do so, the Citizen Power programme seeks to unlock the hidden wealth of citizens' capabilities and commitment to help create a better city. The programme includes six strands of work; all addressing priorities identified by the local authority and Peterborough residents:

- Arts and Social Change
- ChangeMakers
- Civic Commons
- Peterborough Curriculum
- Sustainable Citizenship
- Recovery Capital

These strands represent a work in progress. One year into the programme, much of the focus has been on building trust and partnerships in difficult social and economic conditions. As well as the practical action set out here, one of its aims has been to generate debate and discussion, leveraging in new funds and acting as a catalyst for change on the ground.

The programme – which continues to the summer of 2012 – will have cost Peterborough City Council and the Arts Council £520,000. Citizen Power has:

- Leveraged in over £700,000 to Peterborough;
- Involved over 500 people;
- Generated over 5000 web hits between January and June 2011; and
- Published nine major outputs (including this one).

This report summarises each of the programme's separate strands. It then outlines overall progress, highlighting work that is taking place to embed Citizen Power in Peterborough's structures and culture and some of the challenges and action ahead.



Arts and Social Change

“I’m pleased to have shared my story and delighted to have learned from other people’s stories. It would be so good if more people could share their Peterborough. It’s been so reassuring to meet people who want to listen and find out about each other’s lives. I take away feelings of optimism and support. The future will be better than I thought”

‘Take Me To’ participant

The RSA’s Arts and Society work seeks to develop a stronger account of the role the arts can play in improving social outcomes. A flourishing arts community is good for people – giving us access to creative experiences and stretching our imaginations – and good for local economies. The arts can also play an important role in shaping the identity and feel of a place, in bringing people together and in strengthening community participation.

Although improved by the creation of Vivacity in 2010 – a charity which manages the city’s most popular culture and leisure facilities – Peterborough’s arts infrastructure is weak. Levels of arts participation are below the national average and numbers of funding applications are low. As Peterborough seeks to strengthen its sense of identity and people’s pride in the city, as it works to enable people to play a more active role in civic life and in meeting the challenges

it faces, it needs to further develop its arts and cultural community.

Vivacity has already made a positive impact; not least through its engagement with local artists, some of whom have been involved in planning this year’s Peterborough Festival. Since 2010 Citizen Power has been working with arts organisations – including Vivacity – practitioners, local services and citizens, increasing people’s sense of belonging and civic pride and bringing new creative solutions to old problems. It is helping to build social and cultural capital, strengthening Peterborough’s arts communities and enhancing what they can offer to residents, visitors and the local economy.

Creative Gatherings

Since mid-2010 Citizen Power has hosted five Creative Gatherings attended by 139 people in total and facilitated by The Map Consortium. Each Creative



Experiments in Place Making

Local artists have been working with neighbourhood managers on 'experiments in place making', conducting arts based workshops with eight young women who had been banned from the local shopping centre. They were asked to undertake interviews with shoppers about how they felt about where they lived and have since been asked to become 'ambassadors' for the centre.

Gathering is co-facilitated by a local arts organisation, providing opportunities for local artists to work together with a focus on how the arts can shape the way people think about where they live and their role in their community. Diverse venues have opened spaces to local artists; the fourth Creative Gathering which was hosted at the City College (adult learning) has resulted in a room being offered free of charge to local artists.

The Creative Gathering in May 2011 was held at University Centre Peterborough. It was co-facilitated by former Peterborough Poet Laureate Keely Mills and Jumped Up Theatre's Kate Hall and was attended by 56 people. Each Gathering has drawn in additional people who have not attended network events previously.

Gatherings have created new links between artists, the community and the wider Citizen Power programme; a core group of about 25 people regularly attend including a representative from the Youth Parliament who subsequently linked up with a local school involved in the Peterborough Curriculum. The events have been used to facilitate artistic experiments in the city focused on place making and working with public sector professionals on how they engage the public in their work.

The ultimate aim is for the Creative Gatherings to become an established self-organised and self-funded feature of the local arts community and there is every sign this is happening. At the same time, a network of artists living and working in Peterborough have set up Creative Peterborough to champion the arts and local creative practitioners in the city. The network aims to be inclusive: a genuine representation of all

“The next year or so is going to be an exciting and enjoyable time, with the placement of our residency artist here at Morland Court... I believe that arts practice has the power to challenge established roles and behaviours because of the permission it affords to think and see things differently”

Paul Spence, Morland Court Residents Association



those working in the arts in the city. It will provide a way for people to work together to address some of the challenges that artists face in the city including building skills for securing funding and profile. The network was kick started by a steering group that includes Alex Airey and Stuart Payn (Blok Collective), Kate Hall (Jumped Up Theatre) and local artists Ann Bellamy, Anita Bruce and Sue Shields.

Context Matters

This will include two artists' residencies hosted by locally based voluntary groups in Peterborough for one year from summer 2011. These will be managed by Donna Lynas and Christina Green of Wysing Arts Centre and will be the first residencies of their kind in the UK. The artists appointed are Grennan and Sperandio, and Joshua Sofaer. The hosts will be the Morland Court Residents Association and the Peterborough branch of Street Pastors.

Made in Peterborough

Citizen Power is working on two high quality arts commissions, which highlight the engagement of local citizens. The first commission – Take Me To – took place in autumn 2010. The second commission will be timed to coincide with the Peterborough Festival in 2012.

Talking Arts

Citizen Power is organising dynamic, interdisciplinary events, which will combine art and debate. These will bring together renowned artists and speakers – including local people – to focus on specific issues relevant to the programme and city. The first of these – Cross Pollination: the Birds, the Bees and Us – in autumn 2011 will explore the interdependent relationship between humans and the natural environment. The final event will coincide with the Peterborough Festival in 2012.

The challenges

In times of austerity it can be difficult to communicate the role and value of the arts. Citizen Power has sought to demonstrate the added value of the arts, not just to the creative community, but to the city and public services.

The Citizen Power programme continues to run skills workshops through the

Creative Gatherings including work with open space technology and on developing social enterprises. Every strand has involved mentoring opportunities. The programme is identifying an RSA Fellow to work with the Creative Peterborough group. The challenge for the project is to embed these skills within the community. In particular there is a need to continue to increase people's confidence, knowledge and skills around participatory methods, building audiences and securing funding.

Despite efforts in the last year the Citizen Power programme has not been able to sustain engagement from as many artists from the diverse range of communities that live in Peterborough as it would have wished to. Project staff are exploring ways to address this, including using oral histories and alternative languages. Solutions such as the Context Matters artists' residencies working within diverse communities will also address this.

The legacy for local people

Citizen Power aims to leave behind a stronger, confident and inclusive arts community, which is applying for and securing funding for excellent work and is capable of attracting larger audiences in and beyond the city, creating jobs and boosting the economy. Peterborough citizens will be consuming and producing more art.

Creative Gatherings will continue to develop as a source of creative and civic action and will have demonstrated the advantages of wider engagement in the community and public services. Creative Peterborough will become a permanent local champion and source of networks and skills.

Peterborough City Council, through working with Vivacity, Creative Peterborough and others, will see a marked change in artistic activity and have the confidence to take bigger risks when it comes to commissioning arts for the city and engaging the artistic community in its service delivery priorities. The Citizen Power programme will inform the development of a new arts and cultural centre, which is currently being explored.

Take Me To

In the autumn of 2010, the Citizen Power programme asked the arts organisation Encounters to come to Peterborough to work with local people on what they felt about the city. Encounters created Take Me To, an arts project with workshops that led to five bus tours where 50 local residents hosted tours of their own neighbourhoods. Participants came from across the city and included two police service community officers, an elder from the Traveller community, a musician, a Conservative councillor and an elder from the Muslim community. Rather than looking at the city as defined by geographical or community boundaries, the project enabled connections to be made between individuals from disparate communities: including the local Polish centre and Travellers' community. The project culminated in a winter feast where people shared their favourite dishes and made pledges about how to further develop the new relationships they had made.

Other groups have since expressed interest in developing their own tours. Some participants protested together against the local English Defence League march in December 2010 and others have become involved in different strands of the programme. Peterborough's Children's Services Team is keen to apply this approach with schools.

Sustainable Citizenship

“The Citizen Power programme has supported us in developing our Community garden, helping us to enhance the experience for our local families, which will create a lot more community involvement”

Pauline Moorhouse, Honeyhill Community and Children's Centre

Meeting the challenges presented by climate change requires effective local, national and international policy and green innovations. Critically, it also requires people to change their habits. The RSA's work on behaviour change explores what the best evidence tells us about what tends to change the way we act; the skills, attitudes and knowledge that are most likely to encourage sustainable citizenship. This thinking is being applied in this strand of the Citizen Power programme.

Peterborough has an environmental record to be proud of; designated one of four 'Environment Cities' in the early 1990s, the city's public, private and charitable sectors aspire to build on this, becoming known as the Home of Environment Capital. The city is home to over 350 eco-businesses, a groundbreaking tool to visualise environmental performance, and a popular website that helps people to learn green skills.

Open Space innovation workshop

One of the winning projects is already under way; to develop a community garden attached to a children's centre in the Paston area of the city. The staff and parents plan a number of small campaigns to encourage local residents to recycle their cardboard waste (providing supplies for the centre's craft activities) and grow their own vegetables.

Another project will use people power to identify unused plots of land across the city, with the aim of providing a map that enables each community to use these plots more sustainably, using the knowledge this group has of growing a wide variety of plants and vegetables. The group has identified three plots of land, and is planning a media campaign to crowd-source more.



Citizen Power is complementing this activity by seeding a number of projects, led by local people, to encourage green lifestyles and improve their local environment. Working in partnership with the Peterborough Environment City Trust (PECT), the project aims to develop a long-term network of people in Peterborough who could support environmental initiatives.

Since July 2010, Citizen Power has engaged over 80 people, including local residents as well as national experts on innovation and environmental lifestyles. In October 2010, 26 local residents attended an intense two-day environmental innovation workshop. They mapped local environmental problems and the behaviours that cause them and developed ideas that could encourage more environmentally friendly behaviour. This included an Open Space session, in which people suggested ideas and voted on priority projects. Project plans were developed in teams, and pitched to a panel of three judges (from Eco Innovation Centre, Peterborough City Council and the RSA) who awarded winners with small grants (£1,500) and other support.

As Citizen Power has developed, staff working on its environmental strand have made contact with other community organisations and informal groups. This included a stall at the Green Festival, which presented an opportunity to meet and work alongside several Peterborough organisations. One of these, the Glinton and Peakirk Green Group, is trying to reduce energy use in the two villages. Assistance was given to them to better understand how behaviour change could be designed into their projects and funding applications.

Future plans include working with a housing association – Cross Keys Homes – to deliver another innovation workshop in September to spin off more community-led projects. Citizen Power is also developing a website, to be launched in December 2011, that allows local environmental innovators to collaborate on new projects more effectively.

The challenges

Citizen Power has encouraged local initiatives created and led by citizens. As well as evaluating what has worked to enable people to be more 'green', the ultimate aim is to leave a legacy. One

challenge is to maintain momentum and funding for local projects. To this end, the project is developing an innovation network, which will draw in local expertise to continue to support local initiatives and make them sustainable. PECT is taking a significant role in developing this. The website will continue to facilitate communications among the network. A forthcoming innovation workshop will be co-funded: one long-term ambition would be to grow the profile of these events and the projects they encourage, so that they become sponsorship opportunities for local businesses.

The legacy for local people

Citizen Power will leave behind a network of environmental innovators and an online platform for this network to share ideas and best practice. In meeting its aspiration of becoming the UK's Home of Environment Capital, Peterborough will be able to demonstrate innovative approaches that have increased the number of people engaged in sustainability projects.

As well as acres of redundant land being bought back into use through Citizen Power's work with local people, the legacy of the project will be an increase in people's capacity for self-government so that they can continue to innovate, creating green projects and developing environmental awareness and skills. In addition, a map of unused land will be available to local community groups and local agencies; this will provide a new resource so that local people and agencies can better target their work.

“Citizen Power Peterborough has taken off. Its social action approach to tackling big issues, like anti-social behaviour and drug dependency, is exciting and something other places should be adopting”

Ben Rogers, Director of the Centre for London, a new think tank based at Demos

Recovery Capital

“[Citizen Power] should help join up services to get a holistic picture with the client at the centre. It is client led not professional led and based on community development principles”

Denise Lewis, Project Coordinator, STORM

We opened this report with a depressing case study that highlights some of the challenges agencies and individuals have in turning lives around. The RSA's work in this area is underpinned by a belief that citizens – even those deemed to be a problem who are excluded and seemingly reviled – can be incredible assets to their community. In delivering this work, Citizen Power is drawing on the RSA's work in West Sussex and its findings on the important role that citizen-led approaches and social networks can play in building people's resilience.

Substance misuse can have a devastating impact on people's health and wellbeing and can drive alcohol and drug related crime in the community.

According to Safer Peterborough there were 1,070 people in drug treatment in 2010 and the use of opiates and crack cocaine is on the increase despite a reduction in the treatment population between 2009 and 2010. Amongst those

in treatment, there is also evidence of a year-on-year increase in the number of alcohol misusers between 2004 and 2010.²

According to recent Home Office statistics, crime is at its lowest level in Peterborough for almost a decade. Recorded crime in the city has dropped by 10.4 percent from the period between April 2009 and March 2010 to the comparable period in 2010/11. However, the same period saw a rise in the number of drug offences of 36.7 percent during the same period.³ The Cambridgeshire Alcohol Strategy (2008-2011) aims to reduce the number of health problems this causes and the police authority is prioritising the reduction of violent crimes in the city particularly those that are fuelled by alcohol.⁴

Citizen Power is working with people who have direct experience of using drugs and alcohol problematically and local agencies to develop a new approach



to recovery. It will give those who have problems with addiction a bigger role in designing services and will set up peer led 'recovery networks' to complement current practice. Put simply, recovery capital is the combination of factors that individuals need to be in place to get well and stay well: from treatment to having somewhere to live, from support from peers, family and friends, to routes back into mainstream society.

Citizen Power has interviewed around

150
people

with current or past experience of problems with drug and alcohol in the city

Citizen Power has interviewed around 150 people with current or past experience of problems with drug and alcohol in the city, including 25 people from HMP Peterborough. This process provides an overview of how service users view local agencies, identify the different groups and networks they engage with and begin to assess what resources they have for recovery. The project is also working with a range of local agencies as well as the surrounding towns. Citizen Power has brought together 70 practitioners from the city and surrounding region to develop a greater understanding of how to identify and work with recovery capital for the benefit of individuals and their communities.

The challenges

However, the project can only be developed through detailed work within Peterborough with local people and this takes time: to this end the Citizen Power programme will have set up a Recovery Champion Network including service users, citizens, practitioners from local services and business in August 2011. It will bring together key local stakeholders to steer the project and

Eastern Recovery Champion Expert Symposium

Citizen Power and the National Treatment Agency (NTA) East held a joint Recovery Champion Expert Symposium on 26 May 2011. It had four key aims:

- to understand how 'recovery capital' and gaps in existing services can be identified, in order to determine where resources should be targeted in specific contexts;
- to understand how a range of stakeholders can work with existing recovery capital;
- to understand how to strengthen or build new recovery capital in specific contexts; and
- to generate a series of innovative and practical ideas that have been piloted by participants during Recovery Week in June 2011 and beyond.

The symposium brought together 80 participants identified as strategic, therapeutic or community recovery champions within the East of England region. Several leading figures in the recovery field participated, including Mark Gilman, the Strategic Recovery Champion for the NTA, Michaela Jones, Community Director for WiredIn (a national online recovery peer support network), and community recovery champions from around the country.

The symposium generated a wealth of practical interventions and pilots that were taken forward by the participants. These included a range of events held in June to raise the profile of the recovery agenda, the development of plans to introduce a peer-to-peer recovery network in Hertfordshire and a 'one-stop shop' information service for drug services in Essex.

www.citizenpower.co.uk/video/east-of-england-recovery-1

ensure that the learning and developments of the project reach into a range of networks across the city including problem drug and alcohol networks, treatment services, the wider community and professional networks. The Recovery Champion Network will co-facilitate

workshops with local service users; these will design interventions to help people spark and sustain recovery, and will be piloted from the autumn.

The legacy for local people

The recovery model is increasingly becoming the way of thinking about drug and alcohol services in Peterborough. By spring 2012 Citizen Power will have established the foundations of a Recovery Community with the Recovery Champion Network at its heart. This will continue to develop an understanding of the importance of social networks and role models in people's recovery. As well as providing a cost effective model for interventions elsewhere, the Recovery Champion Network will have become a critical point of contact and source of expertise for local services.

By placing people at the heart of the design and decisions about their own recovery, Citizen Power will provide a growing source of informed and empowered service users. This will enable other agencies to become more user centred and involve hard-to-reach groups in developing more effective solutions to drug and alcohol problems. In the long term, Citizen Power will result in higher numbers of drug and alcohol misusers moving into recovery. This should help to reduce drug related crime in the city.

2. *Safer Peterborough Partnership Adult Drug Needs Assessment 2010/11*, Safer Peterborough 2011.

3. National Crime Statistics, Home Office June 2011.

4. Cambridgeshire Alcohol Strategy 2008–2011.

Peterborough Curriculum

“We see the possibilities of this being beyond the obvious links of road safety with the police and washing hands with the school nurse! We see this as an opportunity to develop a ‘values and ethics’ curriculum around citizenship where the ‘big’ questions can be asked and discussed”

Nikki Cherry, Headteacher,
West Town Primary School,

Children spend most of their lives outside the school gates. A factor influencing educational attainment is parental engagement. The RSA’s work on an area based curriculum is based on the assumption that schools are only one site where learning takes place and seeks to expand the numbers of people and organisations that are engaged in curriculum development.

The Citizen Power education strand builds on an RSA pilot project in Manchester. The idea is that schools become a ‘hub’ for learning and engagement for the wider community and that children learn to value and understand participation. An evaluation of the pilot concluded there were significant positive outcomes including improved staff/student relationships, greater motivation amongst pupils and bridge building with people and organisations in the city.

The performance of Peterborough’s state schools is mixed. Nursery schools

are doing well and an above average proportion of primary schools are good, or better, when compared to similar councils and the national average. Secondary education provision is variable; only four of the 10 secondary schools were judged to be good by Ofsted in 2009. This is below average for similar areas and across the nation.⁵

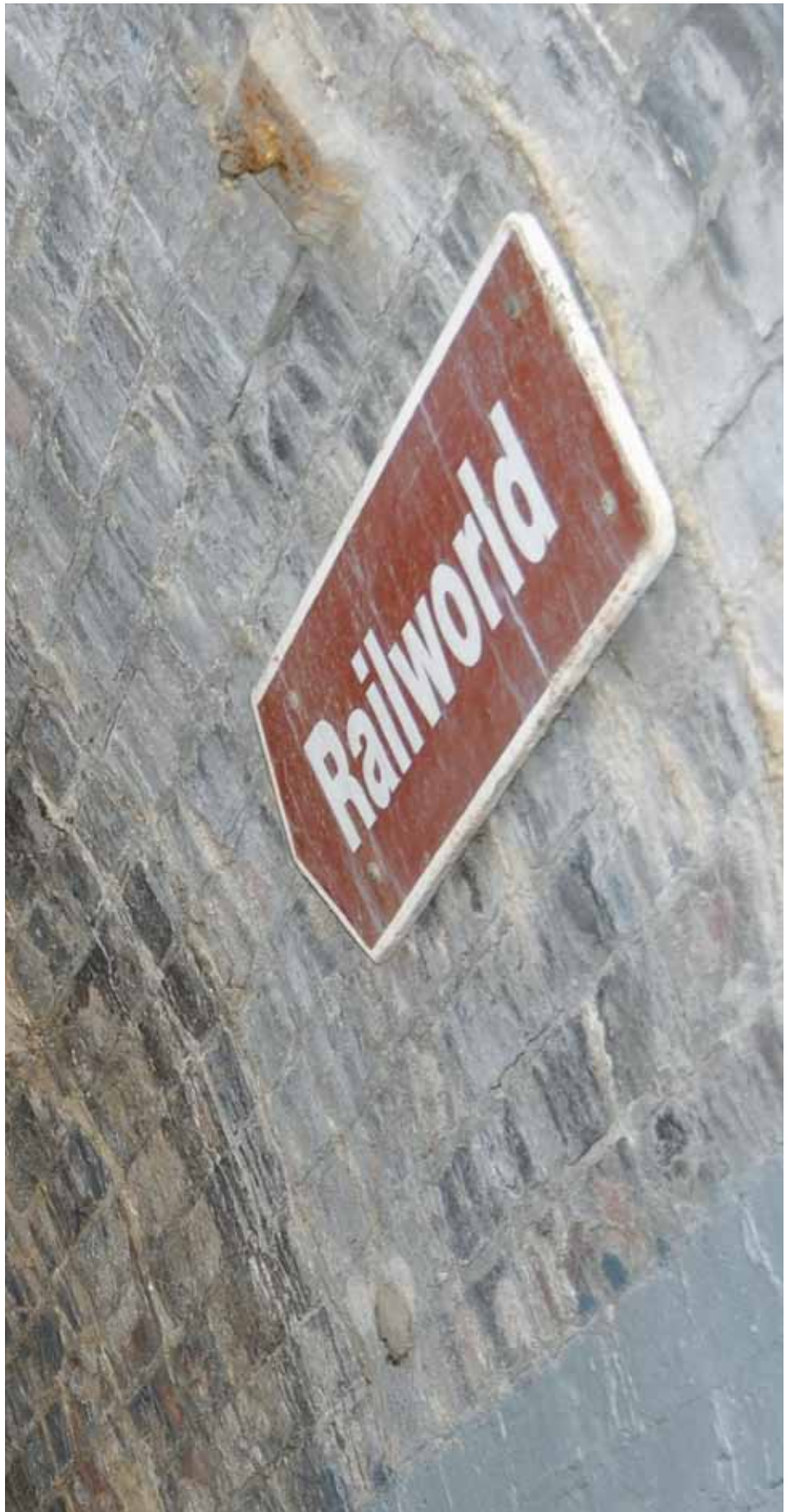
Citizen Power
is working with

5 schools

and a range of local
organisations to design
parts of their own
school curriculum

“We need to build the social capital of the children but also equip them for the challenges of the future. Peterborough will continue to change and children will be able to be part of it”

Simon Martin, West Town Primary School



Dogsthorpe Junior School

The school is developing a project around transport (a significant factor in Peterborough's historical growth and its current context as a commuter town). The partnership between Dogsthorpe – a mixed school in an area of deprivation – with locally based heritage charity Railworld has already included input on history and design. The school aims to develop this relationship further.

Peterborough has experienced rapid changes in its ethnic mix over the last decade and in 2009, only 52 percent of residents felt they belonged in their neighbourhood.⁶ Dialogue between different groups is poor compared to other similar areas even though levels of civic participation are about average.

Schools can play a vital role in bringing communities together and giving young people a sense of belonging and civic responsibility. Citizen Power is working with the local community, business and teachers in continuing to improve the quality of learning in the city with a focus on further embedding schools within their local area. It is working with five schools and a range of local organisations to design parts of their own school curriculum: it will provide young people with a curriculum that reflects local priorities and values, and connects local people with education. It will encourage civic participation and activity across all generations.

Since September 2010, the Peterborough Curriculum has been in development with five schools across the city:

- Dogsthorpe Junior School:
Year 5, 90 students
- West Town Primary School:
Year 4, 43 students
- Bishop Creighton Primary School:
Year 5, 30 students
- Ken Stimpson Community School:
Year 7, 200 students
- Thomas Deacon Academy:
Year 7, 330 students (with some involvement for all students in the school which is around 2,200 people).

Citizen Power has run eight training sessions with individuals drawn from schools and local partner organisations.

Two major events have brought together 60 local people in developing ideas for a locally driven curriculum. Citizen Power will work with each school on a specific project, which they will create and own (to be delivered during the 2011–12 academic year), as well as working together as a network to share learning and resources.

The challenges

The need to ensure local relevance and create new partnerships has taken some time but work has now started with three schools. Teachers involved in the development of Peterborough Curriculum have reported that they are now aware of and in touch with a range of organisations across the city; 46 organisations have offered learning opportunities to schools on the Peterborough Curriculum Portal hosted on the council website.

The legacy for local people

Peterborough Curriculum aims to shape the way in which young people learn and alter the relationship between schools and their communities. It will increase schools' links with business, heritage and the arts and public services, and increase civic participation amongst pupils, parents and the wider community, while strengthening young people's capacity to thrive at work and in life.

The project is focusing on selected schools at this stage. The possibilities for expanding this approach are being discussed and could include rolling the model out across the city. Ultimately, the aim is for the model of locally based learning and participation to shape Peterborough as a Learning City, capable of maximising its use of local assets to drive social and economic success.

5. Ofsted 2009.

6. Place Survey 2009.

“The research shows how difficult it is to create a ‘big society’ of active citizens in the UK. It demands innovative and experimental approaches to public participation like the RSA’s Citizen Power work in Peterborough”

Bobby Duffy, Managing Director, Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute

Civic Commons

“The single most important difference that the RSA has made is ensuring Citizen Power is city-wide and pushed by Peterborough City Council. It has allowed us to look at the city as a whole and then target areas of hardship, getting all agencies there”

Christopher Harper, Member of Civic Commons

At the heart of much of the RSA’s work is the belief that institutions – including central and local government – need to get better at enabling people to do more to create the societies and communities they want to live in.

Civic Commons is working with local citizens to create new opportunities for local activism. Participants are building their knowledge and confidence on a range of issues, better equipping themselves to shape responses to some of the challenges their communities face including anti-social behaviour, isolation amongst older people and the rising cost of social care. Civic Commons will have a ripple effect, as people inspire others to become more active in their communities, and will strengthen the ability of the council to identify, understand and respond to people’s concerns.

At the end of 2010 the Citizen Power programme ran a series of events aimed at identifying a group of residents willing

to take part in the Civic Commons. Since then the programme has worked with 30 people, hosted an initial design workshop at the RSA and arranged two further workshops – one with House of Commons staff on advocacy skills and the other on community organising – which sought to increase people’s skills and confidence as the project progressed from discussion towards action.

Members of the Civic Commons then identified the problem of anti-social behaviour in some parts of Peterborough as a possible focus for their work. The RSA hosted two sessions around the theme. In May this year Civic Commons participants were brought together with Peterborough agencies – including representatives from the police, the voluntary sector, business and local councillors – to decide on the approaches they would take.

Members of the commons will now trial three different models. The first



Tackling anti-social behaviour

After a series of capacity and knowledge-building workshops, a group of 25 citizens met with police, NHS staff, youth workers and local charities to develop innovative solutions to tackling social problems on a particular estate in Peterborough: Century Square.

After hearing representations from the local residents' association, workshop participants developed three new schemes that citizens will take responsibility for instigating. These include an initiative called Community Guardians in which local figures have a regular and friendly presence on the estate, countering the atmosphere of tension. Citizens are also developing a trial of the 'Woolwich Model' in which local leaders and residents are given basic training in conflict resolution.

Many participants commented that this was the first time such a diverse group of local people, agencies and organisations had come together to tackle a problem they all have different perspectives on, but a common interest in solving.

is Community Guardians, where members of the public volunteer to become a positive and visible presence in a problem area. The second is an event or series of events, which will bring together police and young people to meet and work together. The third approach is to trial the Woolwich model, a proposal made in a recent RSA publication, which aims to equip local residents with skills for mediating disputes and safely responding to anti-social behaviour. All three projects will draw from each other and build on existing work (such as Streetwatch).

These approaches will be tested in and around Century Square in the Millfield area which has been identified by Peterborough City Council and local police as experiencing high levels of anti-social behaviour including street drinking, drug dealing, littering and intimidation. Previous attempts have been made to tackle the problem and these three approaches will seek to engage with the local community, including those who are perpetrators.

Six people from the groups are currently developing these ideas further and practical work on the ground is expected to begin in October 2011. Meanwhile the Citizen Power programme is arranging further events on housing, community inclusion and health with the aim of expanding practical work in these areas. The aim is to continue to strengthen the Civic Commons as a group, expanding its members and strengthening their skills and confidence to identify local problems and design solutions.

This will include bringing the experience of the first Civic Commons to other areas of work within the Citizen Power programme, in particular Peterborough Curriculum, which seeks to embed local schools in their communities; the Recovery Capital project, which aims to help problematic drug and alcohol misusers develop new networks and self-directed services; and the Sustainable Citizenship model, which uses some of the same methods as the Civic Commons to enable Peterborough citizens to make positive environmental changes in their area. Longer term, the Citizen Power programme will seek to apply its learning to work with vulnerable families in Peterborough.

The challenges

The Civic Commons strand initially took a fair amount of time to get off the ground. A lot of effort has been put into involving participants in training and development and in providing local people with the chance to meet representatives of local services. The involvement of the latter has been critical in keeping people engaged and in strengthening the belief that they can achieve change by working in partnership with the local council and other agencies.

The Civic Commons approach has tried to ensure that it represents Peterborough in all its diversity. The programme has been relatively successful in this respect, although a continuing challenge is to get a wider spread of ages involved, particularly young people.

The challenge is to keep people engaged between events and to scale up Civic Commons activity, while maintaining agencies' involvement. The potential is significant: this early investment in citizens willing to play

their part not only increases their ability to make change happen in their neighbourhoods and get others to do the same, but also increases the overall reach and capacity of Peterborough City Council and its local agencies.

5

civic commons members

are being included as part of a network of social and public service innovators

In response to these challenges Peterborough City Council is looking at embedding Civic Commons within its wider strategy and structures for neighbourhood management, including its Citizens' Panel. In practical terms this will mean setting up and training groups of ordinary people around the city so that they can identify problems and then work with local agencies and the wider community in designing and delivering solutions.

The legacy for local people

The aim is for Civic Commons to become an established part of Peterborough's democratic culture, working in and around Peterborough on a range of issues that are of concern to the community. The council will be able to devolve greater responsibility to the hyper local level through Civic Commons which will work with local Neighbourhood Councils and the Citizens' Panel, which is used to gauge perceptions about Peterborough and its services. In turn, those involved in Civic Commons are much more likely than the council to be able to recruit citizens to get involved and will be able to bring a different perspective to the table.

Civic Commons is changing the culture of participation in Peterborough City Council and is being rolled out across the city over the next year. In addition to Neighbourhood Councils,

new Health and Well-Being Locality Boards will establish their own Civic Commons to embed the perspective and voice of citizens at the heart of local decision-making, and mobilise local people to problem-solve long-standing issues public agencies have struggled to impact on.

The RSA is also working with the Greater Peterborough Partnership to re-design the city's public services over the next five years. The Civic Commons approach will form an important part of that strategy in two specific ways. First, five Civic Commons members are being included as part of a network of social and public service innovators working together to tackle the most pressing and intractable challenges facing Peterborough.

Second, the Civic Commons approach and the lessons it provides about how to build and mobilise social capacity will be used and applied by public agencies to address some of the specific social challenges they are facing. The next stage of the programme will include an assessment of how people's skills and confidence has changed.

The ultimate aim is for Peterborough to become a model for other cities: where it can show that being part of the Civic Commons is an experience shared by many and beneficial for both individuals and the wider community.

“I learnt a lot, particularly about issues around street drinking and all associated problems... [Civic Commons] is good for community networks”

Kate Young, member of Civic Commons

“Places change for the better when you give people the power to do things differently. That takes courage and genuine commitment to new thinking and ways of working on the ground. Citizen Power is an excellent example of this”

Irene Lucas, Former Director General, Department for Communities and Local Government

ChangeMakers

The RSA depends upon its Fellowship of 27,000 people. Much of its work seeks to identify the hidden networks and connections that exist within communities, which can play a critical part in engaging local citizens in making change happen on the ground. Citizen Power is taking this work to Peterborough, with an emphasis on identifying and bringing together the local ‘changemakers’ – the people inside and outside public services who make change happen.

Peterborough is a city of hidden assets and talents. The confidence of its council leadership is not matched by citizens’ sense that they can make a difference. The ChangeMakers approach is being used to develop a public service and social innovators network that encompasses the people with key responsibility from across the city for delivering Peterborough’s Single Delivery Plan.

While the different projects are presented here as distinct strands,

there is a great deal of potential cross over. The Arts and Social Change project has much to add to Peterborough Curriculum and in engaging residents in environmental issues.

ChangeMakers
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Civic Commons – which has chosen to focus at this stage on anti-social behaviour – will be working to tackle drug and alcohol misuse alongside the Recovery Capital project. Both seek to understand the role that networks – negative or positive – can play in changing behaviour. Significant progress has been made in relation to these areas. The sixth strand of work – ChangeMakers – will build on this and be cross cutting: identifying the key players working across the city.

ChangeMakers will map and mobilise individuals who can help address the social, economic and environmental challenges facing Peterborough. These will span service practitioners and elected officers already working within the public sector; as well as informal gatekeepers and community activists who are well-known among their peers and neighbours, yet who may lie under the radar.



ChangeMakers are likely to have a strong combination of particular characteristics including:

- high levels of knowledge about their local area;
- strong connections within their community;
- generosity and openness with their skills and insights;
- reliability and trustworthiness;
- good communication skills and ability to facilitate; and
- ability to be creative, visionary and influential.

The potential benefits of unlocking the ‘hidden wealth’ of such assets are considerable. They are likely to occupy key positions in their community and can help to transmit positive behaviours and attitudes. They store a wealth of information, have expertise in their fields of work and often have their finger on the pulse regarding what matters most to local people. This project began work in Summer 2011 and will result in the launch of a ChangeMakers Network in Autumn 2011. This will be underpinned by a ‘living’ online directory of ChangeMakers, in addition to a number of network maps, which will show where complementary, but currently disconnected, groups of people could be ‘weaved’ together.

“Big cuts to local government mean councils having to find new ways of plugging the gaps left behind. Citizen Power shows how this should be done – with local people at the heart of everything. Peterborough should be praised for embarking on such a forward-thinking programme of inquiry”

David Lammy, MP for Tottenham

Changing Peterborough's culture

Citizen Power Peterborough is a long-term partnership between the RSA, Peterborough City Council and Arts Council to deliver transformative change in a single place. The shared mission is to support local people to create for themselves the relationships, ideas and practical interventions they need to meet the challenges that are important to them. But also, more positively, to create the places they want to live in and the services they need.

This would be an ambitious programme at any time: in the context of austerity, it becomes both more pressing and challenging. On average, local government is cutting its budgets by a third. Peterborough is no different: indeed the Neighbourhoods division of Peterborough City Council has been cut by 50 percent.

Like many communities, Peterborough citizens are facing tough times: home to some deprived areas and fast changing

demographics, the city needs to respond to drug related crime, problem families and looming gaps in health and social care provision. The city also faces its share of longer-term challenges, including environmental threats, an ageing population and public pressures for more locally responsive services.

The recent Commission on 2020 Public Services at the RSA – which has informed much of the thinking behind Citizen Power – concluded that in meeting these challenges there is a need for: “a complete reconfiguring of public services around the needs and capabilities of citizens, based on the principle of social productivity”.⁷ The evidence shows that communities and public services that effectively engage with users are better: they are more efficient, more popular and promote well-being more effectively.

Building social capacity (and the big society) requires strong public services

that support, facilitate and mobilise social action and the capacity of people to solve their own problems. This means making the most of and developing the city's physical and human assets. It requires new ways of measuring social values and citizenship, encourages holistic approaches to long-term challenges and boosts the important role of civic leadership. The Citizen Power programme and each individual strand seek to meet these needs.

Up to this point, the programme has focused on building the conditions needed for citizen power to flourish: new networks of citizens and services working together to rethink how the city can thrive in the future.

In the next stage, we will bring each project to fruition and will apply Citizen Power thinking to public service reform more broadly. The RSA is now working very closely with the local strategic partnership – the Greater



Peterborough Partnership – to re-think public services and develop a five year strategy – the Single Delivery Plan – for their transformation. This includes seven key priority areas:

- Creating jobs through growth and improved skills and education
- Supporting the most vulnerable families and tackling causes of poverty
- Safeguarding adults and children
- Helping people and organisations live more healthy and sustainable lives and reducing energy consumption
- Empowering people and creating cohesive communities
- Reducing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour
- Using our resources more efficiently and effectively

The key programme, and the one that underpins the public service reform agenda in Peterborough, is the seventh and final one: using resources more efficiently and effectively. Citizen Power is integral to this and will seek to cultivate a fundamental culture change within public services and increase the city’s capacity for strategic problem solving.

The Citizen Power team is now helping to develop and facilitate, for the first time, a new network of public service innovators in the city – drawn from across the public, business and community sectors – to work together to tackle the long-term, systemic challenges facing the city. The seventh programme will implement a new type of settlement for public services, which rejects the existing top-down, service delivery-focused model and builds instead from the citizen up.

Improving the model

The Citizen Power programme was conceived as a two-year experimental partnership. It has made very good progress but, inevitably with an initiative of this scale and complexity, it is ‘in the doing’ that its real potential reveals itself. One of the challenges facing a programme like Citizen Power is how to shift from theory to practice, scale up the projects that we are undertaking, and apply the learning gained across the city and to other social challenges and areas of public service beyond the current scope of the programme.

Peterborough City Council and partners like the Arts Council have shown that they are willing to innovate and experiment with new and challenging ways of working, and draw on ideas from outside to do so. At a time of fiscal restraint and public service cuts, it is essential that the council’s investment in Citizen Power – which has not always been welcomed by some local elected officials – rewards this innovation by delivering value for money and real change on the ground.

By embedding the programme in the delivery plans we hope to ensure that this happens: that Peterborough City Council can make the leap from ‘thought leadership’ to fundamentally changing the way it works with citizens and improving the lives of its residents in the process. This means ensuring that as well as the legacies committed to in the separate project strands outlined earlier, Citizen Power needs to be more than the sum of its parts and outlast its lifespan. That is why Citizen Power is being embedded at the heart of the city’s public service reform strategy – the Single Delivery Plan.

Citizen-Powered Public Services

Active citizens at the centre of everything

Treat citizens like adults. Commission them to problem solve long-term social challenges and co-create services.

Facilitate, rather than prescribe

Don’t tell people what to do. Support them to help themselves and others.

Mobilise ‘hidden wealth’ and social resources

Identify and map what local resources you have to meet local needs. Then mobilise that social capacity to overcome social challenges.

Build long-term culture and behaviour change

Tackle root causes of social problems by taking a ‘whole person’ approach. Focus on long-term outcomes.

Create value together

Break down institutional barriers. Take a ‘whole place’ approach to problem solving and public service design.



Recent discussions – including those that informed this report – show an appetite for securing continued funding to extend the partnership. In the course of producing this report a number of suggestions have been made by a range of different people involved in the project at different levels.

Innovations

- The RSA is working with specialists in social investment and enterprise to set up the Peterborough Catalyst Fund. This will be launched in 2012 and made available to fund local projects and support those struggling to respond to cuts in public spending.
- The aim is that the Catalyst fund will form the basis of a Social Entrepreneurs Network or Hub including people with links to Peterborough. Several people raised the issue of utilising the RSA's expertise in enterprise and social business to increase the capacity of projects in Peterborough.
- Longer term, in order to secure continuity once the RSA is no longer coordinating Citizen Power, the project is looking at the role that timebanking could play. A time bank is a way for people to come together to help others and help themselves at the same time. Participants 'deposit' their time in the bank by giving practical help and support to others and are able to 'withdraw' their time when they need something done themselves. Many of the activities generated by Citizen Power require citizens to connect and volunteer their time. Timebanking could enable this time to be recognised, exchanged and measured longer term.
- The Citizen Power programme will be applied to issues of inequality and social justice in Peterborough. Some of the discussions that took place have raised questions about the extent to which the project was reaching those who were most excluded: in particular people within newly arrived Eastern European communities and the Zimbabwean community. One suggestion was to use the council's emerging model of vulnerability – looking at key moments, lifestyles, settings and groups – as a starting point for exploring how citizens can become more resilient.

- Focusing on Millfield, an area of high deprivation and population churn. The Civic Commons and Recovery Capital projects will both focus their work on Millfield, an area of high deprivation and population churn. In terms of joining up the different strands of the project, one option was to focus on the hyper-local and what impact could be made by undertaking sustained engagement in an area of high churn, deprivation and diversity. Participants stressed the need to focus on arts and culture (including food) in these areas and to engage the community in positive participation.

Citizen Power is a journey that is not yet complete. While some of these ideas may take hold, the last year has taught us one thing: the project will continue to develop in unpredictable ways as citizens get involved and begin to innovate. In the next year the RSA, Peterborough City Council, Arts Council, local agencies and citizens will be working together to develop ideas like these and more to ensure that the legacy of Citizen Power includes:

- Schools that are embedded in their local communities and serve as catalysts for people’s engagement in their neighbourhoods.
- Civic Commons through which local people will be enabled to play a bigger part in tackling the issues they care about, working alongside and adding capacity to local services.
- A confident well-funded arts community able to play a role in facilitating social change and strengthening the arts and cultural offer of the city.
- A greener city driven by Peterborough’s desire to become the Home of Environment Capital and underpinned by ordinary citizens equipped to take action in their own neighbourhoods.
- A holistic model of intervention that is able to tackle multiple needs by engaging some of the city’s most vulnerable and challenging citizens.
- These changes will be underpinned by a growing and capable army of networked and visible Change Makers.

Added together these changes will begin to impact upon the way in which the city thinks about itself, how

Peterborough is perceived externally, and the way local people respond to challenges in their area.

Peterborough will be a step closer towards becoming a place where diversity is celebrated within a strong city identity based on pride in its arts and cultural life, levels of participation and environmental status.

Peterborough City Council will be viewed as a local authority which leads thinking but follows through to delivery, and seen – as the HMP Peterborough project is now – as a centre for innovation in community participation, education, recovery services, the arts and social enterprise. Most importantly Peterborough will be a city where citizens routinely describe themselves as active partners of local services, where they see meeting the challenges of the city as ‘their job’.

7. *From Social Security To Social Productivity: a vision for 2020 Public Service.* 2020 Public Services Trust 2010.

“Public services must be more closely shaped around citizens and the places they live. This is what the Citizen Power programme is doing. The early results published in this report are very promising”

Ben Lucas, Director 2020 Public Services Hub at the RSA

“The Big Society is about transforming the way that the state and services function so that ordinary people are enabled to play a bigger part in meeting the challenges we all face. In its work with the RSA on Citizen Power, Peterborough City Council is leading the way in developing practical models for how this can be done”

Gareth Davies, Head of the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit

“Places change for the better when you give people the power to do things differently. That takes courage and genuine commitment to new thinking and ways of working on the ground. Citizen Power is an excellent example of this”

Irene Lucas, Former Director General, Department for Communities and Local Government

“Citizen Power is one of the best projects on civic renewal to have emerged in recent years. Unlike a lot of think tank work, Citizen Power is creating change rather than only talking about it”

Peter John, Professor of Governance and Co-Director of Institute for Political and Economic Governance, University of Manchester

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