Total Place: a practitioner's guide to
doing things differently

Contents

Introduction
The Total Place journey –
or there and back again
(with apologies to JRR Tolkien)

David Bolger

The Hobbit may not be an obvious starting point for a compendium of ideas about Total Place. But the quest as a storytelling model retains extraordinary power even here in the sceptical world of the 21st century.

In this document, we have gathered the wisdom of a number of people who have been involved in the Total Place adventure. Their wisdom ranges widely across theories and models of change, embracing practical ideas on processes and things to do, and also touching on the inevitable human dimensions of change.

In some cases these experiences of the Total Place quest are recounted by the pilots' programme managers and leads. Others are insights from Leadership Centre advisers who have worked closely with places.

The thirteen Total Place pilots have each undertaken a unique journey over the past nine months or so. It is abundantly clear that there is no single set of rules to follow and that there is more work to be undertaken – the story is far from over.

Nevertheless, at this point, it seems right to try to gather the experience of the Total Place pioneers to date; to understand what they have found useful, inspiring and rewarding in the journeys they have made; and to offer to those who are embarking on their own quest some modest thoughts on ways of thinking and behaving which may be of help.

The compendium is divided into three main areas:

1 THEORIES AND MODELS

2 PRACTICE

3 HUMAN IMPLICATIONS

THEORIES AND MODELS here we briefly summarise, and reference, some of the models of change etc which Total Place practitioners have drawn on; the models are generally well known, researched and documented

PRACTICE here we capture some very practical ideas which have been used in the various Total Place quests. As with the theories and models, no prescriptions are on offer. Simply a description of approaches which have been used to move the Total Place idea forward

HUMAN IMPLICATIONS here we capture ideas about social interactions which have proved insightful for Total Place practitioners.

The compendium is exactly that:

a collection of ideas and approaches which may be of value to those setting out on a Total Place journey. There is no guiding narrative to the pieces here, although there are evident overlaps and echoes between the 'chunks' and between individual pieces. The separate pieces are designed to stand alone and can be dipped into according to taste. Each piece has an identified author, with contact details; and where appropriate, references are provided for theories and models quoted.

It goes without saying, almost, that the various authors of this document offer no warranties about the efficacy of their ideas. They offer them humbly, in a spirit of co-operation and shared learning, to those who may follow them on the Total Place quest. You must make of them what you will-and we hope that in time you will be moved to share your own experiences with the growing Total Place community.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the Leadership Centre for Local Government or its staff.

Guide to the guide

We have broken down our contributors' pieces into seven sections, to help you find the most relevant pieces for you at any given time. Those sections are:

1 **Understanding systemic change** Getting your mind around the 'founding' theories of the initial Total Place approach – the ideas that started things out and shaped the first phase.

2 **Starting out** Getting set up, recognising the need for 'learning cycles' as a scaffolding for Total Place work, and using those cycles to maximise the impact of a piece of Total Place work.

3 **Connecting the system to itself** Linking up people across your system to generate new ideas and agreements – the power of multi-party conversations.

4 **Being human** Recognising the emotional impacts of change on people and the effects of social dynamics on groups and organisations.

5 **Using power differently** Neither ignoring nor being overwhelmed by the power hierarchies we work in.

6 **Counting and story-telling** Using data, stories and deep dives to find the information that begins to change minds: professional minds, leadership minds and political minds.

7 **Thinking differently** Taking your new information and working with it in innovative ways – using new ideas and theories and playing with your creativity.

Getting your mind around the 'founding' theories of the initial Total Place approach – the ideas that started things out and shaped the first phase.

1

Section 1
Understanding systemic change

Getting past the polarities – an introduction to Total Place

John Atkinson, Managing director, Leadership Centre for Local Government

Total Place is a 'both/and' exercise: places and Whitehall were asked to work together to find ways of creating better outcomes for citizens at lower cost to the taxpayer.

This was the first difficult thing for people to get their heads around – Total Place is not a service improvement initiative nor is it a cost-cutting exercise. It is an approach to 'public value' (more on this later) that includes both improvement and innovation and a close eye on the value to the citizen being generated (or failing to be generated) by each public service pound that we spend.

Total Place is also an attempt to bring all of the contributors to public value together in one place. A lofty ambition!
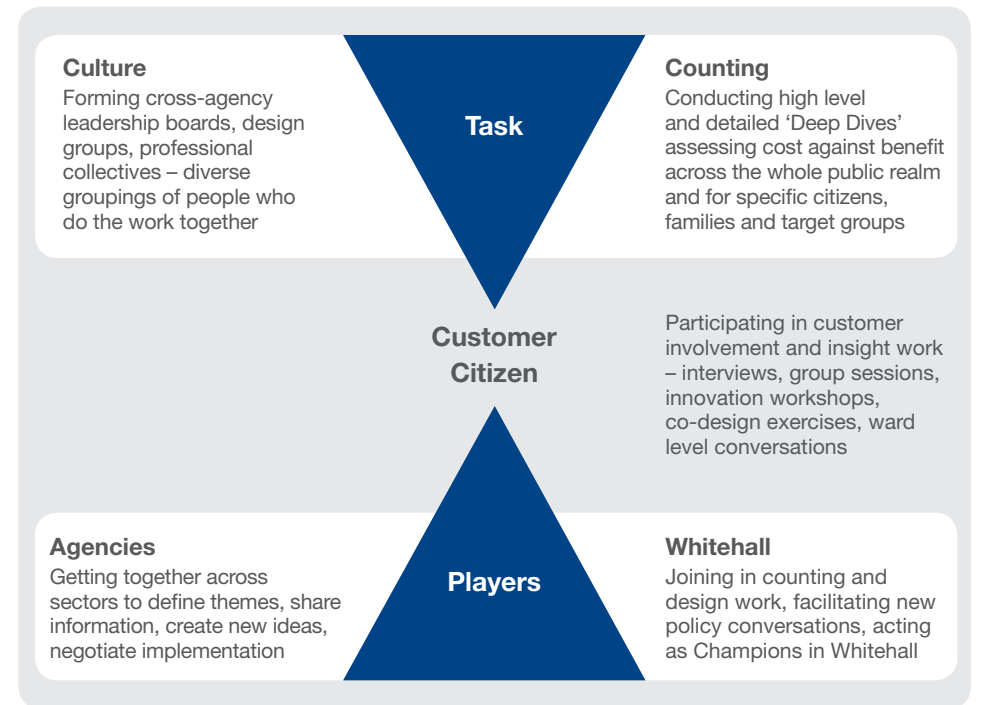
We have a long history of partnership initiatives in the public sector, each of which has made an impact in shifting us towards a more collaborative approach between agencies. Many individual councils, primary car trusts, police forces and other agencies have also done good work with local citizens, involving them in community development, service design and outcome setting. Some Whitehall departments have got closer to their agencies, connecting leaders in places to policy makers around specific initiatives.

So, why do we think Total Place is different from all of these myriad initiatives that have washed over our bows over the last twenty years or so? It's because we think that Total Place is the first time that two crucial triads have been brought together in a single piece of work.

The task triad: Customers, counting, culture

The 'task' of Total Place has been to consider all three of the key aspects in the creation of public value:

- What does the citizen really want from us when they are in the role of customer? Do they really want all the things we provide or would they rather do much of it for themselves? Where they do need the support of the public service, are we doing a decent job or driving them half mad with our internal fragmentation and arcane language?
- What really counts in the huge expenditure managed by the public sector? How much bang are we really getting for our buck? Is the actual investment in services to the customer undermined by the cost of 'being in business'?

Culture Forming cross-agency leadership boards, design groups, professional collectives – diverse groupings of people who do the work together	**Task**	**Counting** Conducting high level and detailed 'Deep Dives' assessing cost against benefit across the whole public realm and for specific citizens, families and target groups
	Customer Citizen	Participating in customer involvement and insight work – interviews, group sessions, innovation workshops, co-design exercises, ward level conversations
Agencies Getting together across sectors to define themes, share information, create new ideas, negotiate implementation	**Players**	**Whitehall** Joining in counting and design work, facilitating new policy conversations, acting as Champions in Whitehall

- How do the organisational cultures of agencies in places and departments in Whitehall hamper our ability to deliver value to the public? Are our attempts to maintain organisational sovereignty getting in the way of working collaboratively to shift society's most intransigent problems?

The player triad: Agencies, citizens, Whitehall

And the design of Total Place has been to create as much connection between the different players in public value as possible. No one agency in a place or department in Whitehall has dictated the work. Perhaps more importantly, a great deal of attention has been paid to creating cross system forums where very significant conversations take place. Whitehall champions have got involved in places; place agency leaders and local political leaders meet together with Whitehall colleagues as part of theme groups and at senior leaders events; agency professionals and managers have worked with customers at large system events and via smaller design groups.

And the choices that working this way create are fundamental and deeply political. This needs to be recognised from the outset and welcomed as part of a reinvigoration of healthy public debate about what is best for our places and how best this can be achieved.

So, if you think the leaders of your place are ready for a 'both/and' approach to generating public value, Total Place may be the approach for you. It's not about everyone getting involved in everything but it is about always keeping the whole task and all the actors in mind – a complex but rewarding way of working.

Total Place - the founding ideas

John Atkinson, Managing director, Leadership Centre for Local Government

Total Place is a bit different from the usual initiative or centrally orchestrated programme – sometimes frustratingly so.

It didn't come with a programme plan, toolkit or defined outcomes – no set of instructions to follow. But it did come with a, largely unspoken, body of theory behind it, theory that informed the design and that has informed the day to day decisions of the Leadership Centre for Local Government and the High Level Officials' Group responsible for steering the work through Whitehall. We thought it would be helpful for places who are wanting to embark on Total Place work to have some understanding of those theories, whether they want to use them in their work or not!

Each of the founding ideas outlined below is dealt with in more depth in one of the following pieces in this section.
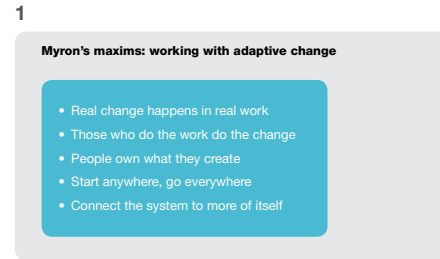
1. Human communities and organisations are not machines, they are living, adapting systems so we need approaches to change that recognise this fact (*Living systems, adaptive change*)
2. Our leadership attention is best spent by considering the information that shapes the system, the identity the system is creating for itself and the relationships that uphold the work. (*Information, identity, relationships*)
3. The long standing and remarkably resilient problems now faced by our society are 'wicked problems' that

can only be addressed with messy (not elegantly simple) solutions (*Wicked problems, wicked solutions*)
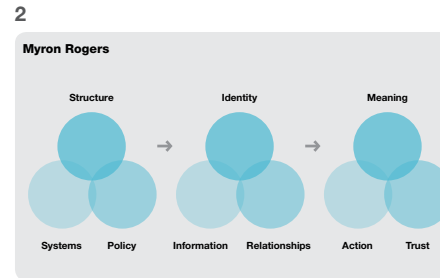
4. If we want to address those wicked problems we must be willing to adapt our thinking, and it is a key role of leadership to help ourselves and others to think new thoughts (*Leadership that changes thinking*)
5. Different individuals have different overarching cultural theories about how human systems work – all of those theories have value in building messy solutions (*Diverse viewpoints, diverse solutions*)
6. If we focus only on 'service improvement' or on 'cost cutting', we get further and further away from understanding the true value of public work for the public we are trying to serve (*Public value*)

As you read through this guide to Total Place, you will spot each of these founding ideas popping up over and over again, sometimes overtly, sometimes in disguise.
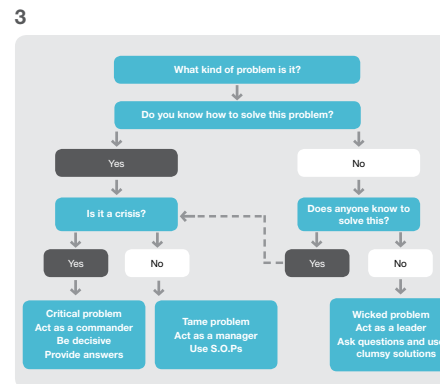
And, as you consider your own local Total Place exercise, you may want to think which of these founding ideas you find useful and how you might incorporate them in your own work.
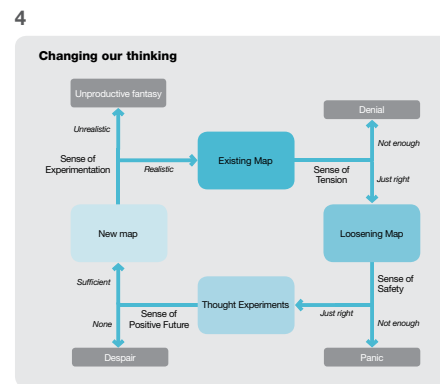
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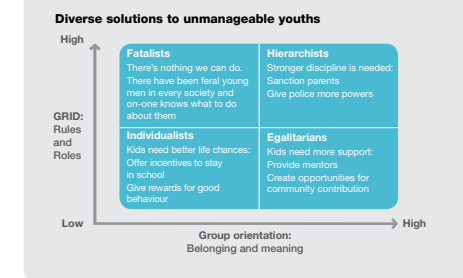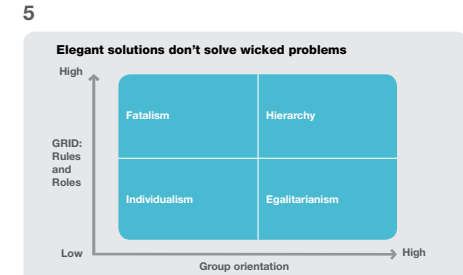Myron's maxims: working with adaptive change

- Real change happens in real work
- Those who do the work do the change
- People own what they create
- Start anywhere, go everywhere
- Connect the system to more of itself

Source: Myron Rogers

2

Myron Rogers

Structure → Identity → Meaning

Systems Policy Information Relationships Action Trust

Source: Myron Rogers

3

What kind of problem is it?

Do you know how to solve this problem?

Yes — No

Is it a crisis? — Does anyone know to solve this?

Yes No Yes No

Critical problem
Act as a commander
Be decisive
Provide answers

Tame problem
Act as a manager
Use S.O.Ps

Wicked problem
Act as a leader
Ask questions and use clumsy solutions

Sourced from Professor Keith Grint, Warwick Business School

4

Changing our thinking

Unproductive fantasy

Unrealistic

Sense of Experimentation | Realistic | Existing Map | Sense of Tension | Denial / Not enough / Just right

New map

Loosening Map

Sufficient

Sense of Safety

None | Sense of Positive Future | Thought Experiments | Just right | Not enough

Despair Panic

Adapted from Kurt Lewin

5

Elegant solutions don't solve wicked problems

High

GRID: Rules and Roles

Fatalism Hierarchy

Individualism Egalitarianism

Low

Group orientation High

Diverse solutions to unmanageable youths

High

GRID: Rules and Roles

Fatalists
There's nothing we can do. There have been feral young men in every society and on-one knows what to do about them

Hierarchists
Stronger discipline is needed: Sanction parents Give police more powers

Individualists
Kids need better life chances: Offer incentives to stay in school Give rewards for good behaviour

Egalitarians
Kids need more support: Provide mentors Create opportunities for community contribution

Low

Group orientation:
Belonging and meaning High

Adapted from the work of Mary Douglas

6

The strategic triangle

The Authorising Enviroment

Public Value Outcomes
Strategic Goals

Operational Capacity

Source: Mark Moore

Living systems, adaptive change

John Atkinson, Managing director, Leadership Centre for Local Government

One of the central ideas of Total Place is that the long-standing machine metaphor of organisation and social systems is handicapping our ability to understand the environment we work in and how to change the behaviours of those systems.

Myron's maxims: working with adaptive change

- Real change happens in real work
- Those who do the work do the change
- People own what they create
- Start anywhere, go everywhere
- Connect the system to more of itself

Source: Myron Rogers

By the machine metaphor, we mean a view of the social and organisational world that assumes that people are passive actors who take instructions and carry them out, that there are 'levers of power' that can be pulled somewhere that will change behaviour and that setting a target will completely drive an intended change. The last twenty years of attempted public service reform shows us that, while small positive changes have been made, the outcomes for individual citizens have not altered to the extent that the machine metaphor would have had us hope.

So, during the design and initiation phase of Total Place, we turned to the work of those theorists and educators who emphasise a completely different lens for looking at human activity – that of the living system (sometimes known as complex adaptive systems theory). There are now many writers who work with these ideas but the person who has most influenced our work is Myron Rogers.

In his work with the Leadership Centre on our Leeds Castle Leadership Programme, Myron describes his view of the five major characteristics of living systems:

- **Chaos and complexity:** complex systems are characterised by ambiguity, uncertainty and unexpected connections. Order arises from chaotic and unmanaged micro-interactions, rather than because of some design from on high.
- **Emergence**: living systems seem chaotic and unpredictable but their patterns are created by simple underlying rules which are not usually apparent to the actors.
- **Cognition**: no one person can ever 'see the system'. Each person will have a different perspective depending on their place in the system and what they see determines what they do.
- **Networks**: people are strongly linked by their informal ties and by the stories they tell. If the 'official line' does not fit with the lived reality of players, they will ignore or subvert it.
- **Self organisation**: social systems preserve their identity. Once a group or organisation has formed a loyalty, people will act to hold on to the identity they have created.

Myron's five maxims for working with living systems are shown in the box above. Perhaps you can see how the initial design of Total Place reflected these ideas:

- Places were asked to do real work rather than just 'set up a partnership' – to find a theme, actively diagnose the issues and create some innovative potential interventions
- Senior leaders were asked to get actively involved in the work (politicians, agency leaders and colleagues in Whitehall) rather than delegating to others to do the change for them
- Places were encouraged to work closely with front-line staff and citizens rather than just consulting them once the work was done – to move gently towards co-creation
- As over-arching issues started to emerge (especially on the relationship between places and national Government), new spaces were made to have those discussions rather than them being declared 'out of scope'
- Many opportunities were created to connect previously unconnected bits of the system – e.g. professionals in places with policy makers in Whitehall, leaders in one area to leaders from another, front line professionals with financial analysts, middle managers with citizens

As you begin, or continue, to work on your Total Place exercises, you may want to consider how you can use these ideas in your work to experiment with their power – perhaps the machine metaphor will begin to have had its day!

Information, identity, relationships

John Atkinson, Managing director, Leadership Centre for Local Government

Much has been made of Total Place as a whole systems intervention. Working with whole systems is now increasingly listed in government literature as being a key requirement of effective leadership.

The term however, is exceptionally vague. Some people can list over forty different philosophies that might constitute a whole systems approach. Total Place has tried to remain pragmatic in the face of all of this and has plotted a course through the work that is mindful of the theory, but rooted in everyday experience.

Myron Rogers has worked with whole systems for decades and has worked with repeated cohorts of the Leeds Castle Leadership Programme. He suggests a way of looking at the work we do along the lines of the diagram opposite.

Our time is primarily spent in the first three circles. We focus our activity on the structures necessary to get our work done, the policies that we wish to pursue and the systems or mechanisms by which we do this. While these are useful pursuits, they fail to significantly address the important dynamic at play. Our work takes place with people, human beings, with all their capacity for creativity, their prejudices and

beliefs and the emotional responses they bring to each other and their work.

Myron suggests we should spend our leadership attention on identity, information and relationships. That this creates an environment of trust, which in turn ensures we address the appropriate rather than historical actions and that together this will make work in the public service altogether more meaningful for those involved.

I have interpreted the issue of identity as determining who we mean when we say 'we' and what it is that 'we' are trying to do. In Total Place, we have made new connections between Whitehall and places, across different areas of local geography and between the state and citizens. This focus on a different 'we' creates a new identity and allows us new possibilities. The variety of different meetings, workshops and forums and the growth of the online communities of practice and other 'e'-processes have all helped to build a sense of identity around the work.
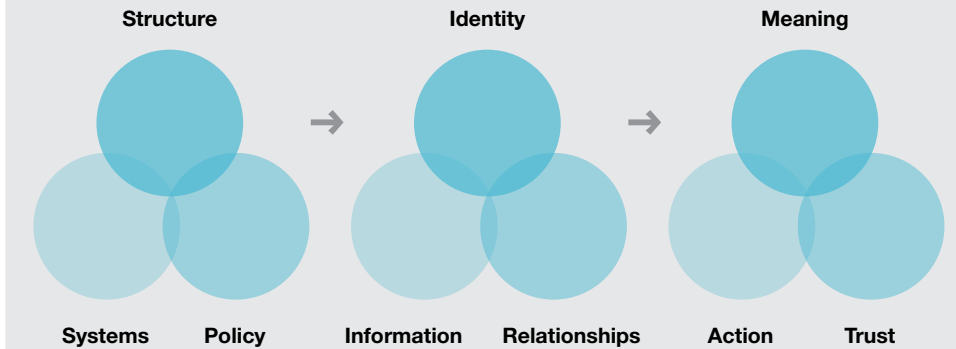
At the same time, getting new information into our discussion has been critical. The most important source of this has been the citizen. Raising the profile of people's stories about engaging with the state brings different perspectives. Put this alongside the wealth of data from the deep dives about how we really provide services and the cost of this, then the conversations we have about what we could (and ought) to do become different.

Through Total Place, people have made new relationships and strengthened old ones. The quality and quantity of these relationships directly impacts on our ability to get things done. One senior civil servant describes me as judiciously using the car-park, train station, late-night mobile phone call to cajole, dragoon, seduce or otherwise persuade an accountable individual to do something useful for the

betterment of Total Place. There has been no substitute in Total Place for racking up the travel miles and the mobile bill.

So one element of Total Place is the requirement to move away from the comfort of policy, structures and systems and into a vaguer but more purposeful world that asks more difficult questions.

- Who are the people that we really need together to solve the problems we face?
- What do we collectively know that we can use to move us forward?
- How can we forge new and stronger connections with the people we need to in order to deliver altogether better services in a time of tough financial constraint?

You can read more about Myron's ideas in the book: '*A Simpler Way*', Myron Rogers and Margaret Wheatley, Berrett-Koehler, 2002.

Looking at the work we do

Structure	Identity	Meaning
Systems Policy	Information Relationships	Action Trust

Source: Myron Rogers

Wicked problems, wicked work

David Bolger, Leadership Centre adviser

Situational Leadership is a term, and model, devised by Hersey and Blanchard, and identified four main styles for leaders which they could adopt according to the capacity of their teams. These modes are: directing; coaching; supporting and delegating.

Details can be found in Blanchard's *'Leadership and the One Minute Manager'*. In recent years, Professor Keith Grint, now of Warwick Business School, has linked the idea of adaptive leadership approaches to the work of Rittell and Webber on so-called 'wicked problems'.

There are two dimensions to consider: the leadership *challenge* which is presenting; and the leadership *approach* which is adopted to deal with the challenge. On the leadership challenge, the Rittell and Webber work suggests that challenges, or problems, fall into three broad categories

- **Critical**, where the challenge is evident and immediate- a fire might be an example
- **Tame**, where the challenge is well understood, and where procedures have been developed and proven in practice, even if the challenge is pretty complicated-brain surgery might be an example

- **Wicked**, where the challenge is either wholly novel or perhaps is long-standing, proving impervious to previous efforts to resolve it - teenage pregnancies might be an example, or long term addictions to alcohol or drugs

Proponents of a contextual leadership approach might argue that the role of a leader is, first, to identify the nature of the challenge, and then to adopt the appropriate leadership response. The corresponding leadership styles can be described as follows:

- For critical problems, **command and control** is the necessary response- you don't expect your leader to form a committee if there's a fire; you expect to be told what to do, quickly and clearly
- For tame problems, **management** is called for - what do we already know about how to deal with this issue? What are the procedures? Let's do that: we know it's going to work
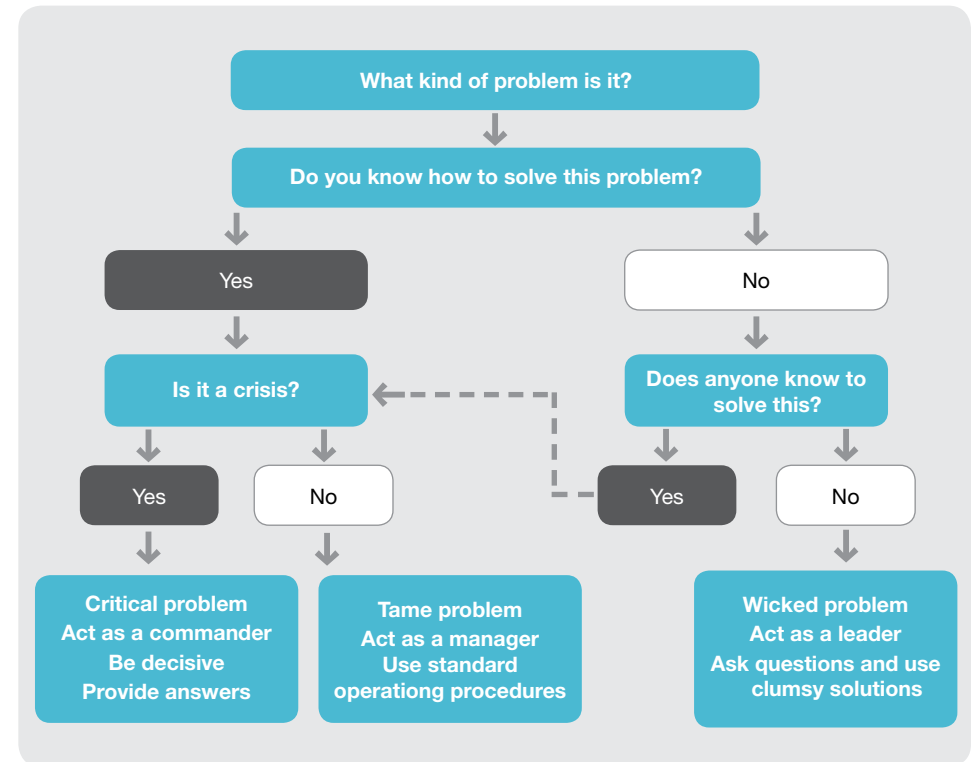
Sourced from Professor Keith Grint, Warwick Business School

- For wicked problems, **leadership** is required - if we've never seen this problem before, and command and control or management don't seem to work, then we need to look for new solutions; this also holds true if it's an old, intractable problem. We need to find new ways of thinking and talking about the issue; and we may have to accept that it is not actually soluble, only that we can make slow, experimental progress or limit the damage.

But beware of two things. First, problems will not necessarily present simply. They may combine facets of critical, tame and wicked. Second, there is also evidence to show that leaders have *preferred* leadership approaches. For example, some leaders relish *crises* and the chance to give some command and control orders; some leaders prefer to *manage*, to defuse the drama of crises but also to avoid genuinely complex and intractable wicked issues; and there are yet others for whom everything is a *wicked* problem, requiring extensive and never-ending analysis and consultation.

You can read more about Keith's work in the book: '*Leadership: Limits and Possibilities*', Palgrave MacMillan (2005)

Diverse cultures, diverse solutions

Karen Ellis, Leadership Centre adviser

One of the things that quickly becomes apparent to any observer of a Total Place conversation is that different individuals are operating from very different core assumptions when it comes to their view of social change.

This is not new news! During the 1950s, a superb social scientist named Mary Douglas began to notice the same thing. Fundamentally, she noticed that when people are in groups, their behaviour seems to be driven by where they sit (usually unconsciously) on each of two spectra :

- Do they enjoy and support formal rules and roles or do they prefer to make up their own rules?
- Do they like to feel part of a group or do they prefer to stay independent and work alone?

She called these two dimensions 'Grid' and 'Group' and created the two-by-two matrix of 'Cultural Types' shown opposite. Of course, none of us is a pure type but most of us would admit that there is at least one box that we prefer on most occasions and certainly one that we don't like at all!
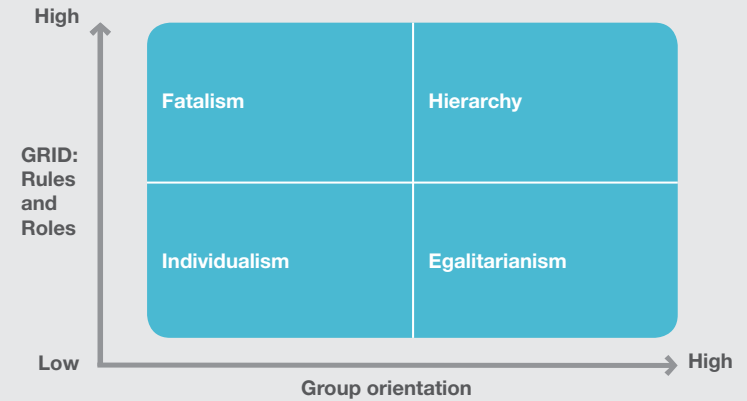
So when we get together in working groups to discuss social or organisational change, these cultural differences start to show up. Unless, of course, our group is subject to group-think. The differences appear not just in thinking about what change we'd like to see (as in my 'hoody' example opposite) but also in the process we'd like to use to find a solution:

- **From the individualist**: "I'll send the experts off to design some solutions, try them all out on a small scale and I'll do a 'Dragon's Den' to choose between them"
- **From the hierarchist**: "we, the leaders, will set the criteria and you, the workers, will work together and come back to us with your proposals"
- **From the egalitarian**: "we will call together all the people who have a stake in the issue and run a collaborative event to design the solution together"
- **From the fatalist**: "whatever I do, it will be subsumed by business-as-usual, so I will put the minimum effort in to tick your box".
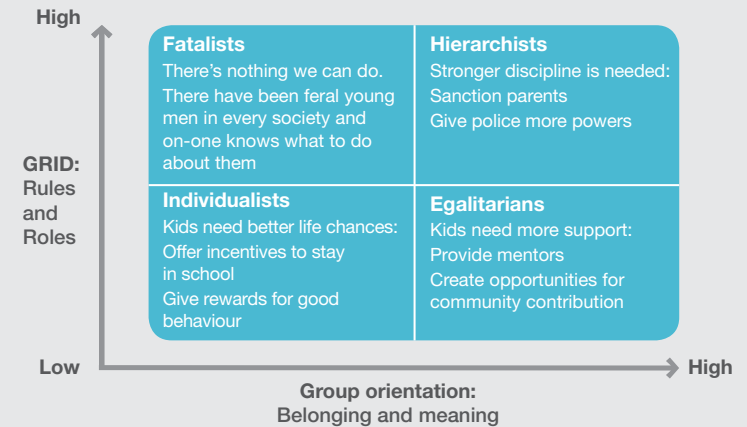
You may see some of your own behaviour in the descriptions above!

So why does this social science theory matter in Total Place? Professor Keith Grint has applied Mary's ideas to the issue of wicked problems. He proposes that the best solutions to long-standing social issues recognise all four of these cultural types. He says that each type has something to offer to the process of identifying and thinking about what he calls **messy solutions** – solutions that are much more sustainable in the long run

Elegant solutions don't solve wicked problems

GRID: Rules and Roles (High / Low vertical axis)
Group orientation (Low / High horizontal axis)

- Fatalism (High grid, low group)
- Hierarchy (High grid, high group)
- Individualism (Low grid, low group)
- Egalitarianism (Low grid, high group)

Diverse solutions to unmanageable youths

GRID: Rules and Roles (High / Low vertical axis)
Group orientation: Belonging and meaning (Low / High horizontal axis)

- **Fatalists** There's nothing we can do. There have been feral young men in every society and on-one knows what to do about them
- **Hierarchists** Stronger discipline is needed: Sanction parents Give police more powers
- **Individualists** Kids need better life chances: Offer incentives to stay in school Give rewards for good behaviour
- **Egalitarians** Kids need more support: Provide mentors Create opportunities for community contribution

Adapted from the work of Mary Douglas

than the single viewpoint elegant solutions that each type would instinctively prefer.

In the process of building messy solutions:

- Individualists are good at innovation and protecting independence
- Hierarchists are good at decision making and setting up structures
- Egalitarians are good at consensual process and recognising everyone's needs
- Fatalists are good at reminding people we've been here before and that this may be as good as it gets.

[Keith doesn't say this but I feel bound to defend fatalists as I think they have a lot of realism to offer!]

In your Total Place process, you will get much further if you ensure that all of the types have a voice in your work – after all, they will all have to be part of the solution…

You can read more about Mary's work in the book: '*Risk and Culture*', Mary Douglas and Aaron Wildavsky, University of California Press, 1983

Leadership that changes thinking

Karen Ellis, Leadership Centre adviser

During the middle part of the 20th Century, Kurt Lewin attempted to look at the actual phenomena of personal or social change without adding in ideas of what was good or bad, useful or non-useful.

Lewin made the distinction between learning as a change in knowledge and learning as a change in motivations or values – the one does not assume the other. So, it's important that we note that knowledge on its own does not create change nor is 'wanting to be different' sufficient to actually be different if people don't have the relevant knowledge or skills to make the shift.

How might this process of change work – either at the cognitive or motivational level? The diagram maps some of Lewin's ideas into a set of feedback processes that can be applied at the level of the individual, group or social system. The steps to changing thinking run something like this:

> **"There are many leaders whose personal style runs directly counter to these strategies, and many pressures in the political and public service systems that push for the opposite behaviour. But, to paraphrase the old adage 'If you keep leading the way that you've always done, you'll keep getting what you always get'!"**
> **Karen Ellis**

1. There is a growing sense of **discomfort with existing knowledge**, mindset or espoused values – data is coming in that suggest that the 'mental map' is no longer a good fit with reality.
2. If this tension is sufficient, people start to **question the existing mental map** and, instead of looking for data to support it, they actively seek out new information.
3. Then, if they feel safe enough to let go of their map, they start to **run some 'thought experiments'** about other ways of looking at the issue and they talk to others about their maps on the subject and find a whole new set of options for thinking about the issue.
4. If they have a sense that there is a positive potential future if they change to a new way of doing things, they will find creative ways to **implement the new map**, developing the skills they need as they go.

Changing our thinking

Adapted from Kurt Lewin

Someone who wants to lead in Total Place, at whatever level, has to be prepared to offer themselves and others the opportunity to make changes to their thinking or their values. What can a leader usefully do? They can:

- Create opportunities to closely examine disconfirming data and controversial viewpoints and point out those points where individuals or groups start to drift off towards denial
- Create a sense of safety – "we are all in this together, you are OK to raise difficult conversations, you won't be punished for not getting it right first time"
- Sponsor the search for new models and ideas, even when they are contrary to perceived wisdom
- Begin to paint in a positive vision for the future – even when it feels far away and the path isn't obvious
- Allow time for hypothesising, experimentation and validation rather than rushing prematurely for results.

You can learn more about Kurt's work in the book '*Field Theory in Social Science – Selected Theoretical Papers*', Harper and Row 1964

Public value

David Bolger, Leadership Centre adviser

Public value is a concept developed by Professor Mark Moore of the JFK School of Government at Harvard in the 1990s. The key reference work is '*Creating Public Value-Strategic Management in Government*' Harvard University Press, 1995.

Moore has since developed a working and publishing relationship with Professor John Benington of Warwick University Business School, so there is opportunity for direct contact with the theorists on this model.

Moore developed the model as a way of dealing with the absence of a 'bottom line' for public organisations. He wanted to help public service policy makers and practitioners to demonstrate the value they were striving to create using the investment of public monies. He also wanted to move away from the traditional sterile model of 'public administration' in which public servants are passive recipients of politically driven goals; and to show that public servants are not mere deliverers of 'public value', but also key co-creators with citizens and with their political representatives.

In essence, the public value model proposes that there are three core dimensions to the creation and delivery of public policy:

- **The definition of public value** – this is not simply the description of the *outputs* of a public policy intervention, but also of the *value perceived* both by direct recipients of those outputs but also critically of other, non-recipient stakeholders. So for example, libraries provide a direct public value to borrowers of books etc; but they also satisfy a *value perception* among non-borrowers (but funders, as taxpayers) that their community provides opportunities for disadvantaged members of society to learn

- **The authorising environment** – this includes all those who have an interest in, and the ability to influence, a public policy issue. The idea of the authorising environment is that those involved provide *legitimacy and support* for the definition of public value which is being sought and for the resources approved to deliver it: while the environment supports the definition, resources will

The strategic triangle
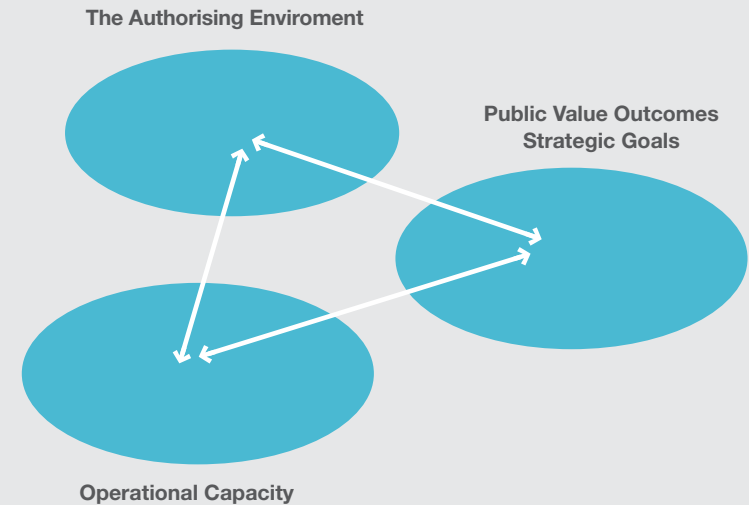
Source: Mark Moore

be authorised to pursue it. Hence politicians form part of this authorising environment, as well as being decision-makers on which definition of public value is being pursued

- **The operational capacity** – these are the resources of money and people, typically, which may be deployed in pursuit of a public policy goal. This is normally the resources of the public body or bodies engaged in delivering the relevant public policy ambitions, but may also include a wider resource pool including the capacity of society and its individual members. Here, Moore develops ideas on co-design and co-production

The public value model is typically illustrated by the 3 circles above. These are said to form the strategic triangle (apologies to geometric purists). Moore postulates that there will always be tension between the elements of the model-the definition of public value must constantly be checked out with the authorising environment, and operational capacity aligned accordingly-and that it is the role of public policy practitioners to maintain the strategic alignment of the model elements through ever-vigilant attention to each of the circles.

Getting set up, recognising the need for 'learning cycles' as a scaffolding for Total Place work, and using those cycles to maximise the impact of a piece of Total Place work.

2

Section 2
Starting out

Cautionary note: one size does not fit all

Karen Ellis, Leadership Centre adviser

Total Place sponsors, programme managers and advisers have been asked many questions. The most popular (and difficult) being, "What is this Total Place thing anyway?" There is already something political (small 'p') in the way each person answers.

We tend to focus on those aspects of Total Place that suit our perspectives or passions and 'forget' the other aspects. If you're outside the existing Total Place community, this diversity of view can seem bewildering.

But there has (deliberately) never been a well defined party line on what Total Place actually is. The whole idea was to set up an environment for innovation, where each place had the chance to define its own thematic thrust and specific approach within a set of broad parameters. A one-size-fits-all methodology would have been inappropriate, due to the significant differences in starting point and approach across the 13 pilots.

This diversity has given us a unique opportunity to look at what works (and what doesn't) in terms of innovation and change in the civic arena. It also helps us to look at which type of approach works best, in which settings, and for what sort of problems.

Across the 13 places there's been a very heterogeneous mix of geographical areas, histories and chosen themes. These unique start points inevitably lead to differences in how the work shows up in that place and the pre-judgements that players and the public have about work of this sort. Some places have an excellent history of working together across agencies; others have had bad relationships in the past or are just starting out as a new geographic mix. They all have different demographics, social strengths, problem areas and economic situations.

Some of the differences that have shown up between the places are around:

- Type and level of sponsorship
- Approach to involvement
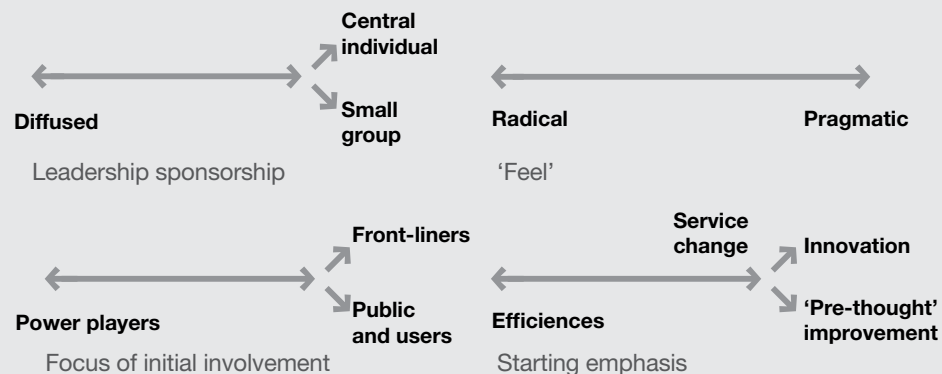- Level of innovation and radicalism

Probably the most heated discussions arising from the question, "what is Total Place anyway?" centre around the degree of radicalism and innovation that each place wants to pursue. Are they content to do what they've done before, with some nice new language? Or are they looking to truly change **how** they do things and **what** they do?

- Are the power players willing to work with the public and service users in a new way when those conversations are usually messy and often embarrassing?

Different starting points

History of working together

Geographic reach

Theme focus (1)

Theme focus (2)
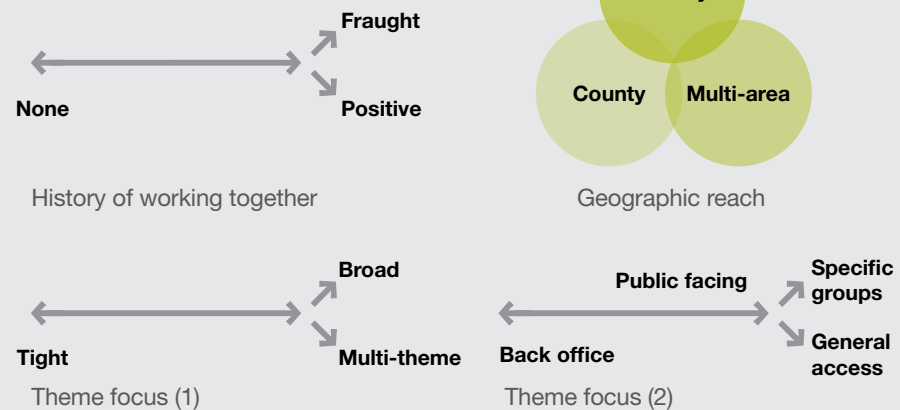
Different initial approaches

Leadership sponsorship

'Feel'

Focus of initial involvement

Starting emphasis

- Are we willing to start tackling contentious issues like state-sponsored (mandated?) behaviour change among citizens when we know that any such approach will get labelled intrusion of the nanny state?
- Are we willing to shift the funding focus from managing symptoms to prevention of the causes of problems when the media will jump on us from a great height whenever our symptom management fails?

We're not advocating where places should stand on these questions. More radical options, by definition, contain more risk and the leaders in each place will have to decide what they can handle locally. Acknowledging the diversity of approach and building it into the work on Total Place has helped some to find radical new solutions to local services, more tailored to local needs.

Planning the first cycle

Karen Ellis, Leadership Centre adviser

Even though there was no prescribed methodology or formal project process for Total Place, discussions with places throughout the course of the pilots made it clear that everyone was following some form of learning cycle in their work.

Their learning cycles seem to broadly fit with Kurt Lewin's approach to changing thinking outlined in Section 1 and can be shown visually (opposite).

Step 1: The first port of call is to ask a leadership group in your chosen place (whether that is a single area or a multi-area) to choose a theme that has meaning and depth for all the players. You could ask your Local Strategic Partnership, your Public Service Board or any other cross agency grouping. But it does have to be a senior group and one which has political backing. A Total Place exercise requires significant investment in time from a range of players and this time needs to be committed from the start. Also, if it works, it will show up uncomfortable data and can come to difficult conclusions about how things need to change – all of which will take leadership to work through.

Step 2: The first major process in all Total Place work is the high level count, swiftly followed by one or more deep dives (there is more about both these processes in Section 6). In parallel, during the pilots,

all of the places ran citizen 'story-hearing' work – interviews, large events, videoing and many more creative activities (also described in Section 6). From a Total Place perspective though, the most important aspect of these exercises is that they attempt to find disconfirming information – that is, information that surprises, even shocks, us and allows the possibility of insight or loosening of previous assumptions about how well the system currently works.

Step 3: Then comes the chance to get creative, to imagine possible futures and new ways of doing things. This is the fun part for most places – it builds energy, helps relationships form in the process of doing real work and can, if done well, let the citizens and professionals form a new alliance in solving local social problems. (More of this is Section 7)

Steps 4 and 5: Sometimes it is possible to go straight ahead from imagining to designing – the work that starts to make your new ideas a reality. In other cases, you notice that there is a real (or imagined)

Total Place – The learning cycle
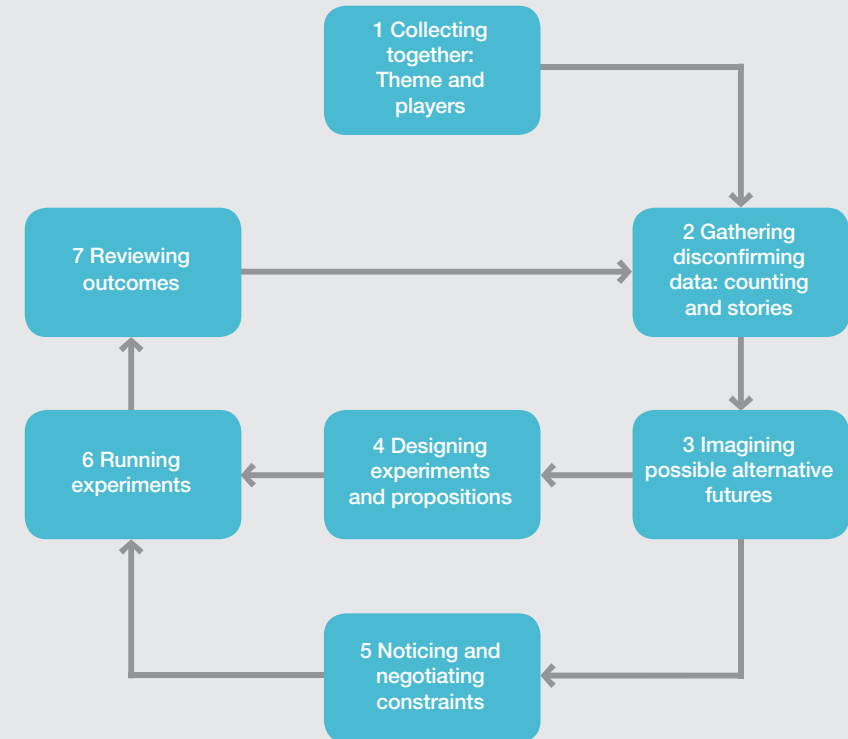
constraint to the change you would like to make. During the pilots, it was during this stage that the new conversations with Whitehall colleagues started to come to the fore. People got together in 'theme groups', across the pilots and with relevant policy makers, to thrash out the potential impacts of current policy and legislation on their proposals. However, this is not the time to **introduce** your Whitehall colleagues to your work – it will be too late! You need to involve them, however lightly, in steps 2 and 3 too, otherwise your ideas will appear to come out of the blue and be met with scepticism at best.

Steps 6 and 7: At the moment we can't tell you much about these! Most pilot places are just moving into their 'experimenting' phase and it would be foolhardy to predict what they will learn from these later elements of the work.

Whether you follow this process or not, the most important thing to realise is that your Total Place work has to have some definable shape and identity, otherwise it will get subsumed into business-as-usual and lose its impact and focus. And it will need senior steering all the way through if it is to become more than just another flash in the pan.

Messy learning

Mike Attwood, Coventry, Warwickshire and Solihull programme manager, Coventry City Council

We wondered whether 'messy learning' had been used before. If you Google™ it, you hit an exciting American website, **www.learningismessy.com**

Have a look because, apart from great work on bullying, it shows how learning is about blending activities that excite people's imagination by pursuing spontaneous lines of enquiry, but also being disciplined, using evidence and working in a stepwise methodical way.

It's worth knowing how you – and those working with you – prefer to learn. David A Kolb's book – *'Experiential Learning'* (1984) describes four learning styles:

- **Convergers** – like abstract concepts with practical experiments. They can practically apply abstract ideas and use deductive reasoning to tackle problems.
- **Divergers** – like concrete experience with reflective observation. They are ideas generators and can see problems from many perspectives.
- **Assimilators** – also like abstract concepts but with reflective observation. They create theoretical models using inductive reasoning.
- **Accomodators** – like concrete experience with practical experiments. They hate theorising, engage with the real world and get on with it.

Honey and Mumford use similar concepts – activists, theorists, reflectors and pragmatists – see *'The Manual of Learning Styles'* (1982) and *'Using your Learning Styles'* (1983).

They describe the journey as:

- Having an experience
- Reviewing the experience
- Concluding from the experience
- Planning the next steps

With Total Place much of the learning seems to be about:

- Getting service users, front-line staff and senior leaders together in whole system events where both theoretical and 'lived experience' versions of problems can either collide or shape new solutions by working through the creative tension.
- Public Service Boards – Leaders across the system building common strategy and trust through mutual support and challenge.
- Simulation events, which can take the sting out of knotty problems by playing out the future in a challenging but safe way.
- Individual or smaller group learning 'off-patch' using mentors, coaches and learning sets.

© John Jarvis, Leadership Centre for Local Government

It can be very important to hold multiple perspectives – a senior manager focused on productivity, financial balance and implementing a single team and single assessment model; a front-line worker who fears loss of professional identity, feeling overwhelmed by paperwork; a mother feeling that like has to be her child's case co-ordinator and is worried that if she says she is only just coping, the family may be split up.

Try to find both **common ground and non-negotiable differences** in these stories. You can connect productivity, too much paperwork and the mother's burden of coordination with a co-designed common assessment/case management solution. Non-negotiables would be the what (but not the how) of financial savings and statutory child safeguarding requirements.

Finally, it's very useful to reflect both on the **content** and the **process**. This is 'Double Loop Learning'. Could service users contribute fully? Did the Public Service Board enable real dialogue between officers and elected members? Was the blend of engagement, energy and action about right? Have I got enough headroom to reflect on my contribution and what I'd do differently next time?

Gathering everyone in

Nuala O'Rourke, Manchester City Region including Warrington programme manager, Wigan Council

Here are four 'Top Tips' from the Manchester City Region and Warrington pilot on how you might think about the processes for involving people in your Total Place work.

Our work on Total Place led us to understand that a cross-organisation approach – one that touched everyone from political leaders and senior managers to front-line staff – was needed for real engagement with our colleagues in our own Authorities and our Public Sector partners. Two way communication was key – people clearly need to understand what was happening but also feel that their voice was heard.

Tip 1

Create and action a plan to communicate clearly with all stake holders at all levels.

Projects with obvious and visible enthusiasm surrounding them have a real sense of **joined up leadership** from multiple chief executive officers across the different sectors. In many cases this joined up leadership has been delivered through bringing leaders together in training and development and thereby creating a network of colleagues who can find different ways to work together, break down barriers and work across boundaries. This type of arrangement – is giving people the space to try new things – and creating a supportive environment that is accepting that sometimes things will go wrong.

Tip 2

Bring senior leaders from all sectors together in a way that will help them develop closer relationships – 'professional friendships' – through experiencing such things as training, workshops or community visits as a team.

Source: Nuala O'Rourke

In many cases through the Place work – these leaders are going out into the community and **listening to people's stories** themselves so that they have a genuine understanding of the changes that need to be made. This type of listening (not questioning, just hearing) is creating the environment for change driven by an understanding that people, not services, should come first and be at the centre of our thinking. This type of first person understanding is key to focusing stakeholders and evidencing the need for change.

Tip 3

Find a way to tell the 'human' stories, either through community visits or through videos of customer journeys. This type of powerful first person evidence energises all stakeholders and drives forward the need for change.

The other area for consideration is engagement from other parts of the public sector and indeed the third sector. We learned that to run successful pilots, the Total Place message needs be owned by all partners, across the region. When projects are perceived as local authority led, there is often the implication that other public sector bodies are 'helping' the authority with their problem.

Tip 4

Seek joint leadership across the most relevant public sector bodies wherever possible and ensure that all agencies are fully represented at the correct level on the project board.

Managing the dynamics

Phil Swann, Dorset, Poole and Bournemouth programme lead, Shared Intelligence

As you start to design your Total Place cycle, there are some aspects to the 'human dynamics' of the work that are worth considering up front so that they don't trip you up.

These aspects are :
- The need for senior and professional buy-in for the process and its outcomes
- The need to maintain momentum throughout the work, especially when times get tough
- The need to unleash people's creativity by allowing for serious play as part of the work

Buy-in is everything

The answer to the Total Place question – 'How can we secure improved outcomes at less cost?' – will invariably generate potentially controversial propositions. If these propositions are to be taken seriously it is essential that there is genuine buy-in to the process from the start.

The importance of shared ownership of the process cannot be over-stated. Joining because 'we can't afford to be seen not to join' really isn't good enough and can lead to an unsatisfactory outcome for all concerned. This is more important than ever where a Total Place project straddles geographical as well as organisational boundaries.

Securing ownership at all levels is also important. There may be an enthusiastic project board comprising the strategic leadership of a place. There may also be a

committed project team getting stuck into the work. But what about the heads of service or directors who may be ultimately responsible for implanting the recommendations? Have they bought into the process and do they have an opportunity to influence it?

History, both long and short-term can cast an unhelpful shadow over initiatives such as this. Perceptions matter; so do prejudices. Important matters of detail such as the composition of the project team and the location of its office can reinforce perceptions to the detriment of work and the likelihood of the recommendations being implemented.

Maintaining momentum

One distinctive feature of the 13 Total Place pilots was the government imposed timetable: the September deadline for interim reports and the February deadline for the so-called final reports.

The interim report deadline provided a useful marker to shift from defining propositions to testing them.

And the final report galvanised decision making and the collation of serious propositions for the public domain. However, it is important to be under no

illusion that any of the reports were final in the true sense of the word. Writing a passable report was the easy bit. The real challenge is to ensure that the recommendations get traction locally and have a lasting influence on the way we do things round here.

That said, the tight timetable undoubtedly generated and helped to maintain momentum.

The Total Place approach inevitably raises sensitive and challenging issues. There are a myriad of reasons for slowing down. The government deadline meant that could not happen. The hard deadline also provided an opportunity for key issues to be raised at the last minute, through substantive amendments to a final draft of the report rather than in face to face discussion.

The national deadlines were not arbitrary, they were linked to important events: the publication of the Government's Pre-Budget Report and the Budget Statement.

Maybe this tactic of **linking deadlines to key events** provides a way forward for councils and partners seeking to build and maintain momentum without government deadlines. A local timetable could be built around local processes and deadlines – such as the budget or corporate plan.

Events designed as part of a Total Place methodology also have a part to play in maintaining the momentum. A local Total Place Assembly or Summit can help secure wider engagement in and ownership of the process. An external challenge event can bring invaluable external perspectives to bear. These and other events can also be used as deadlines for the completion of various stages of work.

Stimulating ambition and creativity

Play is as important to a child's development as conventional learning. In particular it can nurture creativity.

Psycho-dynamic thinkers such as D.W. Winnicott have explored the concept of an organisational equivalent, including ideas such as potential or transitional space.

At its best Total Place can provide that transitional space. Sitting outside routine planning and budgetary processes, it can provide an opportunity for people to think the unthinkable and to have conversations that they wouldn't otherwise have.

But there is always a danger of the ambition ebbing and confusion emerging about how Total Place relates to other national and local programmes. One way of thinking about Total Place is as an **advance party**, breaking new ground, creating the space in which mainline programmes and processes can be more ambitious than would otherwise be the case.

Maintaining levels of ambition will always be a challenge. Here are three things to remember which may help to create the conditions in which ambition can flourish.

First, remember the user or citizen perspective. Ask the question: "How far will what we are proposing go achieving the outcomes that users and citizens tell us they want?"

Second, remember the money. Ask the question: "To what extent will our current proposals enable us to cope with the tightest public expenditure settlement since 1976?"

Third, remember to get out more. There are always lessons to be learned from elsewhere. External challenge can be invaluable in testing the level of ambition. And so can taking advantage of either a new colleague joining a working group or a longstanding member returning after missing a phase of work.

Designing the process – getting the rhythm right!

Sue Goss, South Tyneside, Sunderland and Gateshead programme lead, Office for Public Management

The Total Place pilots faced a dilemma which is common in pilot situations: **how do we balance the need to be creative and experimental with the need to be evidence-based, analytical and 'get things done'?**

There often seems to be a tussle between those managers and leaders (and advisers!) who suggest 'open system events,' appreciative enquiry, world café – colliding different voices, experiences and outlooks – and those who are keen to develop project inititation documents and plans and make sure that small groups of reliable people do the practical work. It's a struggle between 'right brain' and 'left brain' approaches – and – of course – we need both.

If we dive into analysis and close down new thinking too fast – we tend to stick to 'quick wins' which usually means working with the ideas we already had. We move quickly to implementation, but nothing much changes.

If on the other hand, we simply create conditions for creative thinking, we generate lots of energy and excitement that fizzles out fast – since there is no process to convert these ideas into action.
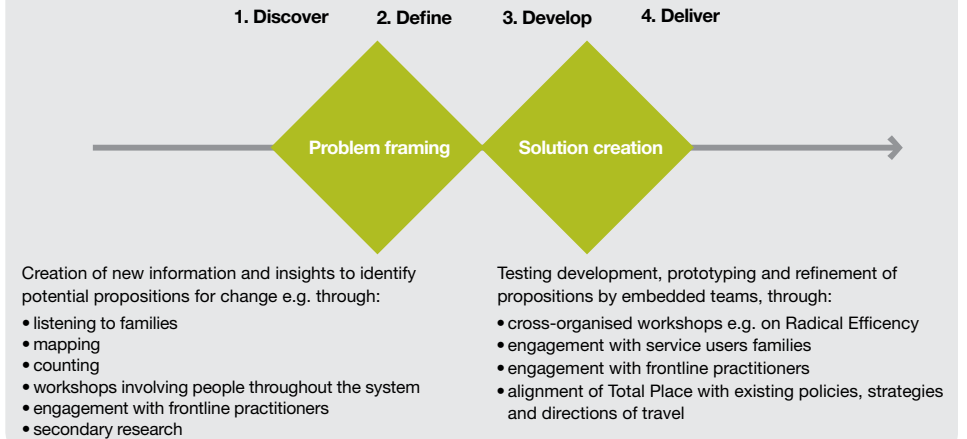
Divergent and convergent thinking

Design experts talk about the need to combine 'divergent' and 'convergent' thinking:

- Divergent thinking – generates wacky and new ideas – finds new ways of seeing, enables different perspectives to collide, encourages invention.
- Convergent thinking – builds these ideas into possible solutions, matches ideas against criteria, abandons false starts, focuses attention, tests and develops.

Several of the pilots have explored ways of combining these two – so that as the project moves forward over time space is first opened up for new ideas, and then narrowed down again to focus on an agreed way forward.

Croydon, for example used the diagram opposite to describe their process.

Design council double diamond approach to design

1. Discover   2. Define   3. Develop   4. Deliver

Problem framing   Solution creation

Creation of new information and insights to identify potential propositions for change e.g. through:
- listening to families
- mapping
- counting
- workshops involving people throughout the system
- engagement with frontline practitioners
- secondary research

Testing development, prototyping and refinement of propositions by embedded teams, through:
- cross-organised workshops e.g. on Radical Efficiency
- engagement with service users families
- engagement with frontline practitioners
- alignment of Total Place with existing policies, strategies and directions of travel

Adapted from work by the Design Council

Partnerships are even more complicated

In partnerships this is seldom achieved through a single iteration – since there are many layers of people learning to work together in new ways. So for example in South of Tyne, where three unitary authorities, police, fire and health were learning to work together for the first time – we developed a series of alternating divergent and convergent stages. Each divergent stage brought in new ideas and experiences and added the understanding of more people. But between each divergent stage, a 'backbone' steering group and a strong governance board were able to critically examine the ideas, focus attention and decide what to do in practical terms. After some more analytical work – we needed to widen out again – bring in people who might feel excluded by small group work – politicians, community leaders, trades unionists, professionals – to test out thinking, build consent, listen to fears, change proposals in response. Then it was time for more focussed work again.

Rather than the usual machine metaphors for organisations – we might think about music. With a strong enough base line, a melody can be complex and creative without the music collapsing into chaos.

An emergent process?

In some situations, however, the problem we are grappling with is so difficult, and the failure of established approaches so serious, that the 'divergent stage' needs to be long enough to generate entirely new thinking about who should take action: challenging assumptions not simply about the problems but about the organisations and systems that are capable of responding. Where this is the case, the role of leadership will be to win support for a prolonged period of uncertainty and exploration – and to create situations in which that deeper and harder re-examination can take place. It would require the political leadership needed to take these sort of risks – and the skills to bring people together in very different ways. For some in Total Place pilots, and predecessors such as Cumbria, Norfolk and Suffolk, the most fascinating discussion has been about 'how far to go'!

Paying attention to emergence – the power of simple rules

Holly Wheeler, Leadership Centre for Local Government

One of the core skills of long term creativity in complex systems is the ability to allow new ideas and ways of doing things to emerge – rather than trying to predict in advance what those ideas and behaviours will need to be.

In the systems jargon, the word 'emergence' is taken to mean:

'the way complex systems and patterns arise out of a multiplicity of relatively simple interactions... in ways that are surprising and counter-intuitive'

www.viswiki.com/en/Emergence

A simpler definition is that simple rules give rise to global behaviour. So if you can identify and change those rules you can change the whole – although not always exactly how you intended!

The example often used is how birds form a flock – the front bird is not 'leading' the flock, nor has it set a vision or process framework(!), yet the birds still seem to move as one. This is because each individual bird is following a simple set of instinctive rules. We're not birds, so we don't know the exact 'rules' they're following, but simulations suggest: fly no more than six inches away from the next bird; don't bump into each other; if in doubt head for the middle of the flock.

Of course, people do this too – you only have to look at the elegant dance that goes on at a busy station in rush hour to see that.

So what does this have to do with public service reform? Well, organisations and communities show emergence too.

When people describe what happens in their organisations, they tend to point to artefacts like structure charts, process maps and vision statements but we all know that what actually happens can be very different. Single actions may seem irrelevant or minor but the repetition of the underlying principle has impact and reflects across a system. Whether that's

Spotting your system's current 'simple rules'
- How do things actually get done, not what the manual says?
- Who makes decisions?
- What are the patterns of how we behave?
- What seem to be the unspoken assumptions?
- What is the ideas/facts currently denied and what is the underlying cause for this denial?
- If there is learning/innovation going on, how is it taking place?

Setting new rules for your Total Place exercise
- What 'rules' are we challenging and encouraging in using this process?
- What behaviours will we need the leadership to exhibit?
- What new information can we bring in to test our current assumptions: what are others are doing that we can connect to and learn from?
- Where is the definition of the issue coming from?
- What do we want to focus on; what's really important?
- Where is reward given and received?
- How does this process/intervention mirror the changes we want to see?
- How can the process support/hold people's discomfort, tension and uncertainty?

a person's thinking, an organisation's culture or the whole of public service, underneath are simple, usually unspoken rules. One common rule is 'the most senior person in the meeting gets the most airtime' – a 'rule' that can make many meetings counterproductive as people with relevant expertise or viewpoints exclude themselves from the conversation by feeling they are talking too much.

Above is a list of questions that may help you uncover the simple rules that drive your system and some that may help you set new rules for your change effort. They are useful prompts for times when you notice that things are getting stuck or going back into 'business as usual' – although asking them may not always make you popular with colleagues! Remember, changing the rules is hard work and small shifts are a massive success. Noticing them is the first step. The rules are often not conscious and processes call into question people's assumptions about how things work and sometimes deep beliefs. We can get upset or resistant when a 'rule' is noticed but, equally, it can be a huge relief to all concerned when a disabling pattern is brought out into the daylight.

Roles and responsibilities

Anne Pordes Bowers, Croydon programme manager, Pordes Associates

Total Place approaches require a mix of skills, roles and responsibilities to maximise the potential for deep cultural and service change.

Below we detail these – what we have not done is prescribe where or who must play these roles (with the exception of leadership).

Our experience suggests that every skill and role below is vital to success; they should all be equally respected and adequately resourced. The ability to think and act in real time is an important feature of Total Place, energy is best sustained by action, which may necessitate a rebalancing of priorities and workloads.

Leadership: Strong impassioned leaders need to create the permission and space for new thinking, and new ideas; they need to model new conversations, building the trust and relationships needed for the deep changes that Total Place can catalyse. Leaders need to make their commitment visible, regularly showing their collaborative commitment. They must be sufficiently senior to act as unblockers in their own organisation, advocating for change at the highest level, especially with partners.

Project/Programme management: Clear processes must be deployed to channel energy and drive into new models of delivery; this means making use of traditional project management tools to maintain and harness momentum. This project management should be light touch in terms of paper work but highly accountable in terms of action. This should include a

- **programme director** who is able to work with partners to turn vision into strategy by creating the programme as a shared journey with a route map. They interpret the changing environment, ensuring benefits are delivered and that the projects add up to a coherent whole.
- **programme manager** ensuring sensible governance and that projects are properly managed with clear milestones.

Technical expertise: Specific skills in finance, research and analysis, and powerful abilities to engage in deep listening with customers, front-line staff and others provide the rigour and analytic frameworks needed to drive out insights from the full range of inputs and data 'sources' that can help shape new solutions for the specific area as well as more systemic changes in the way that localities address challenges.

Subject expertise: The complexity of challenges addressed through a Total Place approach requires input and insight from individuals and teams who are expert in the area. These should include staff at all levels from within the locally based organisations, particularly those who have direct experience of service delivery and interaction with relevant users.

External challenge: External perspectives act as powerful stimulation for new approaches and opportunities. External does not need to be outside of the organisations but outside of the delivery chain being explored; however many Total Place pilots found that having input from outside of the locality was a powerful introduction to new methods for problem framing and problem solving.

What about external support?

The range of skills and expertise above is complex and multi-faceted; there is ample opportunity – and understandable drive – to bring in external support. There are both very good reasons for doing this, and some pitfalls that need to be managed.

External resources can add real value to a Total Place project, introducing new approaches, thinking and perspectives to the situation. They can fill specific technical gaps unique to Total Place such as sophisticated financial mapping and analytic skills or innovative approaches to listening to citizens. They may also fill generic capacity gaps, often providing programme management or leadership support.

The biggest risk of external input is outsourcing ownership and the accompanying legacy, learning and sustainability. Putting in place specific activities, including sessions with staff, key points of decision taken by local leaders etc can go some way to mitigating this risk. External resource also need internal partners to support smooth (as possible) movement through the local context and politics.

Whatever the model that you choose for your Total Place, remember to be flexible, to take time to reflect and learn and adapt as needed.

Overcoming the power of the day job

Anne Pordes Bowers, Croydon programme manager, Pordes Associates

Mike Attwood, Coventry, Warwickshire and Solihull programme manager, Coventry City Council

Transformation programmes falter because they don't mainstream within the organisations they seek to affect – they are not strong enough to pull against the day job. Personal and organisational success of the programme depends first on delivering **your** organisation's targets!

It is futile to fight the power of the day job – instead Total Place needs to become the day job – creating sustainable new ways of working. Leaders need to be a visible, engaged change sponsor without becoming bogged down in detailed 'doing'. Those who are 'doing' (including content experts, finance, customer insight and the frontline) need the support and permission to make Total Place a part of their everyday priorities – and to see how their everyday priorities deliver Total Place.

Leaders already have experience of balancing the future with delivering the here and now, and will need to draw on all of those skills as this balancing act moves into the world of partnerships.

Total Place also takes this tightrope into all levels of the organisation, where the need to maintain this balance may be new.

Getting a committed energised team is central – a team that will see Total Place as the day job. This requires:

- **Time** to build passion, commitment and energy for Total Place
- **Permission** to reprioritise their activities so that Total Place receives due attention
- **Protection** from requests that come as part of their old 'day job'
- **Commitment** from those 'above' (at all levels) that the work is moving towards change and improvement

Common pitfalls are:

Failing to realise how different/challenging Total Place can be

The Total Place approach can be very culturally challenging; colleagues are using new approaches, different timescales (e.g. deliberately protecting time for problem framing) and working in new partnerships. Unlike many other projects or programmes focused on a specific change or service (often prescribed centrally), Total Place is about problem definition and solution; it's not always clear what colour the light at the end of the tunnel will be – or indeed the road to get there.

Failing to spend time developing buy-in and enthusiasm beyond senior leadership level

Total Place can be seized on by enthusiastic innovative senior leaders who then handover to colleagues with less exposure, clarity, energy and excitement. Those who first embrace Total Place approaches should spend time – patiently – developing the same excitement for potential within those who will have to redefine their day-job to deliver and sustain the new way of working.

Over-delegating to external consultants

There is a very powerful temptation to bring in external consultants to lead and deliver a Total Place project; however there is a **very real risk that capacity and legacy are lost**. This is in part about the capacity and learning that happens with new approaches, new learning. Perhaps more dangerously, the passion, relationships and powerful stories of the Total Place journey reside with – and leave with – these consultants rather than with the people who have to sustain the change.

Keeping too close an anxious eye on 'here and now' performance.

The pull of on-going performance is easy to underestimate. Ensure that performance functions are well led and well resourced. Support easy management of on-going day to day work, e.g. using a Balanced Scorecard or Dashboard. Explore how some of the day-to-day activities (e.g. budget exercises, regular performance management) might be amended to reflect what is happening in Total Place (e.g. can budget planning sit alongside the mapping work you might be undertaking – how can one support and feed the other?). Again the mantra is about making the day job and Total Place one and the same thing

Finally, how do you keep the culture energised and alive, and how do people understand that their day job has shifted as they have developed? You are probably asking professionals in your organisation to undertake reflective supervision. Do you do this? Programmes like Total Place offer opportunities to co-consult with colleagues elsewhere, find a mentor or learning set, or hold 'reflection sessions' with each other.

Using story-telling to reflect on the journey can help people reconnect with why they came into public service. Simple acts like complementing complaints reports with stories of inspirational service or visiting front-line teams to hear how the organisation can help them with ideas for change helps you keep yourself and the organisation fresh.

Finally, take time – personally and professionally – to recognise the significant effort and challenge that goes into driving and sustaining a Total Place programme is vital. Remember – at the end there is a new day job!

Linking up people across your system to generate new ideas and agreements – the power of multi-party conversations.

3

Section 3
Connecting the system to itself

Building the common narrative and language

Ruth Kennedy, Manchester City Region including Warrington and Croydon programme lead

One of the most common mistakes that we make in our enthusiasm to work collaboratively with colleagues from other organisations or sectors, is that we assume that we all start from the same place and from the same understanding.

But the reality is that even when people all have the same word in their job titles – 'children' or 'families', for example – they will think differently, prioritise differently, and bring different perspectives to bear on analysis, depending on what their originating organisation, culture and training requires of them.

It is enormously beneficial to design carefully some shared experiences which build a common starting point and language, before launching into saving the world together. This can enable – assuming you are brave enough to allow sufficient time – shared problem-framing of real depth and value, building common purpose and intent which will stand the project in very good stead.

Some techniques which we used in Croydon's Total Place programme which proved very effective in the early weeks included:

Systems thinking

We used systems thinking techniques – such as the drawing of rich pictures and the development of ideal systems diagrams – to understand better the perspectives we brought to the problems we were aiming to fix (in Croydon's case the achievement of better outcomes for children, focused on the early years). We explored our own mental traps, and realised that each of us only sees a small part of the totality of the system which needs redesigning. We began to see that fixing the early years system was going to need **all** of us: no one part of the system was to blame when things didn't work, and no-one could solve the totality of the challenge on their own.

> **"I can really see how this way of thinking and working can change the world."**
> **Police representative**
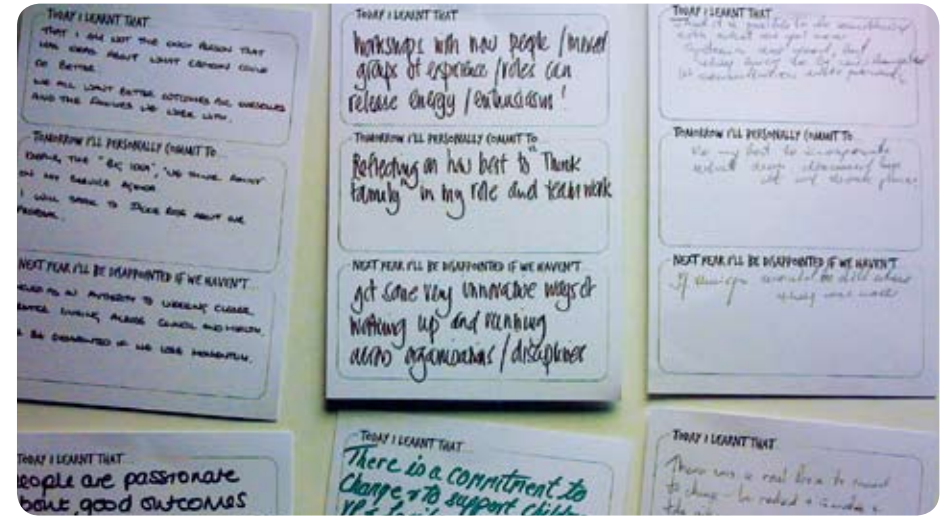
Listening together to the voice of service users

We held six workshops in the innovative space of ThePublicOffice – a leadership experience which uses video-ethnography to help participants see the world through the eyes of service users. These stories of families' interactions with public services showed us very powerfully how 'the system' creates all sorts of problems and unintended consequences. And they made us realise that we – collectively – **are** the system. We found our organisational differences fell away as we were energised by shared empathy to roll our sleeves up and collaborate together on system redesign. Exemplars of brilliantly customer-focused service design from all over the world and from all three sectors gave us inspiration to think differently and better. We took our emotion into our work, and created a wealth of ideas and incredible shared commitment to make change happen.

In Croydon all these activities involved participants from across the Local Strategic Partnership, including the Council, the primary care trust, the Police, child and

> **"I thought ThePublicOffice workshop was brilliant – very very powerful... For many people it was the first time that they had had a conversation like this with others from different organisations. It was genuinely inspiring and will precipitate change in both thinking and doing."**
> **PCT representative**

adolescent mental health services. the hospital, the voluntary and community sector. The events were deliberately held in neutral venues, in physical spaces which assumed no hierarchy and were specifically designed and facilitated to generate energy, ideas and fun. Small details – such as only having people's first names and not their job titles on their name badges; making people work in diverse groups from all levels and backgrounds; encouraging kinaesthetic techniques such as drawing – all signal to participants that the rules of the game are different, no-one organisation or individual is in the ascendency, and that everyone's contributions will be important and valued.

Triangulating your place – new conversations for Total Place

Karen Ellis, Leadership Centre adviser

One of the key initiating ideas for Total Place was the intention to create a process with a combined focus on customers, costs and culture – no easy task!

One way in which pilots are doing this is to convene and facilitate new kinds of conversations in their places:

- Between professionals and the public
- Between managers and leaders from different organisations and sectors
- Between politicians and communities

The conversations range from small scale negotiations to the development of new governance groups and large, creative events.

These conversations have been about building trust, creating new relationships and generating new ideas. And one of the key learnings for many participants in Total Place is that conversations really can change things – unexpected agreements and unpredictable new moves have shown up in a wide range of stories to come out of the pilot areas.

So how does this fit with the idea of changing conversations, within pilots and between pilots and national colleagues in Whitehall and Parliament? In the figure opposite, I demonstrate a link between conversations and changes in social provision – each potential change requires a different sort of 'new conversation' or at least a new **style** of conversation. This new style can be simply described using one of the familiar mottos of Total Place from 'parent-child' to 'adult-adult'. It is a style that **maximises** direct and open requests, sharing of positions and **minimises** spin, 'managerial' speak and hiding behind non-functional professional jargon. And, for those of us steeped in the 'language games' of our professions, political ideologies and organisations, it's pretty hard to maintain! Even more so, while the pressure for concrete answers, evidence and 'good ideas' grows...

Total Place: Changing the way we think together
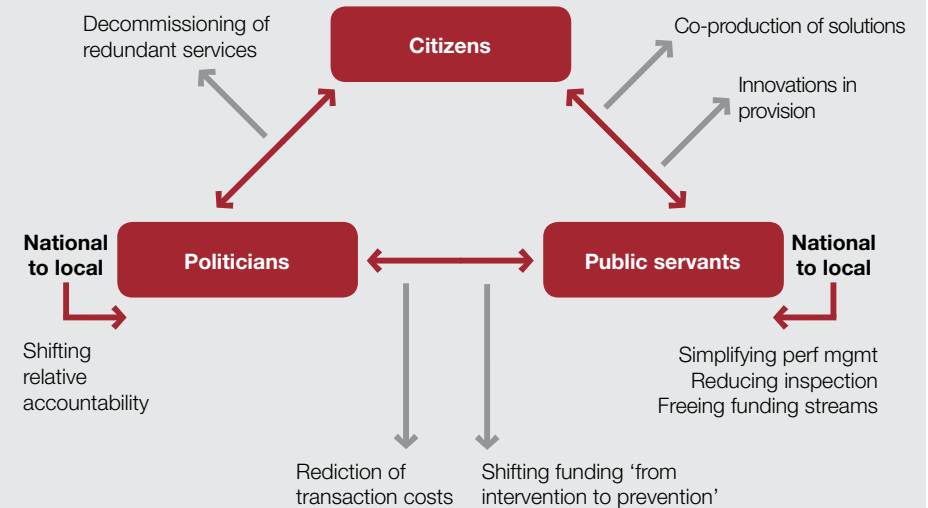
The question for Total Place has been how we push ourselves to be radical in these new conversations, rather than just resorting to the conventional answers? How do we balance the 'quick wins' of the solutions at the left end of my arrow with the potential for massive (albeit longer term) gains on the right. Especially when we can't 'prove' that ideas like co-production and publicly agreed decommissioning actually lead to expenditure savings rather than just identifying yet more un-met needs.

One way might be to recognise that some ideas coming out of the pilots have been fairly black-and-white, quantifiable and based on evidence. Others have been in the more challenging, more radical grey areas. Where we can't predict the results but we can make some guesses using our qualitative reasoning and professional judgement. In these days of hard targets and evidence-based everything, it can be hard to hold our anxiety for long enough to let the 'grey data' through – but if we don't, we run the risk of losing much of the thinking that has been at the centre of Total Place.

Building a partnership protocol

Monica Fogarty, Assistant Chief Executive, Warwickshire County Council

When Warwickshire County Council first considered becoming a Total Place pilot, I thought – this has to be good news – a great opportunity. We were more than willing to look at anything that that would yield both tangible benefits and efficiencies…especially in this economic climate.

With a little unpicking it soon became clear that the Total Place programme presented the ideal opportunity for us to join up with our sub-regional partners in Solihull and Coventry...an opportunity to escalate the sub-regional working we'd been talking about for some time.

Our Total Place pilot has been a success on so many levels. It will deliver real improvements to the way we support schools and therefore improve the experience of those touched by services for children, plus also throw in a few efficiency savings and there is no question that it's the best way to work. That's the official stuff. Personally, I think the real success has been with our enhanced partnership working – the people and the organisations.

People from the 'top of the shop' from the three councils meet every fortnight. We clear our diaries, look at our non-existent papers and follow a loose agenda. We don't have papers for these meetings and we don't stand on ceremony. We just get together around the table and talk about what's on our minds, what's working, what's not and what we're going to do about it. We let off steam, have a moan and do some fantastic visioning about the things that we can make happen if we can get our organisations lined up and sharing our passion. And then we go away and make it happen!

The relationships between the three councils are now better than ever. Our discussions are open, honest and often challenging. We have achieved an air of mutual support and camaraderie that you would want to bottle. To my mind this has had a significant and direct influence on the success of the pilot itself. But there is still some way to go if we want to sustain this positive way of working, particularly given that the financial, economic and political pressures upon each of our organisations will grow and demand much more return from far less investment.

Source: Wayne matthews - Warwickshire County council
From left to right: Jim Graham, Chief Executive, Warwickshire County Council; Martin Reeves, Chief Executive, Coventry City Council; Mark Rogers, Chief Executive, Solihull Council; Monica Fogarty, Assistant Chief Executive, Warwickshire County Council; Mike Attwood, Coventry, Warwickshire and Solihull programme manager, Coventry City Council

In Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire we are taking seriously the need to protect and sustain this relationship. So much so that we are developing a protocol for the way we work in partnership. We are defining the things that we find acceptable and unacceptable, things such as behaviours, language, communications, conflict resolution and many other things. We want to work together, and not fall out doing it. When it gets tough and we need to sort out the sharing of efficiency savings, or decide which council takes the lead on a shared service we need to be able to deal with each other sensitively, but progressively. So investing in a Partnership Protocol is paramount and will hopefully sustain what we've built so far. But we need to give it life and roll out our new way of working across our many partnerships. We're all committed to doing just that and rest assured, if there is any sign of the Protocol becoming only fine words, we'll be having a dust-up!

Reaching the hearts of Herefordshire

Mari Davis, Leadership Centre adviser

'Reaching the hearts of Herefordshire' is a politically led approach to Total Place that connects local councillors with their communities, supported by public service managers.

With the reputation of national politics and confidence in public services at an all time low and the need to cut spending at the fore, the Conservative Leader of the council views the connection with communities to create shared solutions as vital.

Many of the Total Place pilots have focussed on thematic areas and involved political leaders and portfolio holders. There is the potential for this approach to leave other councillors feeling disconnected. If Total Place is firmly rooted in the councilors place - their ward - it becomes every bit relevant.

The purpose to our work in Herefordshire was clear and repeated often:

Place councillors at the heart of their community	Public services and community and voluntary sector work together differently locally
Empower and encourage communities to do even more for themselves	Do something practical – take action!

The themes varied locally and included:

- What can the community do to be even more self sufficient in health and wellbeing in Mortimer?
- What can the community do to sustain rural enterprise in Golden Valley?
- How can we work together to achieve shared solutions in Kingston?
- How can we create a thriving community for young people in Bromyard?

The greatest learning is that it **is** possible to restore confidence in rural democracy through Total Place. Politicians are of their place, recognise the resourcefulness of rural communities and know their electorate well. If given support they can work with local community leaders to save money in the place, to influence and listen rather than to control, and to convene public services around what matters most in their communities.

The approach to the programme was quite simple and consistent in each place. The process need take no longer than 10 weeks from beginning to end.

Many solutions to the challenges faced by rural communities have been generated and are being taken forward. These include:

- investing in the broadband infrastructure
- celebrating volunteering
- combining community and public service assets in places
- changes to housing
- planning and transport approaches
- young people influencing services – all involving closer working between politicians and communities to generate shared solutions

If you are interested in using this approach your purpose needs to be clear and expect initial resistance from all sides – trust is hard earned in communities for good reason. Planning and celebration of what is already working paid off. Communities are fed up with over consultation and expectations around more funding need to be managed.

Further details being published shortly by the Leadership Centre.

Finding novel ways of working with Whitehall

Steve Nicklen, Leicester and Leicestershire programme lead, managing partner, DNA LLP

Top tips:

- Learn together with relevant Whitehall officials and co-create solutions with them, rather than sending fully worked-up proposals for change
- Find a suitable, senior Whitehall 'Champion' who sympathises with your broad objectives and who will be willing to support you in your dealings with the centre
- When you are given opportunities to make proposals, make them specific and evidence-based

© John Jarvis, Leadership Centre for Local Government

Those pilots which have taken the opportunity of the high profile of the Total Place pilots in Whitehall to find new and more constructive ways of working have greatly benefitted from this. Specifically, they have made good use of the High Level Officials Group of senior officials who have been coordinating the relationship between the pilots and Ministers, they have forged good relationships with their Place Champions and they have taken up the chance to participate in joint workshops with civil service colleagues to progress their specific themes.

The traditional way of working between local and national government is for the former, individually or via the Local Government Association, to formulate proposals for change in policy and practice. These are refined and polished locally and then sent to Ministers. Then they are handed onto those officials who 'own' the policy/practice in question – they may well have personally developed them and certainly feel some intellectual and emotional attachment to them – who experience this, because they are human, as some kind of attack. From this frame of reference, they then see their role as to kick the tyres of the proposal. Their resources are such that they are usually able to kick them to destruction fairly soon. End of story, until the next round.

But some Total Place pilots have approached the matter differently.

First, the three pilots that shared the theme of drugs and alcohol misuse. Birmingham, Leicester/Leicestershire and Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland, wanted from the start to learn together and to co-create solutions together. 'Together' means with the relevant Whitehall departments, including, but not exclusively, the Department of Health, Home Office, Treasury and Department of Communities and Local Government, as well as across the three pilots. The external advisors designed and facilitated workshops to this end. Where necessary they also liaised with the relevant officials on behalf of their pilots, helped in this by the fact that they had considerable personal experience of working in, or consulting to, Whitehall departments.

Second, where obstacles to progress have been experienced in some pilots, and this has been a rare event in the work to date, the presence of Whitehall Champions, at DG or Permanent Secretary level, on the High Level Officials Group, has provided a swift and effective way of facilitating progress.

Finally, it has been helpful when pilots have recognised where Whitehall can help on specific issues, and how they can be helped to help. For example the Leicester/Leicestershire pilot responded to an invitation by suggesting to the Treasury and CLG a number of specific changes to the national indicator set, which will have the joint effect, if accepted, of both improving the coverage of national indicator set and also eliminating the need for other, parallel performance indicators, significantly reducing the net burden of inspection, as a result. Specific suggestions for change were welcomed, where a vaguer, generalised request for improvement and simplification would have been less so.

Holding the line – managing communications in Total Place

Rebecca Cox, Leadership Centre for Local Government

If there's one thing that we discovered in being part of Total Place, it's that you get asked questions. **A lot** of questions. Questions that we didn't always have the answer to. So in all of this how did we keep everyone happy?

Total Place has a huge number of people, partnerships and organisations involved. The Leadership Centre sits somewhere in the middle of a web of place leaders, civil servants, pilots, programme managers, press, 'parallel places' and the interested public. That's a lot of 'P's to talk to! We found that managing expectations was key to keeping the task at a manageable size. It's very easy to fall into the trap of trying to please everyone, with the result that you could with very little effort fill your waking hours with preparing reports for all and sundry.

Within the project teams, it's important to negotiate responsibilities at the very beginning of the work. This can be a challenging time, as differences between, for example, more traditional, gantt-chart-driven organisations and those with a looser project management style can be a source of frustration. You'll probably end up with a plan that sits somewhere between the two. The plan will change over time as the project grows, but having the key responsibilities mutually agreed is crucial to the smooth running of the programme.

Externally, we kept a lot of the requests in check by the relatively simple expedient of sending out a weekly update that covers key events, publications and news items and directs subscribers to resources that will give them more information. The newsletter is also a great forum for alerting the Total Place community to questions from interested organisations – a much simpler way of connecting people than trying to find the answer to every query ourselves.
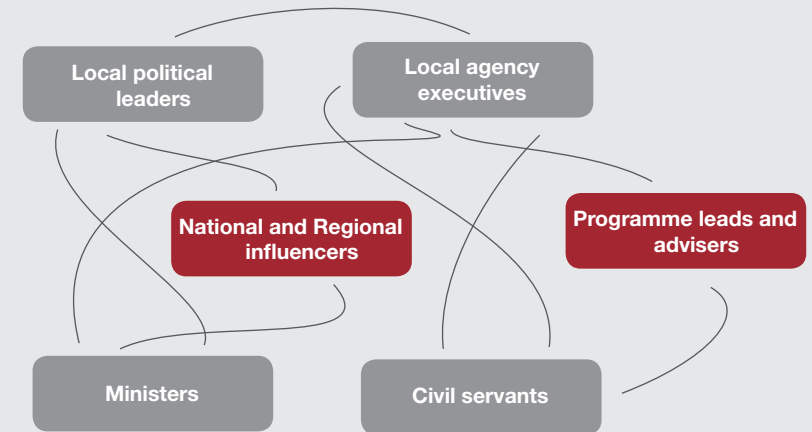
The online Community of Practice (CoP) is another platform that allows people to connect and share resources. It has a useful document library that means we can direct people to it rather than sending out information multiple times. It also provides a space for people working on Total Place to share their own resources and stories with a wider audience.

Our online resources have been discussed in more detail elsewhere, but it's worth noting that having a website is now a must for any project that has a public-facing element. Having a readymade answer to the most frequently asked questions saves a lot of time and energy that can be better applied elsewhere.

This article does read somewhat like a guide to avoiding actually speaking to people, but I hope that's not the message you'll take away. A project like Total Place inevitably generates a lot of interest, and it's easy to get swept away in the tide of queries that arrive. We found there were a few simple things that we could do to make the process easier for everyone involved and make the best use of our people and resources.

We are, of course, happy to answer any questions – just leave a message and we'll get back to you.

Communities of practice

Ben Alcraft, Leadership Centre for Local Government

Communities of practice have been an integral part of organisational thinking since the term was coined by cognitive anthropologists Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger in their publication *'Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation'*.

The phenomenon is as old as the most ancient of mariners, "formed by people who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain" (Wenger), whether it's a book club, an artists collective or a revolutionary clique.

We're all (invariably) involved in a number of pre-existing communities of practice: at the core, or on the margins of a club, network or group. They rely on a *development* of shared practice and transcend a simple common interest or purpose. A chance encounter with a like-minded peer does not, in itself, constitute a community of *practice*; but if that encounter leads to a second meeting and a practical discussion, then a community of practice is formed.

As simple as this very human concept appears, its recent coinage should not be under-estimated. And its contemporary, theoretical incarnation lends itself to a much needed and well-defined 'space' for practitioners to share experiences, stories, tools and techniques. The word 'practice' suggests that a community is 'doing' something when it meets. But a community is not 'doing' in and of itself,

as Wenger argues; we are 'doing' "in a historical and social context that gives structure and meaning to what we do".

That structure and meaning emerges from communities' discussions and can take many forms. These are just a few of the activities/goals we might convene for:

- Problem solving
- Requests for information
- Coordination and synergy
- Discussing developments
- Mapping knowledge and identifying gaps

The explicit knowledge that emerges within a community of practice is easy to share and involves the articulation of one's own experiences, not co-dependent on human contact. But there is also the tacit knowledge to consider, which is unconscious and harder to define, "the subtle cues, the untold rules of thumb", (Wenger). It's this duality of knowledge; the human contact and the articulated wisdom that makes the community of practice an invaluable tool for learning and developing common practice.

Components of a social theory of learning: An initial inventory
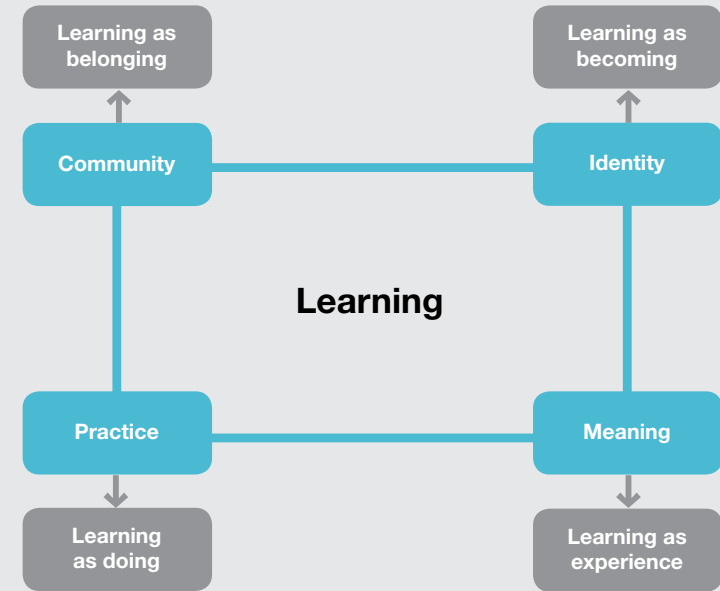
Source: Etienne Wenger

Of the plethora of organisations using the 'communities of practice' technique, the institution of government is no exception. The increasing complexity and scale, especially in times of austerity, suggests that capturing 'knowledge' is an ever-escalating challenge; and because of the number of players involved, there's no substitute for getting them in the same place, at the same time.

Belonging to a community of practice is not a linear learning process. There's no clear beginning, no clear end and communities come together, develop, evolve and disperse as they reach their natural conclusions. For the many players involved in Total Place; off-line and on-line communities of practice have helped to forge connections across organisational, departmental and hierarchical boundaries. And as we've discovered, the richer the membership, the more experiences, stories, tools and techniques we share.

Virtual spaces for Total Places

Rebecca Cox, Leadership Centre for Local Government

Like much of Total Place, the development of the online resources is still a work in progress. We've been learning by doing in a very real way. What follows are some of the ways we've found that the online world can support the offline one.

Firstly, online spaces can serve as **repositories of information**. This can be user-created, as in the Improvement and Development Agency's (IDeA) Community of Practice (CoP) document library, or more centrally controlled, as in the content shared on the Total Place website. Different kinds of information can also be published differently. For example, details of the governance arrangements of Total Place are static and don't need any input from users to be relevant and useful. In contrast, keeping information about what's happening in the 80-odd 'parallel places' across the country up to date is too big a task for any one person to do alone. Instead, we made it available as a wiki on the CoP so that anyone who's a registered member can go in and edit the text to reflect what's been happening in their place.

Online fora are also places for people to **share ideas**. This can be as simple as enabling comments on web pages, or taking advantage of tools like Twitter to start conversations with individuals and groups from a wider audience. The CoP embodies this best, as it provides a safe space for members to ask questions, share stories and give advice. It can take time and effort from CoP facilitators to help members do this without support from the facilitation team, but the investment is more than worth it. Creating a self-supporting community around Total Place will greatly aid the work's long-term sustainability.

The egalitarian nature of online working, combined with the tendency for participants online to be at the middle and lower levels of an organisation gives a wider range of people the opportunity to develop and collaborate on new ideas without needing endorsement from senior leaders. This helps to empower leadership at all levels and increase the capacity for innovation and creativity – all helping to develop better outcomes for local people.

The tools for doing all of this are readily available. We used WordPress and our combined in-house talents to build a website in a couple of weeks – it might not win design prizes, but it's **flexible, easy to use and free!** We also set up an online CoP on the IDeA's great communities of practice platform to allow a more interactive debate than is possible on the website. In addition to these two main channels, we shared content and contacts through Twitter, YouTube, SlideShare and Facebook, but there are lots of other (often free) services out there that you can make use of – just remember to make content accessible to as many users as possible.

This piece touches on just a few of the many ways that online resources can support the creation of communities around a large piece of work. Anyone interested in exploring further might enjoy Clay Shirky's *'Here Comes Everybody'* and Charles Leadbeater's *'We-Think'*. Don't be afraid just to start experimenting, though; there's lots to discover and you can try as much or as little as you like. See you online!

Find us at:
www.localleadership.gov.uk/totalplace
www.communities.idea.gov.uk
www.twitter.com/totalplace

1 Total Place website
2 Communities of practice for local government
3 Twitter
4 YouTube
5 Facebook

Recognising the emotional impacts of change on people and the effects of social dynamics on groups and organisations.

4

Section 4
Being human

Unlocking organisations and enabling participation

Geoff Norris, Bradford and Kent programme lead, director of Team Consultants Ltd and BQC Ltd

Involvement in Total Place related activities means different things for different organisations. Understanding these differences is important if the project is to succeed.

The obvious differences between central government departments and local government is that they think differently, have different structures and very different cultures. Some have patients; some have clients; some have cases and some even have customers!

The basic premise of Total Place has to be the focus on securing long-term **sustainable efficiency gains**; it is **not** about **cuts or savings**. It's about identifying different ways of thinking and doing things and challenging existing systems, methodologies and approaches in order to deliver sustainable efficiencies.

Underpinning all of this has to be the focus on understanding the individual organisation's **culture**. In the Bradford and District Total Place pilot we quickly identified the varying cultural aspects of the key partners and players. We found it necessary to define culture as the **attitudes, beliefs and behaviours** that we experienced on a daily basis and how these directly affected their involvement in the project.

To ensure the overall success of the project we applied the **BQC Alignment Model**. By doing so we were able to maintain a sense of purpose and a focus on challenging the way we all worked against the vision-culture-structure-resources that were required in order to deliver a Total Place approach in Bradford and District.

The above model illustrates that unless organisational alignment is fully understood and appreciated, then the chances of an organisation achieving the desired outcomes is significantly limited. High-performing organisations are very effective in their approach to alignment. This is achieved through top level leadership that understands the interdependencies between the factions as outlined in the alignment model.

To interpret the model read across from left to right, the top line illustrates how you need to align vision-culture-structure-resources in order to deliver the results.

The BQC Alignment Model
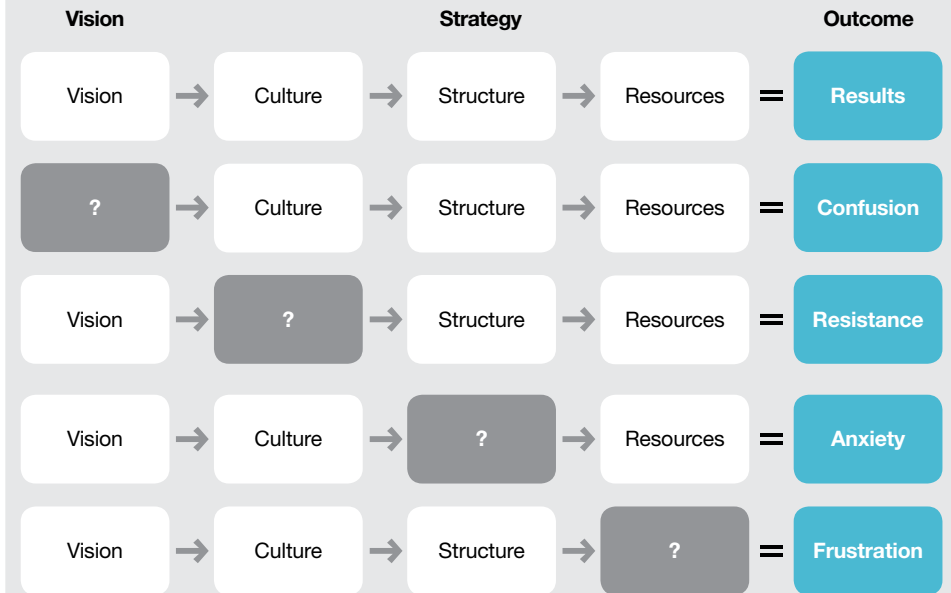
Please note that this model is protected by copyright and cannot be used or reproduced in any format without the written permission of Team Consultants Ltd & the BQC Network

The following four grey boxes illustrate what will happen if you fail to work equally on each faction and fail to understand and secure the interdependencies.

- **Vision**; owning the vision and aspiring to take the organisation into the future is a key leadership responsibility. If this is not achieved then organisational wide **confusion** is the likely result.
- **Culture**; understanding the importance of constantly seeking to develop the future culture (the what and the how). If the importance of developing the culture is not fully understood, then the outcome is organisation wide **resistance**.
- **Structure**; developing and securing the appropriate organisational structure. Failure to achieve this results in high levels of **anxiety**.
- **Resources**; the utilisation of resources to deliver the required outcomes is a key aspect of effective leadership that secures sound organisational performance. If this key area is ignored, then **frustration** will inhibit organisational progress.

In summary, a frustrated, anxious, resistant and confused organisation is not what you want; it will not deliver the required results!

Why do people think the way they think?

David Bolger, Leadership Centre adviser

The following analysis is based on the work of Dan Gardner, particularly his 2008 book '*Risk: The Science and Politics of Fear*' (2008). In that work, Gardner develops a thesis about increasing global societal fear and risk aversion.

Other writers in this furrow include Christopher Booker, who has written extensively on how 'public scares' develop, such as global warming. For the purposes of this guide, Gardner starts his book with a helpful summary of how the human brain works, and some of the implications for the way people make up their minds and take decisions.

Gardner draws on research into the human brain to suggest that there are two key ingredients to human decision-making: the 'head' and the 'gut'. The head is described as reasonable, conscious, calculating and explaining. The gut is about feelings, intuition, emotion, and speed. These two components of the brain have evolved over different timeframes: the head is a relatively recent phenomenon, evolving in the past 200,000 years or so. The gut has been a key element in the brain's working for something like 2.5 million years. So it seems that the human brain is essentially a very primitive instrument in a sophisticated shell.

This has important implications for the way people decide things. In essence, their intuitive mind will jump to conclusions some time before their rational mind catches up. Plainly, this is ideal if you're about to be eaten by a lion but may be of less value when faced with knottier problems. Gardner takes the argument further by reference to the work of two psychologists, Kahneman and Tversky. Writing in 1974, their article on Heuristics and Biases tended to confirm that the idea of human beings as rational, calculating beings was at best a limited picture. They identified, among other things, a number of prevalent heuristics (rules of thumb) in human decision-making.

For example, there is the **anchoring** heuristic: this encourages people to take decisions unconsciously guided by some anchoring fact. So, for example, if a supermarket advertises a special offer on wine, but limits people to a maximum of 10 bottles, the evidence suggests that people will buy on average seven/eight bottles. Without the 'guide limit', they buy four/five bottles.

GUT	HEAD
Feeling	Reason
Conscious	Conscious
Lightning	Slow
Intuitive	Calculating
Emotional	Explaining
↓	↓
Primitive man fight/flight c 2.5m years ago	c 150-200k years ago

And the **typical things** heuristic is just as interesting. In research, people were asked about the probability of 1000 people being killed by floods in the USA next year. The average probability was around 0.5. But those asked about the probability of an earthquake in California, leading to 1,000 or more deaths was much higher. This is even though we know that the probability of two events is lower than the probability of one. So it seems that people can convince themselves of relatively improbable outcomes if they are given one or more plausible, if still improbable, hints or guides.

This is the argument that Gardner, Booker and others use to illustrate why major 'scare' stories can develop, despite their inherent improbability, and is a useful indicator of the limits of human rationality.

Understanding the emotional response to change

Roger Britton, Worcestershire programme manager, Worcestershire County Council

Once the momentum of change has begun those involved will have a reaction to it. The theory here suggests that such reaction is inevitable and unless we deal with that reaction, and perhaps more important, the different reactions of different people, it may get in the way.

Total Place is an essentially practical and pragmatic exercise so what, you may wonder, is the point of a look at models of change which we all did in management training anyway?

The answer is simple. Of course Total Place is about results on the ground and in the current financial position we don't have the luxury of contemplating our navel and engaging in woolly theorising. But people in organisations don't behave like boxes on a structure chart and if we pretend that they do then even the best solutions will fail.

What is needed is a simple and robust understanding of how people and organisations change. This may not stand the finer tests of academic scrutiny but will provide a practical framework upon which the delivery of transformational Total Place can be delivered. It will, if shared, facilitate discussion by providing a lingua franca for the process.

The most useful way of thinking about the way individuals respond to change is by using the Kubler-Ross approach. This was originally devised as a way of looking at grief but has emerged as a valuable way of plotting human reaction to all significant change. Unlike the force field approach there is little value in attempting to plot where individuals sit on this curve, although it can be a useful tool for an individual to follow their own reactions over a period of change. The real value in sharing this model is to keep reminding all those involved that people will be at different points along the curve and that those doing the detailed work are more likely to be ahead of others, so when they are positive and enthusiastic others simply will not be and have to be helped along their journey.

The Change Curve
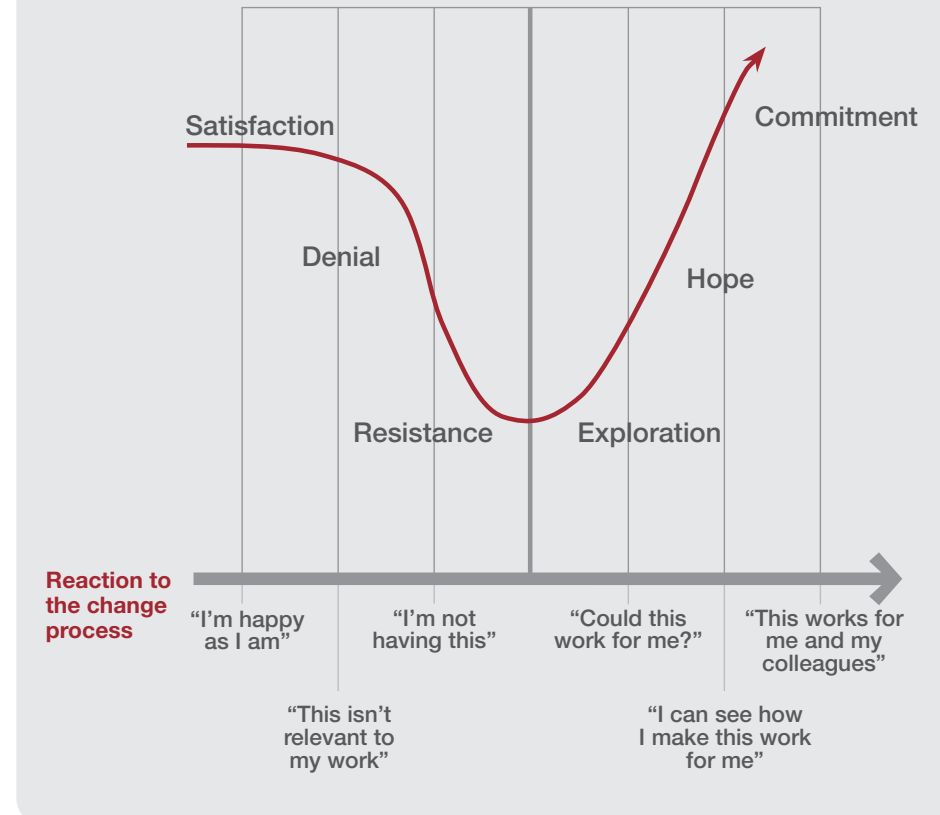
Source: Elizabeth Kubler Ross

In dealing with all this the essential tool is communication. Obviously communication must be clear, accurate and timely but as well as the **what** of communication we must turn our attention to the **how**. This does not refer to using newsletters or briefings but to the way we manage the interactions which make up that communication.

Managing conversations that matter

Ruth Kennedy, Manchester City Region including Warrington and Croydon programme lead

Leading place requires a great team. But great teams rarely start off as great teams: they usually start as a group of individuals, who need to learn how to work together as a whole.

Peter Senge argues that great teams are actually learning organisations – groups of people who over time enhance their capacity to create what they truly desire to create. This involves development of new capacities and fundamental shifts of mind – individually and collectively.

One way to encourage team development over the course of a programme is to set aside regular time for intentional shared reflection. Asking good questions and listening well to the answers is a very powerful skill that can help us understand more about others and ourselves. If we get this right, information will flow, learning will emerge, cultures will shift and connections will be made that help transform experience into insight which informs different thinking and doing.

How do we do this?

It can be a challenge to get senior people to set aside time in busy diaries for 'reflection', and you will need to persuade them of its importance! Once participants have agreed in principle, get the time secured in their diaries for a regular slot – perhaps every 4-6 weeks. A good session will need at least 90 minutes. It is particularly important that the conversations are well managed and

facilitated, so the group quickly senses that the sessions will be personally and collectively valuable.

Having a framework in place can help the conversation feel 'safe' for participants and ensure the time is focused and fruitful. A very simple tool for managing such 'conversations that matter' is the ORID framework which gives the group a structure to think within.

Participants consider their personal responses to a set of questions, and then share their thinking with each other. Opposite you will see the ORID framework for a focused conversation. The questions under the headings are illustrative of the kinds of question that can be used.

How might a conversation work?

Move through each heading (O,R,I,D) in turn, asking the group to write down their personal response to the questions, working on their own. This may take 10-15 minutes for participants to complete. Then invite each member of the group to share their reflections under Objective. Once they have listened to each other and discussed what they have heard, follow by sharing their thinking under the 'Reflective' category, and so on.

Objective
(What has been happening?)
- What happened: facts, issues?
- What words or phrases do you remember/stand out?
- What are some of the key phrases or images?

Reflective
(Your personal reaction – emotions, associations with the facts)
- What surprised you?
- What was the highpoint for you?
- Where did you struggle?
- How did you feel as a result?

Interpretive
(So what? What does this mean?)
- What were the people saying?
- What does this mean for me/us?
- What are we learning?
- What are some of the deeper questions you hold now as a result?

Decisional
(What now?)
- What is your/our response?
- What can you do here about these issues?
- What actions can you take?
- What are the next steps?

What will we achieve?
The framework gives individuals space to consider what has been happening in the project for them, and to share those reflections in a structured way. You will find that this both builds a common sense of what is happening and the learning which is being experienced through the work, **and** allows insight into how things can be experienced differently by different people. It builds common purpose and secures shared decision-making.

> **"Once you begin to master team learning or systems thinking, it is very difficult to play the old office game of optimizing your position at the expense of the whole."**
>
> **Peter Senge:** *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook* (1994)

> **"The reflective process has been excellent. When I first saw that we were going to do this I said 'Oh no!' but in fact I have really found it has enriched the whole process. It has been good for us as individuals and as a team. It has made us come together and really share. When you come together and reflect together it really helps us to understand not only our own positions but that of others too. I think that it has been very important and quite profound in terms of the work we have done and the leadership we are developing."**
>
> **Croydon Director, Total Place** (2010)

Working in groups – understanding our social needs

Karen Ellis, Leadership Centre adviser

Once you get going on your Total Place work, you will notice that you are spending **a lot** of time in groups – formal meetings, large system events, design groups – and that sometimes either your or others are definitely uncomfortable in those groups. Total Place creates a strong emphasis on collaborative working and on getting together to uncover, create and negotiate.

There is always as risk that we then assume (often against previous experience) that working in groups is always 'a good thing' and is relatively trouble free. Not so.

You will also have noticed that some groups, events and meetings work better than others – often because there is an effective leader or facilitator present. But what is it that these people are **doing** that makes the difference ?

One thing to consider is that an effective group leader or facilitator has, consciously or unconsciously, taken account not only of the task to be carried out but also the human social needs of the people in the room.

Many social and psychological theorists have had a look at groups and how they work (often those who have come from a family systems background) but two of the simplest and most comprehensive sets of ideas come from Bert Hellinger and David Kantor. Bert and David are both psychologists and therapists who began their work in family groups but who have later extended their work to social and organisational settings.

My own summaries of Hellinger's and Kantor's views of people's social needs are outlined in the figures opposite. There is a huge amount to be read about both of their work – I thoroughly recommend both to anyone who wants to work with groups more effectively. However, to get you on your way, you might want to think about whether the groups in which you work are currently addressing the social needs of all of their members – and the impacts on the task if they are not. For example :
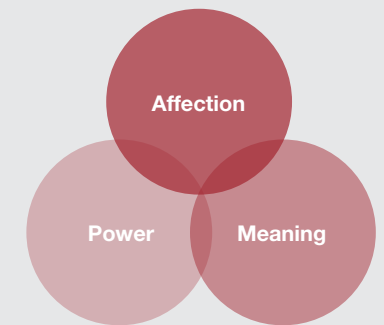
- Belonging needs – are people properly welcomed and introduced to each other?
- Loyalty needs – are people's professions and organisations respected or are they 'bad-mouthed' or described in generic terms – "the NHS always does x"?

Personal needs within the group
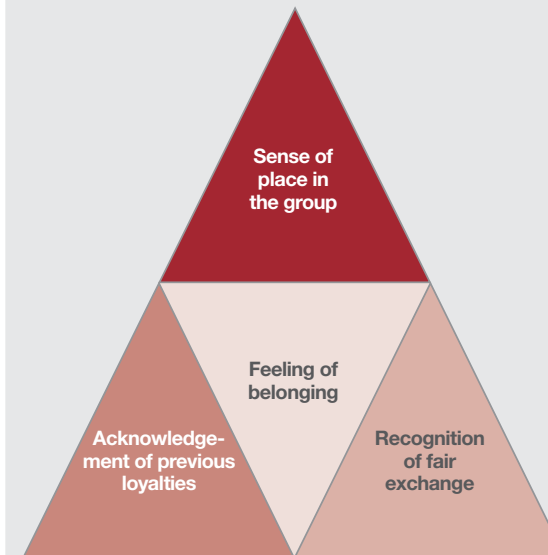
Adapted from the work of Bert Hellinger

Human social needs

Adapted from the work of David Kantor

- Place needs – do people know why they are in the group and what level of importance they have in it – leader, contributor, decision maker, interested onlooker etc?
- Fair exchange needs – are all players bringing something of value and is that value respected by everyone in the group – resources, expertise, perspective etc?
- Affect needs – is there an atmosphere of warmth and collective endeavour, even when there is conflict in the air?
- Power needs – do people balance air time and allow themselves to be influenced as well as expecting to influence others?
- Meaning needs – is there a sense of common purpose, of what this group is here to do at this time?

If the answer to any of the questions above is a resounding 'No!', you and the group leader or facilitator may want to have a look at that question. It may also be an interesting area of conversation for the group as a whole as well (although groups tend to avoid these sorts of discussions until things actually do start to go wrong).

At the very least, try to introduce some of these ideas into your own thinking and start to notice how you could make a difference to the group by your own actions, even if no one else knows what you are doing!

You can learn more about Bert's and David's work at www.hellinger.com and www.davidkantortheory.com

Why don't we do what we know how to do? And why do we do things we know don't work?

David Bolger, Leadership Centre adviser

Opportunity and risk for Total Place

Why is there so much knowledge in the world that, collectively, we choose to ignore? Why is it that we so frequently work long and hard, against astounding odds, merely to 'discover' insights which are already well known? And it also seems pretty clear that, not only are we reluctant to 'learn' some well-worn lessons but we are also stubbornly resistant to unlearning some lessons which are plainly wrong.

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What might the reasons be?

Here are some suggestions:

'Ignorance'

Just because something is 'known', doesn't mean everybody knows it. We need to check that known ideas, like the value and challenges of partnership work, really are well known and understood; maybe we've just forgotten, and need reminding.

NIH, Not Invented Here

Sadly, there are people who will ignore a good idea just because it wasn't dreamt up by them or their people.

Timidity or fear

Sometimes even if people know in their hearts what should be done, or indeed what should be avoided, for some reason they don't speak up or act accordingly. It may be that they don't actually wish to see the desired change implemented, perhaps because the change may mean some difficulties for them personally. Or perhaps because it offends some deep-seated belief, which they are loath to **un**learn. Whatever the motives, it seems there are cases where key figures are knowledgeable, but don't act.

Failure to follow through

These are the cases where well-intentioned people have worked hard to see how things could be better, how more could be delivered for less, how prevention should be valued as much as cure; and so the list goes on. But for some reason, they don't carry on with the job.

What are the lessons from the Total Place initiatives?

- We should respect the past: much has been learned by our predecessors which we would be unwise to ignore.
- We should be open to lessons learned by other people in other places.
- Ask yourself why you or others are really resistant to a new idea/proposal/way of working; are you quite sure the reasons are real?
- And perhaps most importantly; let's persevere with new ways of thinking and working, at least for a while. If we're convinced that they offer a better future, let's give them a chance.

Making the most of your 'critical friends'

Roger Britton, Worcestershire programme manager, Worcestershire County Council

Getting at the answers to 'wicked issues', those multi-faceted, messy and complex challenges which face society, demands high levels of expertise.

Therefore to stand any chance of success an expert and experienced team has to be established, drawn from all the partners, who will explore the issues and come up with valid and deliverable solutions.

Our experience of such teams is that they work best when liberated to get on with the job. Within the team status has to count less than contribution and different perspectives have to get an appropriate hearing. Where the members of the teams have genuine operational experience and intelligence then we found that they were willing to address all angles on the issue for instinctively they placed the client or customer as the focus of all discussion.

This is clearly good news. But there is a caveat; the tendency to operate from within the confines of an, albeit extended, professional framework based on accepted norms and parameters. At best this is a constraint to creativity and at worst it results in groupthink. To be crude – nobody asks the stupid questions!

Inserting 'stupid questioners' into the group or providing expert facilitation for each session does not work because it changes the dynamic of the group and, at least in our case, there are not the resources to deliver this.

Exploring solutions to this we alighted on the television programme Dragons' Den and saw the benefit of robust challenge and exploration of the ideas. The deliberate tension or confrontation of this approach may provide theatricality to the encounter but may actually get in the way when the pitch is ideas and not a simple and tangible product. But we felt that the idea was on the right lines.

The solution was **Critical Friend Sessions**. The expert groups, which by then had gone through their own formation process, were visited by a group of senior people at Chief Executive, Leader or Managing Director level who were able to ask the stupid questions.

We approached this on the basis that:

- There would be more than two but fewer than six critical friends at any session
- Critical friends with expertise in the area concerned were discouraged

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- The session would last no more than one hour to force the pace
- It would happen as part of a planned meeting so the critical friends came to the group rather than the group being summoned
- The critical friends had a briefing on the approach and a short (one side of A4) account of the group's work
- The discussion began with a short introduction from one of the group members
- There was no agenda or script – the conversation would go wherever it went
- It was for the session to conclude if there would be any follow-on

So does it work?

From our experience the answer is a resounding yes. The visits, particularly as they were by the most senior people in the partnership, were appreciated by the groups and highly motivational. The critical friends were enthused by their ability to get deep into the issue and came away with a sense of personal ownership of the emerging solutions. The stupid questions emerged and in some cases stunned the experts with their simplicity and fundamental focus; but more than that took explorations to places which the expert groups have since freely acknowledged that they would not have gone.

**Neither ignoring nor being overwhelmed
by the power hierarchies we work in –
using power to everyone's advantage.**

5

Section 5

Using power differently

Orchestrating the leadership system

Sue Goss, South Tyneside, Sunderland and Gateshead programme lead, Office for Public Management

Switching on leadership

Partnerships offer the potential to break out of the assumptions and constraints that 'lock' member agencies into traditional solutions – they offer the 'unoccupied' space where organisational obstacles and 'group think' are less strong.

But partnerships have weaker power of agency than single agencies, so an important leadership role is to constructing the authority and power to act – connecting decisions to the delivery capability of partner agencies. A partnership remains 'inert' – unable to command or deploy resources – unless those linkages are made.

Leaders have two crucial roles – creating the experimental space in which new solutions can be found, and helping to 'switch on' the partnership so that current runs through it and it gains the power to act. In a partnership each player faces a choice about whether or not to 'invest' their leadership in bringing the partnership alive. It is hard to make anyone do this – since partners are usually volunteers – with heavy pressures to default back to organisational priorities. So the values, beliefs, rules of engagement and shared goals that will lead people to help the partnership succeed all have to be created – none can be taken for granted.

So what do good leaders do in partnerships?

- Help to negotiate the rules of engagement for all the partners – agreeing purpose, goals, values, ways of working etc – so that others feel able to invest their own leadership in success
- Create an environment where relationships can succeed
- Encourage learning, developing space to experiment, room for creativity.
- Broker relationships between different belief systems
- Use creative tension – drawing strength from difference – exploring ways to see 'many truths'
- Create trust and a sense of mutual accountability – enough to risk committing resources

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Orchestrating the leadership system

In a partnership there is never a single leader – leadership comes from several different places. It makes sense therefore to see a partnership as a leadership system. Often, when things are going right, someone is 'orchestrating the leadership system'- connecting all the leaders together and ensuring that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. This might be done by one of the leaders themselves – the local authority chief executive or a skilled partner – or it might be the role of a partnership co-ordinator or project manager. In some of the total place pilots, it was a role carried out by the programme lead – and will need now to be transferred inside the partnership to continue. So what might 'orchestrating the leadership system require?'

- Keeping in touch with leaders between meetings, understanding their concerns and ensuring they are surfaced and addressed
- Paying attention to the different legitimacies and accountabilities of different partners – making sure they don't feel bounced
- Observing the process of working together – making sure everyone feels listened to and engaged
- Connecting up the political process – one multi-authority pilot, for example, had a meeting of the relevant politicians before each executive board to ensure support and a 'steer' when needed
- Keeping open links to Whitehall and the Government Office
- Encouraging the conversations that lead to trust – and action

Practising adaptive leadership

Emeritus Professor John Benington,
Institute of Governance and Public Management (IGPM)
Warwick Business School, University of Warwick

Airport bookstall publications tend to define leadership in terms of charismatic individuals making heroic speeches to mass audiences, or miraculously rescuing failing organisations from complete collapse.

However there is little evidence that leadership of this kind is effective in helping organisations and individuals to grapple with the kind of complex and often painful choices which are facing citizens and communities (e.g. in relation to ageing and social care; alcohol and drug misuse; crime and the fear of crime).

An alternative approach to public leadership is being tested by some teams in Total Place which draws on ideas developed by Ron Heifetz at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University (Heifetz R, Leadership Without Easy Answers, Harvard University Press 1997), and tested in a number of real life decision-making situations in the UK.

Heifetz challenges the myth of leaders as specially gifted individuals at the top of organisations, who solve other people's problems, in favour of an alternative model of leadership as an activity which can be (and is) carried out by people at many different levels of the organisation, and consists in jointly confronting difficult issues and taking shared responsibility for tackling them. Heifetz highlights seven dimensions of 'adaptive leadership', which can be summarised briefly as follows:

- Identify the adaptive challenge – be clear about which are the crunch issues to be tackled
- Give the work back to the people with the problem – challenge those who need to make the adaptive change to work on the problem along with the leader.
- Recognise that some of the most important insights about the adaptive challenge, and some of the most powerful leadership momentum for change, may come from people at the bottom rather than the top of the organisation.
- Regulate the distress – know when to increase the heat to get the change process cooking, and when to lower the temperature to avoid the change process boiling over or burning.
- Create a 'holding environment', physical or organisational, within which painful issues and changes can be worked through at a manageable pace and where truth can be spoken to power; mistakes can be discussed in terms of what can be learned
- Pay disciplined attention to the issues and confront work avoidance
- Move between the balcony and the battlefield. Leaders need to be able to get up on the balcony to take a strategic (helicopter) overview of the whole battlefield combined with an equally strong perception of what is happening at the front-line of the immediate struggle on the ground

I and other colleagues at Warwick University have been testing out and developing this model of 'adaptive leadership' across the public sector. What would it mean for Ministers, Government officials, NHS managers, and the police to develop an adaptive leadership approach to change and improvement and innovation in Total Place?

The seven principles for leading adaptive work

1 Get on the balcony
- A place from which to observe the patterns in the wider environment as well as what is over the horizon (prerequisite for the following five principles)

2 Identify the adaptive challenge
- A challenge for which there is no ready made technical answer
- A challenge which requires the gap between values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours to be addressed

3 Create the holding environment
- May be a physical space in which adaptive work can be done
- The relationship or wider social space in which adaptive work can be accomplished

4 Cook the conflict
- Create the heat
- Sequence & pace the work
- Regulate the distress

5 Maintain disciplined attention
- Work avoidance
- Use conflict positively
- Keep people focussed

6 Give back the work
- Resume responsibility
- Use their knowledge
- Support their efforts

7 Protect the voices of leadership from below
- Ensuring everyone's voice is heard is essential for willingness to experiment and learn
- Leaders have to provide cover to staff who point to the internal contradictions of the organisation

Adapted from Ron Heifetz by Irwin Turbitt, Warwick University

Using rank differently

Mike Attwood, Coventry, Warwickshire and Solihull programme manager, Coventry City Council

Total Place asks organisations to work more holistically than ever before. Often organisations in the public sector expanded services in years of plenty, only to retract rapidly when the money disappeared.

Of course it has not always been so stark, but it has proved difficult to hold quality of service and value for money in one approach. This sometimes results in a distancing of relationships between front-line practitioners, service users and senior leaders, where the top of the organisation seems to be holding the financial and target performance bottom line, whilst frontline staff can see caring and counting the cost as competitive jobs.

How can senior leaders use their rank differently? Strong leaders have always engaged within their organisation, with partners and service users. Total Place underlines the importance of whole systems thinking. Our experience is that bringing together service users, front-line staff and senior teams to work together on common service challenges in a 'diagonal slice' is very powerful.

For example, the Design Council's 'Public Services by Design' programme has helped local leaders form alliances to reshape Gateshead's sexual health services and start unblocking challenges with Children's Centres in Coventry.

There seem to be some factors that help:

- Authentic leadership matters. People must see that you believe that working systematically with users and practitioners enriches problem solving and unleashes new solutions. Occasional engagement special events bolted onto the existing ways of working will be spotted! People look for consistent behaviour messages. Are you expecting learning disability teams from health and social care to work together in one team and building, but not so willing to consider a common public sector human resources team or shared senior appointments?
- Keep clarity about roles and responsibilities. Using your power and position in a more engaging way doesn't mean that you're not still accountable for the strategy, budget and quality standards. Whole system approaches must be properly shaped with clear rules

and boundaries. There will still need to be tactical meetings between CEOs and Finance Directors to bottom out risk-sharing deals, but people need to know this and that their contribution to service design will still have counted in the run-up to budget and target sign off on 31 March.

- You'll probably be more successful if you make 'leadership through engagement' core to your organisation's business model and work toolbox. For example, the NHS 'e-cycle' sets out how public engagement can enrich all stages of

the commissioning cycle, from needs assessment to contract compliance. This approach helps the whole organisation work in a more engaging way whilst still being systematic. If you have an engagement team, they almost certainly need to shift from 'doing' the engagement to skilling up the whole organisation. A clear business cycle with an enabling development plan for the workforce can break down barriers between what can be seen as separate transformational and transactional aspects of commissioning.

Identifying innovative ways of working is not new to the staff. Inter-agency working is not new to our organisations and working across the sub-region is at the heart of some of our most important strategies. So why has the our Total Place pilot generated a new way of working for public agencies in Coventry, Solihull & Warwickshire. What has it given us that we didn't already have and why do things feel different around here...?

Within the current context, the importance of strong and committed leadership, willing to drive innovation, generate a collective vision and take risks where appropriate is crucial. Our steering group has provided and generated the momentum necessary to engage in dialogue across the sub region and crucially between ourselves and colleagues in Whitehall. Flowing from this leadership, we have the mandate to think differently and a growing confidence in being innovative.

Pilot status has further strengthened our confidence in thinking creatively by creating a 'safe space' in which to test and try out things. The innovation which flows from such freedoms cannot be underestimated and has taken both leaders and frontline practitioners to think creatively and tackle those 'elephants' which have been in the rooms of all strata of public services for years.

Gereint Stoneman, corporate planning manager, Warwickshire County Council

Making use of the power you've got

Karen Ellis, Leadership Centre adviser

It is sometimes easy to forget that power is a neutral force – it is 'the means to do work' rather than an inherently coercive or authoritarian approach to others.

When we are working in any group of greater than one, we all sometimes need power to get work done – we need to convince our colleagues that our ideas are valid, that they should put their weight behind our arguments, that they should (at times) desist from their foolhardy aims! Any healthy creative human system allows a good deal of creative conflict and so needs the individuals within it to both accept and give away power in the service of the work.

Most of us are so used to working in organisations that are arranged as authority hierarchies that we assume that the only source of power in human systems is positional power (ie the power conferred on people by the seniority of their role). This can lead us to dramatically distort our conversations in groups – giving maximum air time to those in senior roles and excluding a range of people who have expertise, direct personal experience or good ideas about the matter in hand.

If we remember some of the other forms of power, we can use different interventions in a group to gain more power for our own views or, indeed to offer power to others, especially those whose input gets excluded by the group. The map of power types and currencies opposite outlines some of the common and uncommon sources of authority in a human grouping.

So, how could you use these ideas to assist you in your Total Place work?

Gaining influence for your ideas:

- Find ways of quickly demonstrating your knowledge power: rather than sending long documents outlining your ideas to the 'power players', create a visual, develop a two minute 'elevator pitch', get hold of some relevant numbers

- Emphasise your personal power: make sure you find an opportunity to demonstrate your style – volunteer to lead a session, facilitate a group, run a guided tour around a place of interest - anything that allows people to get to know you as a person rather than a role

- Build your alliance power: seek out others who see things in a similar way and who have influence in the system. Trade resources, assistance, personal support, thinking time

Positional Power

People with positional power can:
- Offer others recognition, advancement and visibility
- Directly command resources (money, staff time)
- Provide opportunities for linking with others – contacts and networks

Knowledge power

People with knowledge power can:
- Provide information, ideas, expertise into the thought process
- Show where thinking is misguided or where pre-existing work can be used
- Provide contacts or references to people who have linked expertise

Alliance power

People with alliance power can:
- Include others into their networks and contacts
- Negotiate for resources from their allies
- Use the power of their grouping to gain weight for their ideas

Personal Power

People with personal power can:
- Draw people to them to generate new groupings
- Inspire others to learn, act and take risks
- Provide effective personal support and advice

Helping others gain influence

Often the people in groups who have the most to offer get excluded from the conversation – this is particularly common when the 'language game' of the majority is not known by the minority (e.g. when we include citizens in managerial conversations or professional staff in political conversations). If you notice someone is getting excluded, some of the following moves can help:

- Help them demonstrate their knowledge – give them a formal slot at the start of the proceedings to demonstrate their perspective. This can be via informal story telling, role play or formal presentation. Advise them to keep their input short and rich – 15 minutes is plenty and with as much information as possible.

- Make them feel at home so they can use their personal power. Welcome them carefully, refer back to them in your conversations, make plenty of eye contact, invite them into the conversation by asking direct questions.

- Help them build their own alliances. Introduce them to others who have interests in common, emphasise what they might gain from conversations with others, link them up with people with whom they can share information.

Again: remember power is a neutral force – your personal ethics dictate whether you use it for good or ill. So, more power to your elbow!

Shifting senior leadership alignment and style

Steve Nicklen, Leicester and Leicestershire programme lead, managing partner, DNA LLP

Top tips:
- Balance leading from the front in Total Place with a recognition of the pace at which others can move
- Place emphasis on the context of leadership, working primarily on developing relationships, on learning, or on driving towards specific goals, depending on that context
- Take a whole systems approach to leadership development interventions
- Challenge any mismatches between 'espoused' and 'real' engagement by partners

Total place: leadership in context
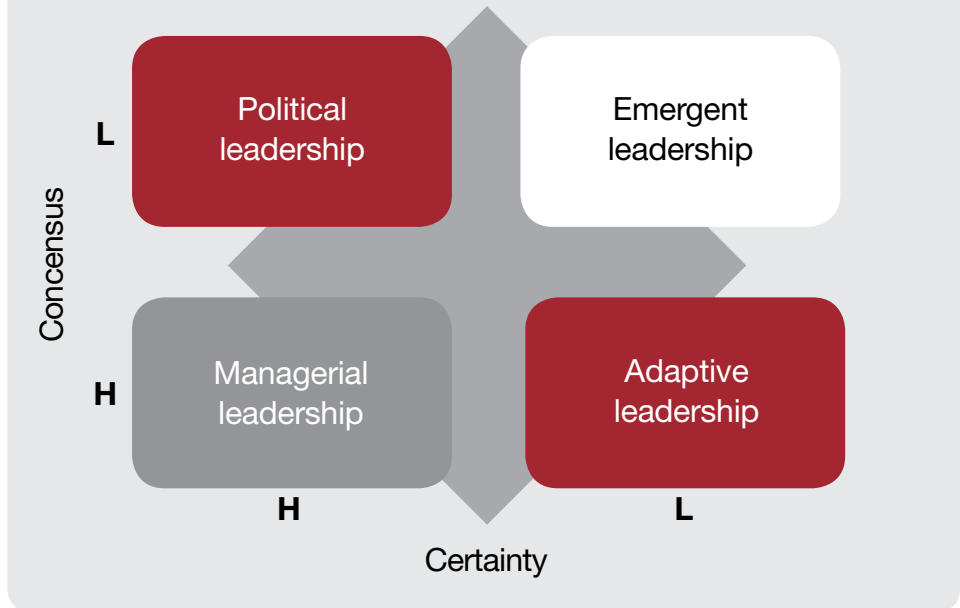

Source: Steve Nicklen, DNA Associates

All fundamental change needs sustained, effective leadership to be successful. Total Place, in addition, calls for a wider range of leadership roles and styles than more narrowly focused traditional change management.

There is a paradox. Total Place has been most effective where there has been clear political and chief executive leadership from one or two individuals within a place. But leadership has also to be shared across organisations. It has had to mirror the changes in cross-organisational work it seeks to bring about. The prime movers need skilfully to strike the right balance between leading forcefully and recognising the pace at which others can move.

The kinds of leadership needed in Total Place must reflect the context. One model, shown opposite, illustrates this:

- 'Managerial leadership' is appropriate for many issues, where there is consensus about what is to be done and we know how to do it
- But many issues lack the necessary consensus, and 'Political leadership' recognises this through placing the development of trusting relationships and dialogue in the foreground
- Many Total Place themes are 'wicked issues', where we don't know how to make progress towards our desired objective. 'Adaptive leadership' recognises this and places the emphasis on learning with others. For example, the three pilots working on drugs and alcohol misuse – Birmingham, Leicester/Leicestershire and Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland – co-created solutions with each other and with the relevant Whitehall departments

Some places have invested in whole systems-based leadership development to support their leadership.

It is not enough for the relevant organisations' chief executives to say that they support Total Place. They also have to ensure that it is given sufficiently high priority within their organisations. One senior director said to me: "I support this, in principle, but it's not one of the three or four top priorities for my chief executive. These already take up all my time, so I don't see how I can support it in practice."

Sometimes it's OK in response just to 'push where it moves' and for an organisation that is peripheral to the main theme to decide that it will sit on the sidelines for the time being.

But sometimes steps need to be taken to confront misalignment between 'espoused' and 'real commitment', when key organisations fail to enable key players, with the right knowledge, skills and clout, to involve themselves in the real work. It's a judgement call what then to do. Should the programme advisor talk with these players about what can be done to help them find the time? Should he/she talk directly with their chief executives? Should he/she advice those more actively leading to intervene with the relevant chief executives? What won't do is to let the problem drift, because this can lead to the progressive disengagement of others.

Reviewing governance and accountability

Steve Nicklen, Leicester and Leicestershire programme lead, managing partner, DNA LLP

Top tips:

- Use Total Place as an opportunity to re-examine the appropriateness of local governance structures
- Building on this, open a dialogue, with local strategic partnerships, on public accountability, and with the centre, on new possibilities for financial accountability

Some pilots have used Total Place as an opportunity to rethink fundamentally the kinds of governance structures that are appropriate in looking at outcomes and expenditure across the place and in conjunction with the centre. The following considerations have informed their thinking:
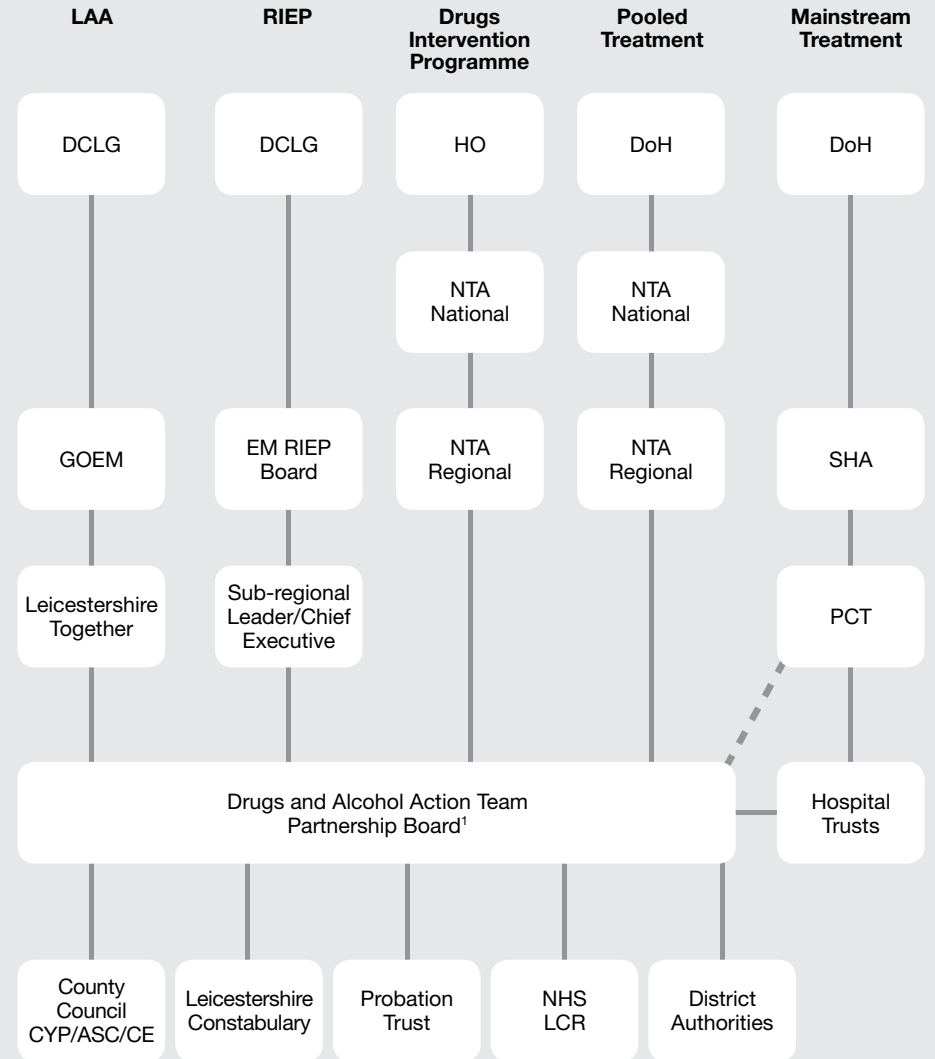
- Existing governance structures can present obstacles to allocating resources and coordinating activity
- They encourage the complex flows of funds from the centre to the points of service delivery, with the significant attendant administrative costs and increases in the burden of performance management and inspection
- They can confuse the public, the media and other partner organisations, as to where accountability should correctly lie. If Ministers are being held de facto politically accountable for issues, it is harder for them to agree to local decision-taking
- Whatever their other virtues and achievements have been, local strategic partnerships are not structures which can easily take the necessary, local, strategic decisions

The diagram opposite illustrates out the complexity of current governance structures, using the example of Leicester/Leicestershire in relation to one of the Total Place themes examined in the pilot there, drugs & alcohol misuse.

Leicester/Leicestershire has established a new Public Sector Board, comprising the Leaders and Chief Executives of the county and city councils the Chairs and Chief Executives of the four NHS bodies (2 PCTs and 2 provide trusts) and the Chair of the Police Authority and Chief Constable.

These new governance structures beg further questions about whether they should be accompanied, by new relationships with Ministers, on the one hand, and new financial accountability arrangements to Parliament on the other. Novel answers to these questions will raise further fundamental political and constitutional questions, and clarity will need to be reached on the relationship between such bodies as the Public Services Board and LSPs. But they do highlight a possible route forward.

Leicestershire drugs and alcohol governance

LAA	RIEP	Drugs Intervention Programme	Pooled Treatment	Mainstream Treatment
DCLG	DCLG	HO	DoH	DoH
		NTA National	NTA National	
GOEM	EM RIEP Board	NTA Regional	NTA Regional	SHA
Leicestershire Together	Sub-regional Leader/Chief Executive			PCT

Drugs and Alcohol Action Team Partnership Board[1]

Hospital Trusts

| County Council CYP/ASC/CE | Leicestershire Constabulary | Probation Trust | NHS LCR | District Authorities |

Key:

NTA	National Treatment Agency	**SHA**	Strategic Health Authority
DCLG	Department Communities and Local Government	**GOEM**	Government Office East Midlands
		PCT	Primary Care Trust
DoH	Department of Health	**RIEP**	Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership
HO	Home Office		

[1] This governance map relates to the Leicestershire and Rutland DAAT.

Using data, stories and deep dives to find the information that begins to change minds: professional minds, leadership minds and political minds.

6

Section 6
Counting and story-telling

Calling Cumbria together

Leadership Centre for Local Government

In 2007 the partnership organisations in Cumbria declared a shared determination to improve more rapidly the lives of people living in the county. With the Leadership Centre for Local Government they created *Calling Cumbria*, which brought together hundreds of people from all walks of life in a new kind of conversation about what they could do better together.

We designed a programme which invited people to take part in one of two themed 'inquiries' each running over three days, leading to a large scale event involving 150 participants from across the public, private and voluntary sectors within and beyond the county.

The inquiries were based on themes that emerged from the exploratory phase and captured the interest of those invited to attend.

- "How can we work together to build the chance of a better life in Cumbria?"
- "How can we work together to surface the pride in Cumbria?"

The inquiries were designed to:

- Enable participants to know each other better
- Connect with the public they served in a fresh way
- Build trust and common purpose through shared experience

To get maximum impact from their time together during the inquiries, participants had to be open to the idea of doing things differently and relating to one another in new ways. It meant reminding them what they really cared about and legitimising the fact that they did. This personal shift was encouraged by a presentation of still photography near the beginning of the first day, set to music and showing evocative portraits of people of Cumbria.

The remainder of the first day, participants:

- Looked at new ways to work together based on relationships and interconnected needs
- Heard personal stories from inspiring public service leaders
- Learnt new techniques for deeper conversations
- Developed maps of individual and community needs
- Created a picture of the web of projects, partnerships and collaborations serving those needs

© Andy Smith photography

- Identified the communities or issues that participants wanted to understand more deeply

Day two of each inquiry took the participants out and about to engage in different and often spontaneous conversations with people who live and work in Cumbria. They visited a variety of places – anywhere people gathered – including day centres, schools, colleges, town centres and businesses. One participant said "I had a different kind of conversation with people so that's got to be a start. I went back to the day job and injected a dose of reality into discussions".

On day three participants mapped out their new understanding of the interconnected needs of individuals and communities, based on the conversations they had the previous day and the new insights they generated. They looked at the system of service delivery in which they operated and identified ways to connect and support projects and initiatives more effectively.

For more information on the Calling Cumbria inquiries, see the *'Calling Cumbria'* publication at www.localleadership.gov.uk/current/ publications.

Using the power of stories to create movement for change

Cat Parker, Coventry, Warwickshire and Solihull programme manager, Coventry City Council

When Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire embarked on Total Place we were clear that it meant we had an opportunity to think and act differently. Change was a given in some ways, but large organisations can so often seem immovable.

One of our non-negotiables as a project team was that we took an opportunity to spend lots more time than is usual listening to the voices of front line staff and service users to understand how things are now and possible opportunities for change.

Stories stimulate the emotions, they make things real, and at best can change the way we act, think and feel. When a story is told well it creates an experience, how many of us have pondered about a book or film long after it ended? Somehow they stay with us.

Time spent listening to people's stories has done two main things:

- Helped us to understand the journeys of our customers in ways that we hadn't before, uncovering new perspectives and possible solutions
- Validated some of the hunches we had about our services, which are now impossible to ignore

Some of questions we posed, and our thoughts and actions in response to them might help you to consider how to use story telling to stimulate change in your own place. We haven't got everything right, but in particular our work with young people who are not in education, employment or training has been very powerful in creating the impetus for change.

Of course to have any impact the stories need to be authentic, and the story tellers real. When you get it right, its about as powerful a tool as you can have to make people say "we can't carry on this way".

How do I use service user stories with the maximum number of people, across a range of places?

If the use of stories is not to feel exploitative, it is important to avoid the feel of a service user road show. It is simply not reasonable to ask the people who have invested time to do so over and over again. We filmed the young people that we spoke to. This was done in an unstructured a way as we could manage, to preserve the voice of the story tellers. For an area as large as ours this meant we could replicate the DVD, and use it in a number of settings, and in a number of ways.

What is the optimum mix of data and story telling, and can you combine the two?

Whichever stories you use, they are at their most powerful when brief and recent. They can be coupled with city wide data which puts the individual story into context.

We used our DVD, coupled with some data analysis to produce case studies of young people who were not in education, employment or training. This seemed to us to be a good mix of story telling, and understanding the cost to public services – key to Total Place. Importantly we've used the language of the young people to do this.

Where do I find story tellers?

We found that our front line staff were the best source of people and stories, they connected us with people who use the service and are a trusted point of contact for individuals. Most public sector organisations have tried and tested methods and individuals responsible for the engagement with service users. It's a good idea to channel involvement this way because it can be much more about a dialogue than a one off story.

To encourage employees to tell their stories you have to be creative. Graffiti walls and suggestion boxes (real and virtual) can be used to great effect, as can walking the floor. However, there is no real substitute for spending dedicated time with groups or individuals, encouraging them to open up and share their perspective.

If the process is to become truly embedded you'll have to be up front about what you'll do with the information and find a way of feeding back what has happened as a result.

How do I use a story to sell a vision?

Any possible vision of the future, if it is to appeal to all your listeners, must be described in different ways to appeal to all the senses. You can describe what you see, feel, taste, smell and hear in your new world. This makes the story come alive, and feel much more a part of a reality, as the stories about how things are now do.

Customer journey mapping

Deborah Szebeko, Founder and director, thinkpublic

What is customer journey mapping?

Journey mapping is a way of using customer insights data to visually represent a user's experience of a service. It helps you to better understand, analyse and identify with the real experience of a service user. It also helps you pinpoint and map any opportunities for intervention, innovation and service improvement.

How does customer journey mapping work?

You can either work with the service user directly or draw on previously captured user insights and research to plot the customer journey map. The map's narrative can be drawn by identifying touchpoints and interactions along the service journey. Touchpoints are a point on the journey where an interaction occurred with another person, with technology, or with the environment. An emotional touchpoint is a point on the map where heightened emotion was experienced by the service user. A map can also include personal insights, anecdotes and images.

When is customer journey mapping useful?

Journey mapping can be used to:

- Identify where and how to re-design services and interactions
- Identify unnecessary elements of a service and calculating the impact of greater efficiency
- Precede the co-design stage, which involves service users and providers in designing better services with their needs at the core
- Bring a user's experience to life and get real stories and real insights into the process of change
- Reveal in detail the user's perspective of a service and it's touchpoints
- Help service users clearly communicate their experiences in sufficient depth and feel meaningfully involved in service improvement

Why is customer journey mapping important?

- Customer journey mapping can help to design and deliver services that meet the needs of people and frontline staff rather than just the needs of government
- The insights that customer journey mapping generates can help shape strategy and policy, leading to better customer experiences and more efficient services
- Customer journey mapping can confront preconceptions and help transform perceptions, acting as a call to action and contributing to culture change

How can you use customer journey mapping in Total Place?

Using customer journey mapping with Total Place's 'whole area' approach to public services can help to identify and avoid overlap and duplication between organisations. This can be achieved by understanding how users access and experience access services. This will result in identifying service inefficiencies and where savings can be made by joined up working, resulting in better services at less cost.

www.thinkpublic.com

On the back of an envelope: doing a high-level count

Leadership Centre for Local Government

How much money in total is going into a place? How effective is this spending in achieving what we want on the ground? Could we get more from the public pound if its spending was differently organised and directed?

These are questions which the taxpaying public and the recipients of services rightly have a strong interest in, more so in hard times. They are difficult to answer but they are central to the work of public, voluntary and private sector organisations collaborating to make their place better. The Leadership Centre for Local Government, Local Government Association and Improvement and Development Agency set out to begin to answer these difficult questions in Cumbria in 2008.

Framework

The UN 'COFOG' (Classification of the Functions of Government) structure, which is used by the UK government in its breakdown of government spending, was used to provide a common framework for the types of expenditure. Further information on the UN COFOG classifications is available at (**http://unstats.un.org/UNSD/cr/registry/regcst.asp?Cl=4**).

Local spending

Figures were taken from councils (including parish councils), the Regional Development Agency, police authority, NHS Trusts and PCT and strategic partnerships.

Government departments

The estimated flows of expenditure from government departments into Cumbria were calculated from the Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses (PESA) and supporting public information.

Non-departmental public bodies

Financial information was obtained for 104 non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) spending money in Cumbria. Information for a further twelve was not available. NDPBs were excluded if they were advisory, tribunal, Foreign Office or DfID sponsored or do not have direct Cumbria connections (e.g. British Museum, Regional Development Agencies other than NWDA). NDBP data was treated as identifiable – and therefore included – in the PESA estimates of departmental expenditure as advised by HM Treasury.

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European Union

No area in Cumbria was eligible for Objective 1 funding (which promotes the development and structural change of regions whose development is slowed or lagging behind). However, much of the county was covered by Objective 2 funding which supports the economic and social conversion of industrial, rural, urban and fisheries areas (usually smaller than a local authority in size) facing structural difficulties.

The Sustainable Communities Act of 2007 enshrines the principle that local people know best what will improve the wellbeing of their area. It requires the provision of local spending reports so that people can see where the money goes and propose changes. *Counting Cumbria* was a step towards such reports and towards doing things better. While the methodology may be for experts the results are for all of us.

For more information, see the *'Counting Cumbria'* publication at www.localleadership.gov.uk/current/publications

Using the high-level count to best advantage

Steve Nicklen, Leicester and Leicestershire programme lead, managing partner, DNA LLP

Top tips:

- Use the High Level Count (HLC) to try out some specific ideas you have (e.g. the cost of inefficiencies in funding flows in relation to specific services) and/or to support specific cases for change you want to make (e.g. to reduce the local burden of inspection)
- See the analysis as a source of future additional Deep Dive themes
- Focus the internal or external technical resources carrying out the count with a clear brief
- Don't just let the count happen!

A common initial reaction to the counting strand of the Total Place was that it wouldn't show anything of particular interest. British Nuclear Fuel spend several billions in Cumbria and nothing much anywhere else – so what? Department for Work and Pensions spends a great deal everywhere, and the Potato Marketing Board much less everywhere – so what?
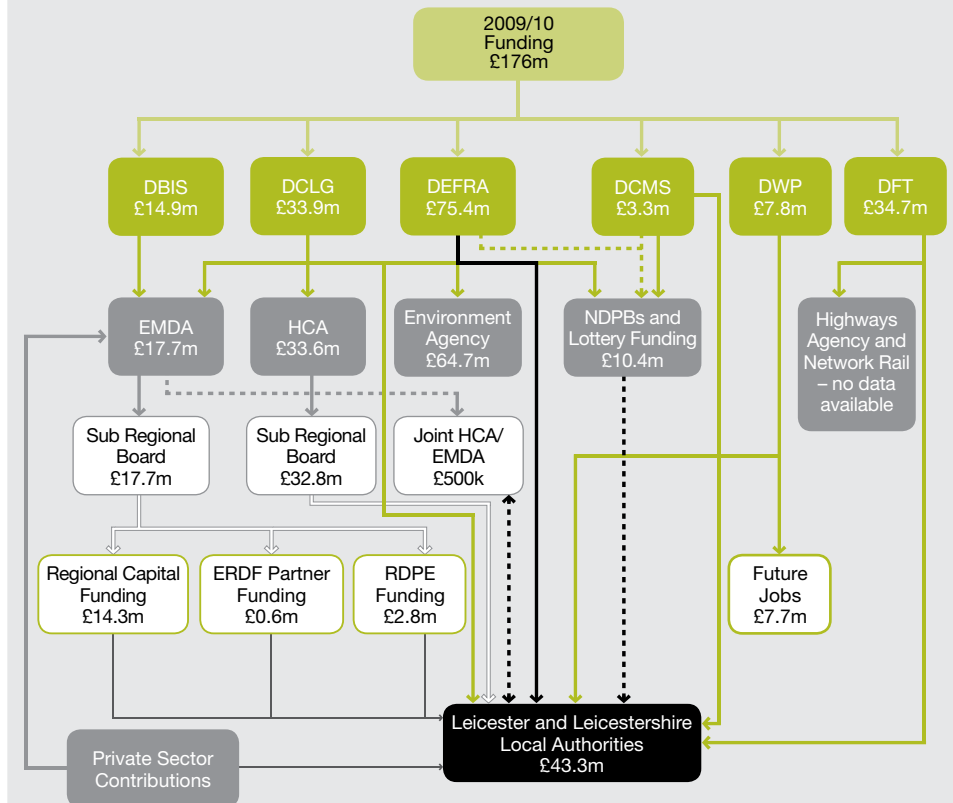
But those places that have used the High Level Count forensically and imaginatively have unearthed and highlighted among the most intriguing opportunities that have yet emerged from the Total Place experiment. Here are some illustrations:

First, the Audit Commission have concluded that, for every hand-over of a funding stream from one organisation to another, some 20% of the value of that stream is lost in administration. Opposite is the complex funding flow diagram for financial support

from Europe from Economic Development, developed by Deloitte as part of it High Level Count support to the Leicester/Leicestershire pilot. This complexity is expensive. Applying the Audit Commission's calculation, we estimated that the administrative cost of delivering £230m in supporting projects, is some £180m! This has provided the evidence base for a call for a simplifying of funding and for the radical stripping down of regional and other intermediary bodies.

Second, the High Level Count has also provided evidence to support responses within Total Place to the Government's offer, in its 'Strengthening Government' White Paper, to reduce the local burden of inspection. Leicester/Leicestershire calculated this cost as some £7m per annum. On this foundation, we suggested improvements in the NIS, which, taken with the dismantling of other performance

indicators these would allow (e.g. NHS Vital Signs Indicators and Analysis of Policing and Community Safety Police Indicators) should enable this burden to be greatly reduced going forward, perhaps by as much as £120m each year, across the country.

Third, High Level Counts have also been used to identify areas for future Deep Dives in localities, as Total Place moves into its next phase of becoming the way of working in localities across the piece. In many places, second and third

generations of Deep Dive themes have been identified, which are now waiting in the wings.

Finally, taking a purposeful and focussed approach to the High Level Count in some localities has avoided the disappointment in some others, where consultants brought in to provide the technical support needed to support the count were not been given a clear enough steer for their work. This has necessitated the reworking of data, and the inevitable increase in consultancy fees associated with it.

Economic development funding map

Bringing data alive – one

Anne Pordes Bowers, Croydon programme manager, Pordes Associates

Mapping the flow of resources and funding is the bedrock of any Total Place project. It is much more than just 'counting', often exposing significant anomalies in service design, seemingly 'crazy' approaches to resourcing and of course embedded inefficiencies.

The 'big spreadsheet' is often the knee-jerk reaction to the need to map; identify the headings, put some numbers in boxes and do some calculations. There will need to be some form of a spreadsheet that will be necessary, but in the course of the Total Place project displaying the information in an insight-prompting manner is much more powerful.

Two innovations are shown opposite and overleaf. These have both been tried and tested and proved invaluable within Total Place projects

Top down: a mapping wall

A mapping wall is a visual representation of funding flows from source to citizen, with various ways of identifying services, institutions etc.

Bringing together service and finance colleagues from the range of partners the wall can develop over time as gaps and questions are identified and filled.
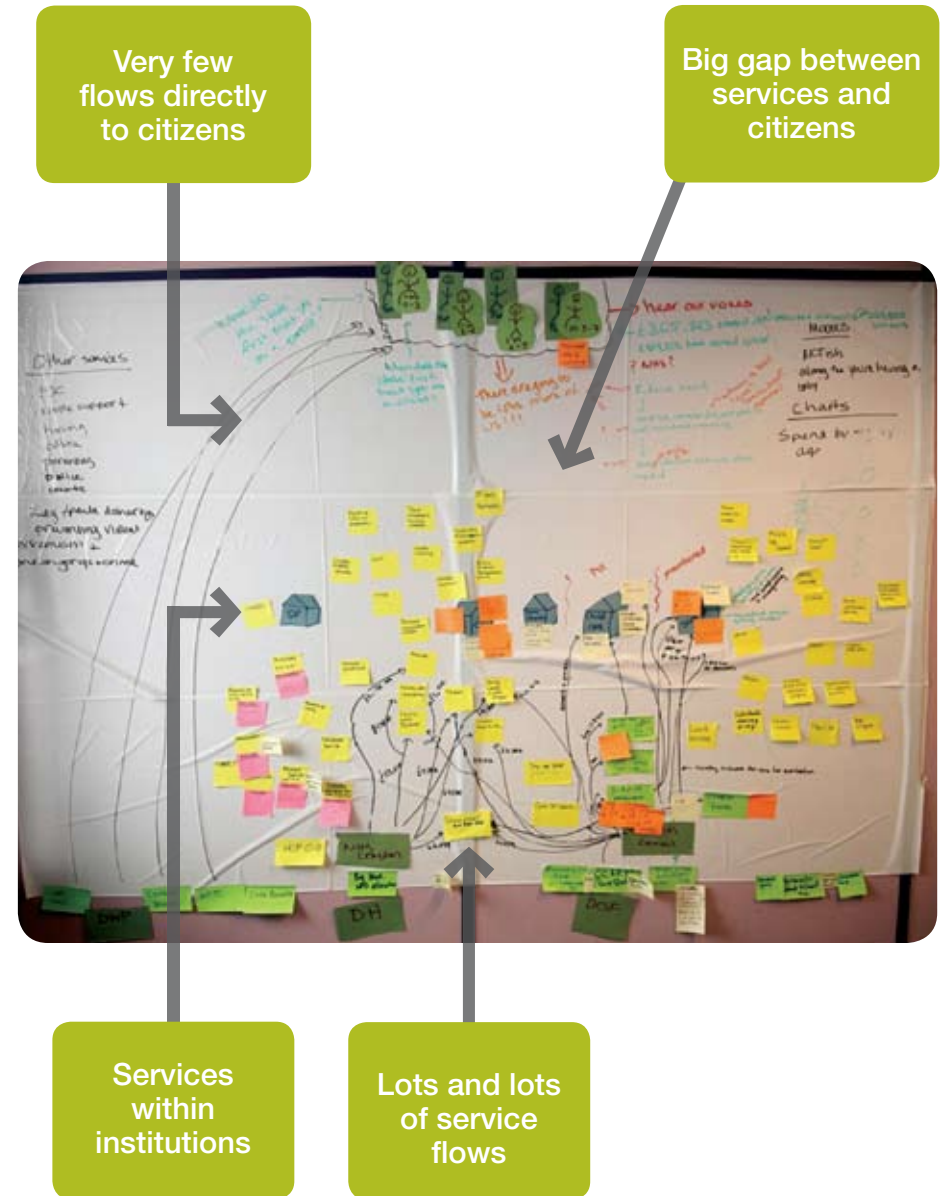
This visual approach:

- **Exposes insights we may have otherwise missed** (see the example opposite)
- **Acts as a focal point for discussion amongst senior leaders and others to discuss and reflect**
- **Compels colleagues from across organisations to share information as they can how it is informing the bigger picture**

Creating a mapping wall was relatively straightforward, requiring nothing more than a dedicated space, some post-it notes and a bit of artistic confidence. The more visually enticing the wall, the more powerful it becomes.

"The first time I saw the mapping wall I found it very arresting."
Caroline Taylor, CEO NHS Croydon

Very few flows directly to citizens

Big gap between services and citizens

Services within institutions

Lots and lots of service flows

Bringing data alive – two

Anne Pordes Bowers, Croydon programme manager, Pordes Associates

Case Studies:

Using real life stories of families, anonymised but accurate, provides a rich basis for another form of analysis. Instead of originating at the flow of resources, the counting can start from the experiences of citizens or service users (e.g. a child).

Costs (both actual and time) can be ascribed to each of the 'stops' on the journey – as well as the distance travelled to get there (e.g. what is the cost of multiple repeat phone calls between citizens and professionals, professionals and each other around information, scheduling and the myriad other 'little things.'

This approach:

- Exposes the full level of resource brought to bare on a particular situation
- Highlights where services are working particularly inefficiently, exposing unnecessary time lags, the impact of failures to act on both citizen experience and the public purse
- Focuses thinking on particularly inefficient or ineffective touchpoints and stages on the journey

Expanding the scope

Both of these methods have been used to look at public sector resources and interactions. As Robert Murray said in his recent essay *Danger and Opportunity: Crisis and the new social economy*, the future of delivering social outcomes is a hybrid of The State, The Market, The Grant Economy and The Household. These visually captivating methods can of course be powerfully expanded to encompass all of these areas, creating even more opportunity to hone in on opportunities for improvement. As with all activities of this ilk, capacity and availability of information is the big challenge.

Family Bresha £56,890

Jacqueline Bersha is single parent with moderate learning difficulties. She had her first child at 16 and now has a 2 sons aged 5 and 1 and a daughter of 3. Her mother and sister support her, although they both have moderate learning difficulties as well. All members of the family live on the New Addington estate and only leave to attend Mayday A&E. Jacqueline has attended the same school and children's centre and has been able to access support for her eldest son with ASD on the same school site.
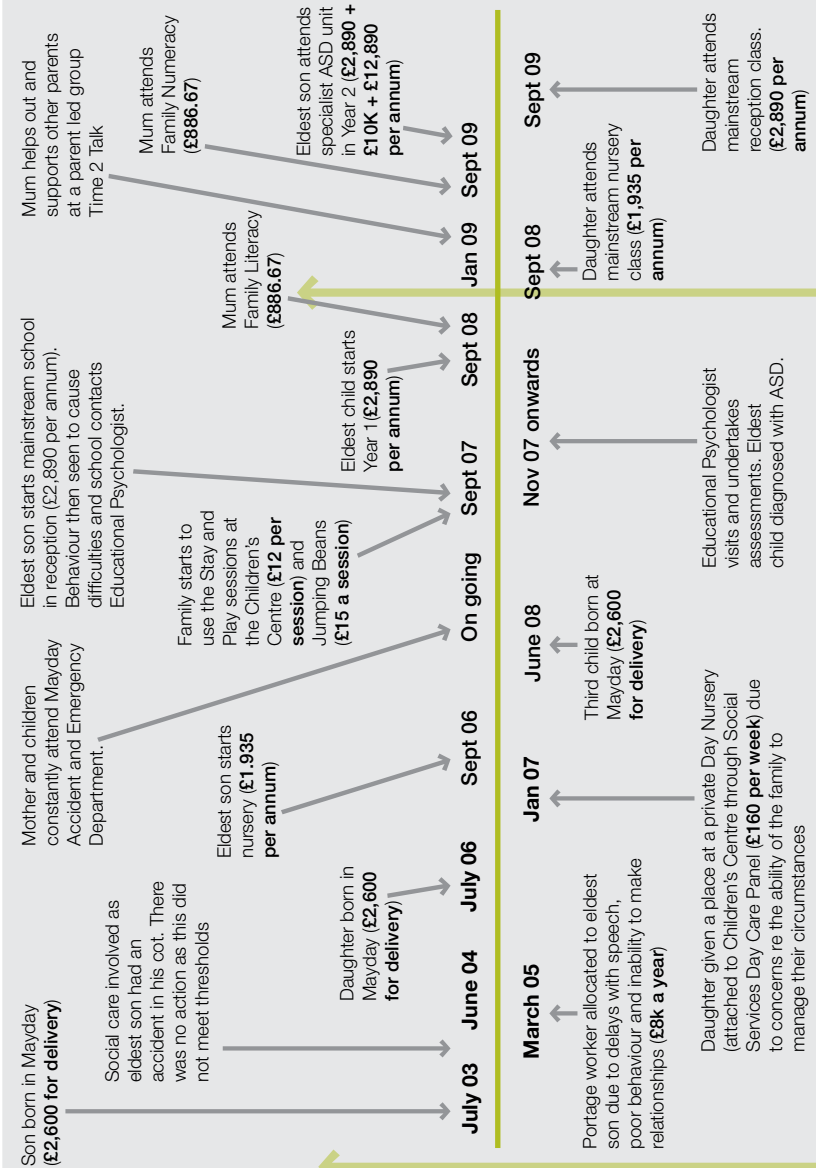
Keeping it clear (if not simple)

Phil Swann, Dorset, Poole and Bournemouth programme lead, Shared Intelligence

The issues raised by Total Place are inevitably complex. The policy issues are often intractable. The financial and governance issues are challenging. And the approach demands a whole system analysis.

If there was ever a danger of not seeing the wood for the trees this is it. It is essential to be as clear as possible about what is being explored and what the key elements of a way forward are.

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Here are four top tips for keeping it clear (if not simple)

**First, define the question.
For example:**

How can we secure improved outcomes for older people at less cost through greater collaboration between agencies, a deeper engagement with citizens and communities and a genuine focus on place?

**Second, specify the propositions which are to be tested.
For example:**

That modest investment in state support – to create the conditions in which family and community support is available to former drug addicts – will enable them to continue their recovery journey following treatment and will reduce the overall cost of treatment and the social and community cost of abuse.

**Third, use a crude formula to focus attention on the 'at less cost' element of the question.
For example:**

A – (B+C) = Y

Where:

A is the saving secured by reducing the number of older people avoidably admitted to secondary health care or unnecessarily receiving intensive social care services;

B is the increased investment necessary to develop enhanced community services in order to:

- Meet the requirements of those diverted from secondary care and intensive social care services;
- Prevent unnecessary use of intensive social care and secondary health services in the future.

C The cost of sustained provision in universal services and the development of social capital to help older people maintain their independence; and

Y is the contribution to responding to a significant reduction in public expenditure.

Fourth, a jigsaw puzzle analogy can provide a useful way of managing different strands of a complex issue.

Distinct work streams can be thought of as jigsaw pieces which are regularly put together to maintain the whole system big picture.

Taking your new information and working with it in innovative ways – using new ideas and theories and playing with your creativity.

7

Section 7
Thinking differently

Thinking in loops – the power of the multiple cause diagram

Karen Ellis, Leadership Centre adviser

Assuming that the Places we work in are complex living systems we need tools that allow us to think of them in that way, rather than trying to use machine like imagery.

So, for much of our work in Total Place, we need to shed our nice linear cause and effect diagrams, our neat Gantt charts and our assumption that we can always find incontrovertible quantitative evidence for our assumptions.

So, once we have dispensed with those tools, what can we use to replace them? Two of the most powerful tools for systemic thinking are multiple cause diagrams and rich pictures. There are many examples of rich pictures throughout this guide – this piece focuses on the use of feedback diagrams to share knowledge and generate new ideas.

All living systems are complexes of myriad feedback loops :

- Balancing loops that maintain the system around an equilibrium point (e.g. how your body maintains its temperature)
- Intensifying loops that cause escalation (e.g. how an infection can cause your temperature to spiral out of control until

you have a fever – the more the chemistry changes, the worse the problem gets).

And social systems also run via similar feedback loops:

- Group norms, repetitive language and stuck conflict all act as 'balancing loops' keeping a system oscillating around its normal state
- Interruptions from outside agents, periods of anxiety and inflammatory language will all cause situations to escalate or change to a new state – sometimes for good, sometimes for ill.

One of the most powerful things we can do when we are trying to understand a complex system is to map out a **multiple cause diagram** that helps us understand the feedback loops and unpredictable non-linear behaviour of a human system. Jake Chapman is a brilliant educator in the systems thinking field who teaches the fundamental ideas to public sector leaders
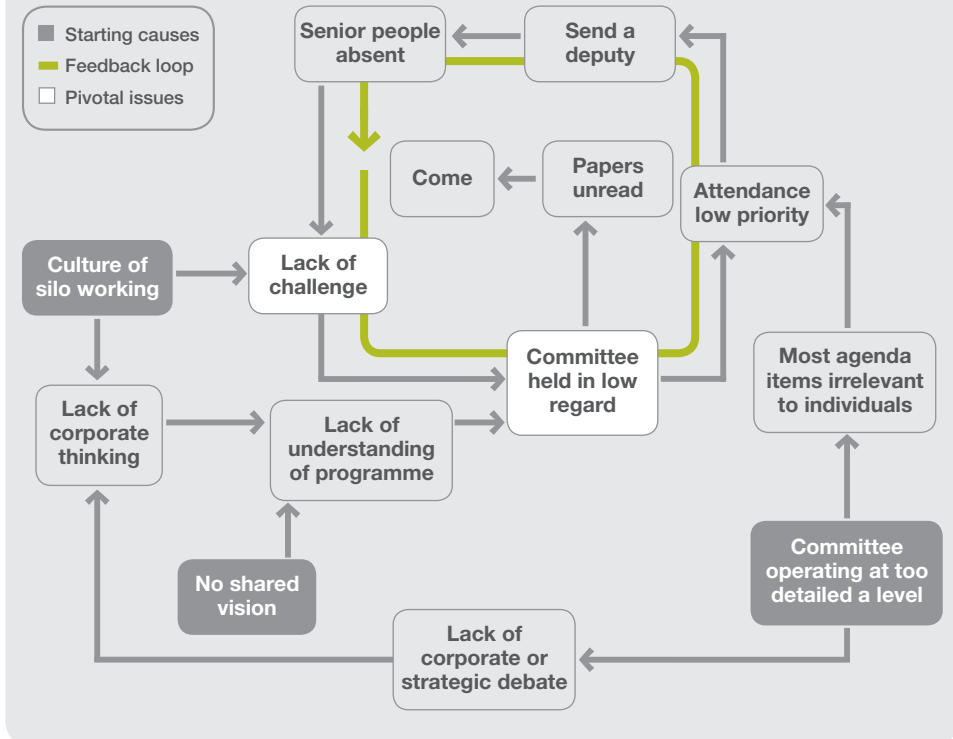
Committee example

Diagram shown above is courtesy of Professor Jake Chapman, Demos Associate.

and managers. One of his multiple cause diagrams can be seen opposite, together with instructions for creating your own diagrams.

So, how could you apply this technique to your Total Place work? Once you have identified your theme, you will start to set up your Deep Dive process, bringing together professional experts, frontline staff, resource managers and, sometimes, citizens to get a richer, multi-perspective view of the issue at hand. Using multiple cause diagrams to clarify your own thinking in advance of the session can be useful in itself. However, running a session which allows people with multiple different

perspectives to examine the issue and all its complex cause-and-effect relationships can be an immensely powerful intervention. It's a messy process, with lots of discussion and argument but all of that discussion helps to build a strong shared understanding of the current situation and the likely results of any proposed interventions.

Articles elsewhere in this guide show examples of such diagrams, created by pilot places in the course of their Total Place work.

Paddling up the public value stream

Emeritus Professor John Benington,
Institute of Governance and Public Management (IGPM)
Warwick Business School, University of Warwick

There is a tension within the Total Place programme between two apparently contradictory pressures.

Several of the Total Place pilot projects have identified the risk that their work on Total Place could result in public authorities suggesting cuts in their own budgets – like turkeys voting for Christmas. An alternative approach has been discussed and tested by some pilots, (e.g. Leicestershire, Leicester). This involves applying Public Value Stream Analysis (PVSA) to some of the complex problems facing citizens and communities (e.g. alcohol and drug abuse).

Public Value Stream Analysis
begins by asking three key questions:

- What does the public most value in this situation?
- What will add most value to the public sphere?
- What are the key outcomes we most want to achieve jointly with citizens, communities and other stakeholders?

We then work backwards from the specific outcomes we want to achieve and trace in detail the stream of activities and processes which help to achieve (or hinder) those outcomes. As we trace that stream, we identify which activities create value, which allow value to stagnate or actually result in destructive, unintended consequences.

Value creation:

Public value is often co-produced at the very front-line of public service (e.g. between teachers and pupils in school class rooms; between nurses, patients and families in hospital wards; between police and local people, businesses and voluntary organisations in neighbourhood communities).

- Where specifically in the process is public value being built?
- How do we support and strengthen these points in the value stream and concentrate resources there?
- How do we strengthen these processes of co-creation of public value at the front-line?
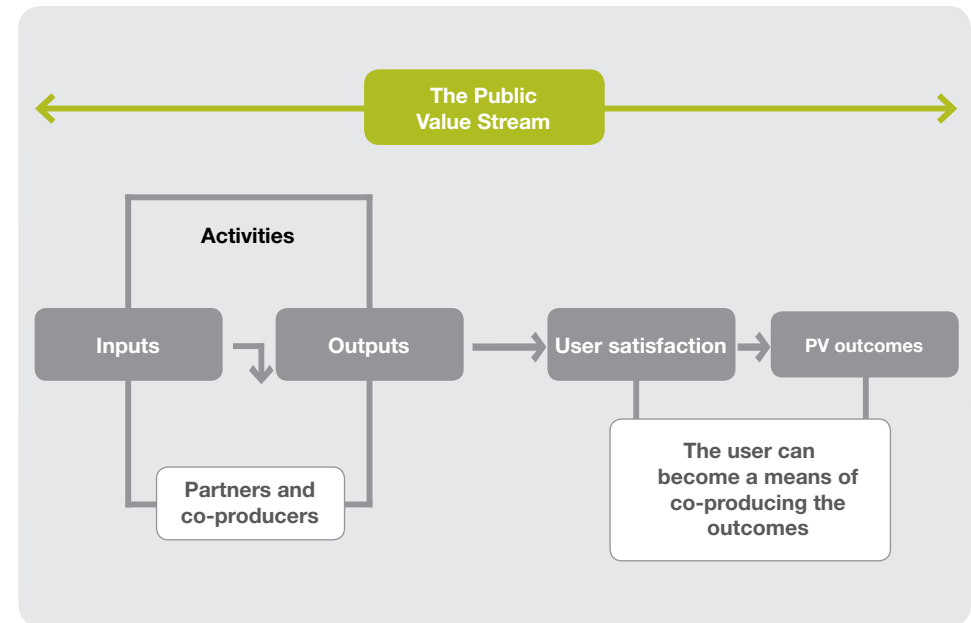
Source: John Benington and Mark Moore, The Theory and Practice of Public Value, Palgrave (forthcoming 2010)

Value stagnation:

This is where increased quality, productivity, and value for money can be achieved.

- Where in the process is public value lying stagnant or idle?
- How do we remove the blockages, and free up the flow?
- How do we re-align, re-energise and re-mobilise the efforts of de-moralised staff behind the achievement of public value outcomes for citizens and communities?

Value destruction:

This is where most savings can be made.

- Where is public value being subtracted or destroyed?
- How do we eliminate waste and leakage from the public value stream?
- How do we stop doing things which add little or nothing to the production of the public value outcomes we want to achieve?
- How do we remove unproductive stages or activities which interfere with or interrupt the creation of public value outcomes?

This type of analysis creates potential for a much more forensic approach to changing our processes, creating more value for the citizen at less cost to the tax payer.

Force Field Analysis

Mike Attwood, Coventry, Warwickshire and Solihull programme manager, Coventry City Council

Often the oldest tools are the simplest and best! Force Field Analysis derives from the work of social psychologist Kurt Lewin. Human behaviour is driven – by what we believe, the cultural norms exerted by the organisation and wider environment in which we work and the expectations of the system and those who exert influence within it.

Simply, Force Field Analysis enables us to map those influences that either support or resist the change we are trying to achieve. It is a very useful tool because it is quick to use and for those of us who may work intuitively, it is a way of stepping back and mapping the changes at work in the environment a little more objectively. For the more structured thinker, it can help us get over 'paralysis by analysis' by plotting one simple, overall picture of the whole system. This helps when anxiety and over-detailed analysis can slow us down.

In practical terms, the **driving forces** have to be stronger than the **restraining forces** to overcome inertia. It's also a powerful tool to use with groups of change leaders because it enables each person to map their own take on the 'for' and 'against' forces and for these to be compared and contrasted to build a shared view of how best to focus the energies of the team.

Usually the situation being handled is mapped onto a Force Field Diagram like the example opposite:

The arrows show the direction of each force as well as the scale of it. The evidence suggests that working to reduce or overcome restraining forces is more effective than strengthening the driving forces as this can lead to a mirrored increase in the power of the resistance. The tool also enables real conversations about what is driving resistance and whether genuine risks have been missed. In the NEETs example, national legislation, or at least permission to local Job Centre Plus teams, is needed to make sure that information is shared so that the young person who is NEET only has to tell their story once. Schools and GPs come from a long tradition of autonomy and force field analysis can lead to powerful dialogue about how the innovation of individual creative teams can be spread across the system through capacity building, workforce redesign and tactical use of incentives or contractual sanctions.

What forces affect the achievement of young people not in employment, eduction and training? (NEETs)			
Driving forces	**Strength**	**Strength**	**Restraining forces**
Cost of failure in the criminal justice system means that there is a clear understanding that a creative new approach is needed	→	←	Many schools want disruptive pupils who disproportionately affect average school performance to be removed
Some NEETs have survived the system and are championing change as mentors of their peers	→	←	Intergenerational worklessness is entrenched in some communities
Partners are prepared to risk share resources between agencies to invest upstream	→	←	Information sharing between Connexions and Job Centre Plus is very limited

"This is a handy way of actually plotting what's going on with the diagram shown here being populated with the various forces. This needs to be done as an explicit part of the work and then the specific forces addressed or exploited in the work plan, remembering that they will obviously change over time. The forces plotted on this need to be real things which actually make a difference – they don't need to be particularly clever or erudite. Remember, what you are trying to do is kill the restraining forces and magnify the driving forces."

Roger Britton, Worcestershire programme manager, Worcestershire County Council

Getting into service re-design

Cat Parker, Coventry, Warwickshire and Solihull programme manager, Coventry City Council
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There are a number of service re-design options available to improve both cost and outcomes of service delivery which we've trailed. We see continuous improvement and radical change as key to addressing the challenges that the public sector will face over the coming years.

One of the most promising ways of making the change has been the use of Lean reviews, delivering significant savings relatively speedily (although not without resource committed to the process) There has been lots written on Lean, and its possible application in the public sector, here are the basic steps to take if you want to try Lean:

Getting started

- Identify your community – these are the people who are involved in the work, either as providers or users.
- Leaders to create a clarity of purpose, and a need for change. They will act as unblockers for the change so its crucial to have sign up

Understanding the process (baseline)

- Map the process – this can be manual (post-its and a large wall) or electronic
- Capture the voice of the customer – this can be through questionnaires, focus groups, or existing information
- Reach consensus on the waste in the process – using the visual map makes it easier to see the root causes of problems, linkages and possible disconnects.
- Calculate the cost of the current service

Re-design

- Design the optimum way of operating focusing on simplifying the process and structure
- Calculate the cost of proposed new service

Source: thinkpublic

Implementing the change

- Short term improvements should be agreed and implemented quickly (this can be something simple like physically moving desks so people can hand over quickly)
- Longer term opportunities should be signed off by leaders and a clear plan established with timescales
- Create a culture of continuous improvement & sustain it.

We're going to be establishing a network of lean practitioners, so if you'd like any further advice or support don't hesitate to contact us through the Leadership Centre.

Finding sources of innovation

Steve Nicklen, Leicester and Leicestershire programme lead, managing partner, DNA LLP
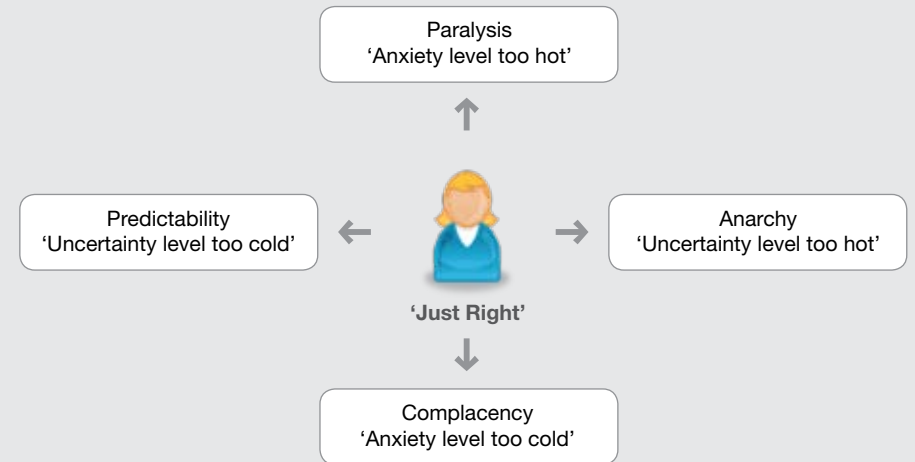
Top tips:

- Consciously build in sources of innovation. Don't assume they will emerge spontaneously
- Encourage 'play', through new ways of working and in different environments
- Disturb the system, e.g. through novel ways of involving politicians and customers in the work
- Manage the levels of ambiguity and anxiety in people, so that these stimulate rather than paralyse

Total place – Supporting innovation: The Goldilocks solution

Source: Steve Nicklen, DNA Associates

Total Place is a radical approach to seeking ambitious improvements in service outcomes and efficiency savings, and this requires innovation to be successful. Otherwise, if you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got. But an instruction to be more innovative is not very helpful! What can be done in practice to stimulate and support innovation?

We know that play is a good source innovation. While the pinball tables of Microsoft may not be practical, some Total Place programmes have used novel ways of encouraging their project teams to play, to find creative ways of looking at problems. There are a plethora of techniques around, for example, using pictures, as well as words. What you should use is what feels right.

The space within which you work matters. When we find ourselves in an environment we associate with other activities, we tend to behave in ways appropriate to those activities, not to what we're now seeking to achieve. So a committee room at a local authority is not an obvious stimulus to innovative challenges to the status quo! The drugs and alcohol misuse project team at Leicester/Leicestershire consistently met in unusual (and usually neutral) spaces, at the Police Training Centre, and at various commercial and charity events rooms around Leicester. Then, when the time came to end divergent thinking and to start concentrating on the precise changes we wanted to make, with specific targets for improvement, we moved to the more business-like environment of one of the councils.

A whole systems view of the world leads one to see the value of disturbances to the systems. In Leicester/Leicestershire we disturbed the system in a variety of ways, and with varying success. The access to service project team spent a lot of time talking with customers. As a result, as well as hard data, we also had many evocative stories about individuals' experiences and desires. The views of politicians, who had been exposed to the night time economy and its impact on the NHS and police, were important to our work on drugs and alcohol misuse. And we used the participants at the Leicestershire In Partnership Programme, a whole systems-based leadership development programme being run across the public and third sectors in the sub-region, as grit in the oyster.

But too much uncertainty or by too much anxiety about delivering results can suppress innovation. This is illustrated above. Managing these levels of ambiguity and anxiety is a particular challenge given the great ambitions and short timescales necessarily associated with change in the public sector now and, perhaps even more in the future. Keeping these levels where they stimulate innovation, rather than paralyses and destroy it, will be one of the major leadership challenges going forward.

Using the Radical Efficiency model to help drive innovation thinking

Ruth Kennedy, Manchester City Region including Warrington and Croydon programme lead

When you know you want to think innovatively, but it's a struggle to break out of the current way of viewing the world, a robust theoretical model can be hugely helpful.

In Croydon we had scoped some potentially exciting propositions, and we wanted to make sure we didn't lose our radical edge as we developed the detail further. The Innovation Unit (IU) helped us interrogate and progress our thinking with a very creative workshop based on their Radical Efficiency model.

What is Radical Efficiency?

Radical Efficiency is all about public service innovations that deliver different, much better outcomes for users at significantly lower cost. Radical efficiency is not about tweaking and improving existing services. It is about generating new perspectives on old problems to enable a genuine paradigm shift in the services on offer – and transform the user experience.

The IU have uncovered more than 100 examples of radical efficiency from across the globe in different services, contexts and on different scales. Top ten case studies range from Mental Health First Aid in Australia to mobile banking in Kenya, and from the Chicago Police Department's virtual crime mapping tool to solar lamps in India.

They all offer different and better outcomes for users at significantly lower cost.
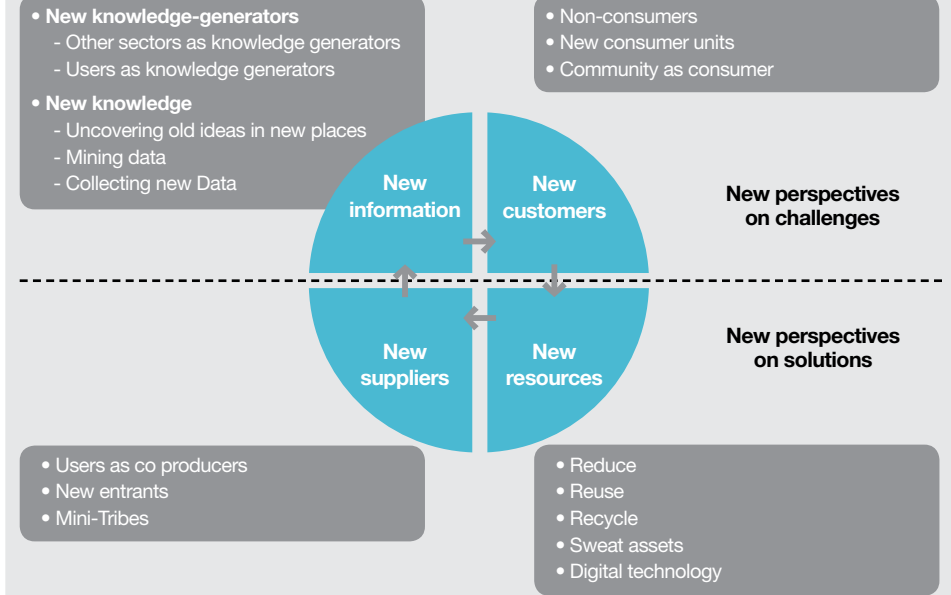
The model

The Radical Efficiency model (opposite) is a simple framework that extracts the common principles from all the exemplars examined. The bottom half of the framework describes good innovation that generates new solutions to old problems. This is about improving existing systems. It is useful and can be very powerful – but it is not radically efficient.

Taken together however, the top and bottom halves of the framework describe radical efficiency. They illustrate that by taking a fresh look at the nature of the challenge – as well as thinking creatively about how to construct better solutions – we can fundamentally change systems, not just improve them.

"I wish we'd done it two months ago – which is recognition of its usefulness and generative capacity."
Jon Rouse, Chief Executive, Croydon Council

Radical Efficiency

- **New knowledge-generators**
  - Other sectors as knowledge generators
  - Users as knowledge generators
- **New knowledge**
  - Uncovering old ideas in new places
  - Mining data
  - Collecting new Data

- Non-consumers
- New consumer units
- Community as consumer

New information / New customers / New suppliers / New resources

New perspectives on challenges

New perspectives on solutions

- Users as co producers
- New entrants
- Mini-Tribes

- Reduce
- Reuse
- Recycle
- Sweat assets
- Digital technology

Source: The Innovation Unit

How did the model help Total Place?

This framework provides a powerful way in for service leaders from across agencies to think differently about the shared challenges they face. Taking the two ways of 'rethinking the challenge' – through 'new insights' from other sectors or new sources of data; and through considering 'new customers' or reconceptualising who is truly being served – participants' thinking is opened up to a whole new domain for innovation. We discovered the 'real' challenge, rather than the one we had been working on by default for many years.

In Croydon we were pushed to consider who the new customers for our early years services might be (for example, the wider family or older siblings), and to imagine how private industry or third sector organisations might approach the same challenges. We were made to think more boldly and differently.

"A really helpful morning, which will make us think differently – and more radically – about our proposals for improvement."
Caroline Taylor, Chief Executive, NHS Croydon

We identified potential 'new providers' and 'new resources' to address our priorities. What might users bring to 'co-producing' services for themselves for example? Which organizations are users already interacting with who might be good service partners? We worked together to identify whole new directions to investigate in further developing our propositions.

We had a range of light-bulb moments, and agreed that we should use the thinking methodology more widely. Participants in Croydon said that the experience stimulated 'the extra 20% of new thinking' that will allow them to truly transform services.

Changing public attitudes and behaviour – nudging our way forward

Sue Goss, South Tyneside, Sunderland and Gateshead programme lead, Office for Public Management

As we explore ways to get more for less, attention focuses on those areas where public spending 'mops up' problems that could be prevented.

Some Total Place pilots have explored how citizens could take greater responsibility for their own well-being and the well-being of their 'place' – and how if we changed our behaviours we could reduce the vast spending on alcohol and drug abuse, energy, waste, obesity, offending, anti-social behaviour etc.

Governments have always sought to impact on public behaviour, but traditional approaches use tax or financial incentives or financial or legal penalties – and rely on the assumption that we always think and act rationally. Books like '*Nudge*' suggest we should pay more attention to 'irrational' processes. When choices are complicated:

- We make mental short-cuts that skew our preferences
- We tend to prefer immediate gratification to long-term pay-offs
- We tend to default to the easiest course of action

Thaler and Sunstein argue that policy makers can act as 'choice architects' to set defaults to elicit better choices. Well-known examples are the opt-out only polices for pensions or organ donation, which use inertia to create socially beneficial outcomes.

Other social science suggests we need to start from people's lived experience and help them take control of personal choices. The health service is adopting ideas from cognitive behavioural therapy and social therapy to work with individuals through 'motivational conversations'. Other factors include the confidence people have in their own ability to take action and persist, so that it often helps to set and reward small incremental goals.

People often look around at others for guidance on how to behave. Cialdini's research shows, for example that people are twice as likely to litter if their environment is dirty. We are learning that social norms and social values such as loyalty, commitment and reciprocity play an important role in behaviour change, and that in order to participate in solving collective problems, people need to feel part of a wave of change, rather than isolated or powerless.

Seven steps for helping communities change

The *Capital Ambition Guide* suggests seven key steps:

- Set a clear goal – (deciding by how much you want behaviour to change; whether you want to change the behaviour of targeted groups or everyone etc)
- Understanding the lifestyles and experiences of our communities in relation to this change – and what might motivate them; what they are up against etc
- Segment target groups – understand differences
- Understand the 'theory in use' about how behaviour is likely to change – what is the combination of stages we are planning and why?
- Engage with local people – understand their views, preferences and worries – co-design the approach with them
- Design an approach that works over time, combining different interventions
- Ensure public and political support – and account to the community for the choices made.

Harvard sociologist Robert Sampson terms this 'collective efficacy' – we need to know not just what is right or even what is in our self-interest but also that our participation will make a difference.[1]

There are good places to look for learning from current projects. The Social Marketing Centre has detailed case-studies on the website; and the London Collaborative has produced a guide to Behaviour Change for Capital Ambition with several case studies, which can be found on their website.

Some important learning:

- Different people have very different experiences – a blanket 'advertising campaign' is unlikely to work
- Personal change takes place over time and has several stages – a combination of interventions has to match the different stages people have reached[2]

- Human conversation is very important in helping someone to understand their own motivations and find their own route to change
- Public service workers can play an important role – but they need to explore their own behaviours, values and motivations to help to others
- Public agencies have to think hard about 'who decides' which behaviours are acceptable and unacceptable
- Local partnerships can create the relationships and space necessary to enable to enable the 'who decides' question to be satisfactorily answered – and enable the community to act collectively to implement the decisions made

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[1] For sources, see Prendergast et al SMF 2008
[2] Prochaska and DiClemente have described this as a 'cycle of change'

Creating the world café

Lesley Cramman, WiT Partnership Ltd

The purpose of a world café is to bring together people with diverse views and experience to foster collaborative dialogues and constructive possibilities for action.

It works on the assumption that people often just need the right context to work innovatively and creatively. It is a flexible and fun process that creates a real opportunity for people to share and cross-pollinate ideas and make new connections. World cafés are excellent for large numbers of people but are less effective for groups under 20.

Preparing for a world café

There are a number of things to consider before the world café happens.

- Be clear about why you want to use the café
- Is the café the right process to use?
- Do you have an appropriate venue?
- Who will you involve in formulating the questions?
- Who will be the table hosts (you will need one host for four/five participants)?

Getting the questions right

Good questions that people care about are at the heart of the world café. You will need to work with the table hosts before the café to get the questions right – this is a good investment of time.

How the world café works

There are some key things that need to be worked on to ensure the café is as successful as possible.

- Use small tables which seat four or five people at most. The point is to have smaller groups where everyone can really connect and talk in some depth
- Cover the tables with paper tablecloths – for people to draw, doodle, write their ideas on. You may choose to write key ideas on large post-its and place them around the room
- There are usually three café rounds each lasting about 30-35 minutes (including changeover time)
- Every table usually (but not always) addresses the same question at the same time
- Each table needs a host. Table hosts stay at the table and their role is key. They welcome people to the table and do introductions at the beginning of each cafe round. They share ideas from each round of the café with new people and encourage people to listen carefully to one another and build on ideas. They encourage people at their table to write,

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draw, doodle ideas, connections, and questions (use the tablecloths). At the end of each café round, hosts help the table to decide on three or four of the most important points they want to share and record these in an agreed format

- In the final round of the café people often go back to their original tables to share what they have learned and synthesise their insights and learning
- The world café closes with a meeting of all participants to share ideas, insights, questions and agree a way forward

Follow up

People will want to know what has emerged from the energy and goodwill of the café and what happens next. You could produce a short report which includes photographs of the event, a write up of the key points and future actions.

For more information about the world café, visit www.theworldcafe.com

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