# Building Community Resilience and Wellbeing: Practical examples

## Belfast Healthy Cities

Laura Dosanjh
Director of Applied Innovation

8 November 2012

THE
YOUNG
FOUNDATION
THINKING
ACTION
CHANGE

# About the Young Foundation

We are The Young Foundation and we are determined to make positive social change happen.

We pioneered the field of social innovation, with The Open University, Which, UpRising and Studio Schools.

We continue to work closely with individuals, communities and partners, building relationships to ensure that our thinking does something, our actions matter, and the change we make together
will continue to grow.

**THE YOUNG FOUNDATION**
THINKING
ACTION
CHANGE

# This presentation

- Brief overview of Young Foundation work in this area

- Practical example based on research into community resilience in Birmingham

- Emerging examples from our work on community resilience within Europe

# Our Wellbeing and Resilience research

Grit
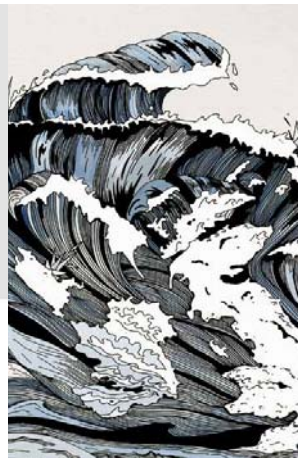The skills for success
and how they are grown

Yvonne Roberts

Taking the temperature
of local communities
The Wellbeing and Resilience
Measure (WARM)

Nina Mguni & Nicola Bacon

Local Wellbeing Project

THE YOUNG FOUNDATION
THINKING
ACTION
CHANGE

Sinking and
swimming
Understanding Britain's
unmet needs

THE YOUNG FOUNDATION

An insight into
the impact of
the cuts on
some of the
most vulnerable
in Camden

Adapting to
change: the role of
community resilience
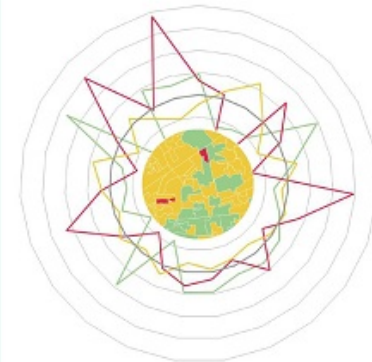
Commissioned by the
Barrow Cadbury Trust

BARROW CADBURY TRUST

The State of Happiness

Can public policy shape people's
wellbeing and resilience?

The wellbeing and resilience paradox

Nina Mguni, Nicola Bacon and John F Brown

# …and our practical work with individuals and organisations

- **Local wellbeing programme** – piloted resilience interventions in three local authority areas
- **Bounce back** – training teachers to deliver resilience curriculum in schools
- **Face up** – resilience training for young people at risk of involvement in gangs and crime
- **Full of life** – training volunteers to deliver resilience support to isolated older people
- **Local Minds** – working with local branches of Mind to map and identify needs for resilience building for older, unemployed men

**THE YOUNG FOUNDATION**
THINKING
ACTION
CHANGE

# Concept of community resilience builds on the sustainability agenda



THE
YOUNG
FOUNDATION
THINKING
ACTION
CHANGE

# … and addresses chronic issues

# Recent definitions tend to emphasise the defensive nature of community resilience

- **Kimhi, 2004** *Individuals' sense of the ability of their own community to deal successfully with the ongoing political violence*
- **Coles, 2004** *A community's capacities, skills, and knowledge that allow it to participate fully in recovery from disasters*
- **Pfefferbaum, 2005** *The ability of community members to take meaningful, deliberate, collective action to remedy the impact of a problem, including the ability to interpret the environment, intervene, and move on.*
- *UK Cabinet Office 2011 - Strategic National Framework on Community Resilience: The capacity of an individual, community or system to adapt in order to sustain an acceptable level of function, structure, and identity."*

**THE YOUNG FOUNDATION**
THINKING
ACTION
CHANGE

8

# We define community resilience in terms of assets

# And emphasise the transformative potential of adaptive resilience

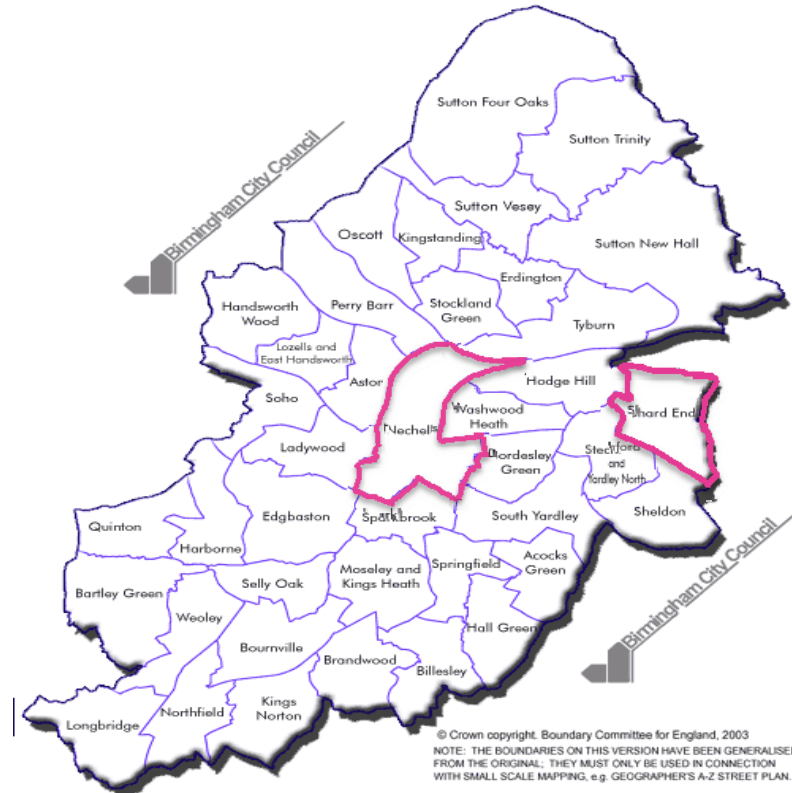# Example 1: Adapting to change



Adapting to change: the role of community resilience

Commissioned by the Barrow Cadbury Trust
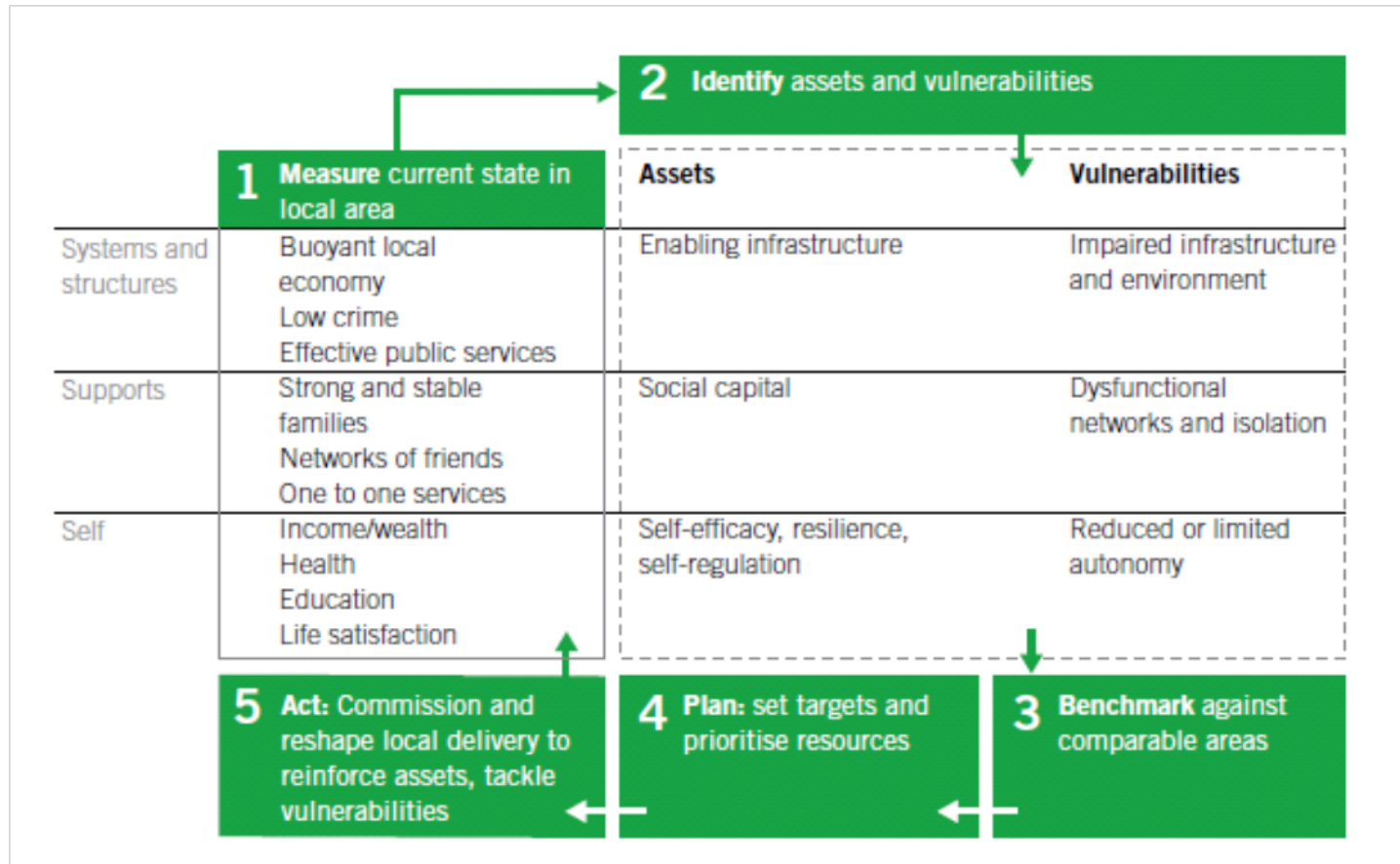
# Shard End and Nechells

# About these two communities

- Located a city with a rich manufacturing heritage

- High levels of unemployment and vulnerable people

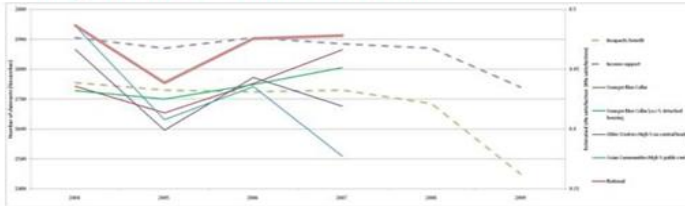- New service economy developing, but a sense of being on the edge of things

*"I don't think people think about us at all. I don't think people would know this place existed. It probably does not conjure up a good picture for people. Sometimes I don't admit to coming from Shard End."*

**THE YOUNG FOUNDATION**
THINKING
ACTION
CHANGE

# WARM (Wellbeing and Resilience measurement)

# Shard End WARM map

**Stage 1: how has Shard End fared?**

Satisfaction with life: Estimated level of life satisfaction suggests blue collar workers fare better than older residents and those from minority ethnic communities.

**Stage 2: measure assets & vulnerabilities**

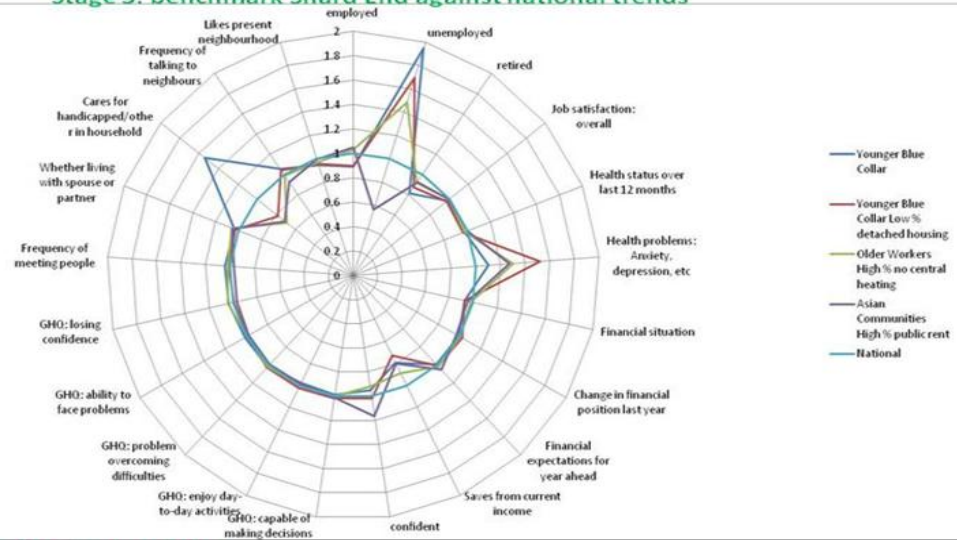| Self | Education |
| --- | --- |
| | Health |
| | Material wellbeing |
| Supports | |
| | |
| Systems & structures | Public services |
| | Crime & anti-social behaviour |
| | Infrastructure & belonging |

**Main assets**
Low number of carers
High level of participation in local decision making bodies focused on crime
Good level of satisfaction with GP's
Comparatively low level of crime – including ASB
**Main vulnerabilities**
Poor performance at GCSE and low level participation post 16
High proportion of people have disabilities and long term illness but poor mental health score
High number of people aged 50+ on benefits
High proportion of single pensioner households
Low number of vacancies in the area

**Stage 3: benchmark Shard End against national trends**

Legend:
- Younger Blue Collar
- Younger Blue Collar Low % detached housing
- Older Workers High % no central heating
- Asian Communities High % public rent
- National

Axes: employed, unemployed, retired, Job satisfaction: overall, Health status over last 12 months, Health problems: Anxiety, depression, etc, Financial situation, Change in financial position last year, Financial expectations for year ahead, Saves from current income, confident, GHQ: capable of making decisions, GHQ: enjoy day-to-day activities, GHQ: problem overcoming difficulties, GHQ: ability to face problems, GHQ: losing confidence, Frequency of meeting people, Whether living with spouse or partner, Cares for handicapped/other in household, Frequency of talking to neighbours, Likes present neighbourhood

**Stage 4: understand and plan**
- The estimates of life satisfaction show improved levels of life satisfaction amongst blue collar workers. In contrast, Asian communities and older workers fare less well.
- Younger blue collar workers are the most likely to experience unemployment, but the least likely to experience anxiety and depression. Though there are comparatively few carers in the ward, younger blue collar residents are most likely to have caring responsibilities.
- The majority of output areas in this ward are formed of older workers. This will present some challenge given the comparatively large proportion of people aged 50+ who are claimants. Similarly, older workers experience the least confidence.
- Older people may face isolation given the large proportion of single pension households in this ward.
The priorities and how they can be addressed:
There is low attainment and post 16 participation in education and skills but potentially limited capacity in FE college.
There are high levels of unemployment but limited capacity to absorb unemployed workers
Poor mental health outcomes could be reduced by targeted provision building on the high levels of satisfaction with GP provision.
Isolation of older people could be addressed by the strong social networks

THE YOUNG FOUNDATION
THINKING
ACTION
CHANGE

# Community response - frustrations

*"All this development taking place on our doorstep but we are not part of it. I want to know why my community can't get jobs there. Why are we excluded? Why are we not benefiting when everyone knows that our area has very high unemployment? Of course we are consulted and all the right boxes are ticked. But no one knows what it feels like to be long term unemployed? Who really listens?"*

THE
YOUNG
FOUNDATION
THINKING
ACTION
CHANGE

# Survival resilience?

*"It's a deprived area so people are hardy. The main quality is resilience. Life constantly throws things at them. Life isn't smooth here for people. But they have learnt to overcome and move on, and brace themselves and they move on to the next thing. It's necessity that makes them resilient; they get used to dreadful things getting thrown at them."*

— Community Gardener, Shard End

# Community leadership – *Eden Project and Allotments* (Shard End)

- On a derelict, 2-acre site
- Brings generations together
- Helped local children learn more about how to grow fruit and vegetables as well as renewable energy
- Involvement from agencies across the sectors
- UK's Best Green Community Project
- Sponsorship to install a solar panel, making them energy self-sufficient for next 25 years

THE
YOUNG
FOUNDATION
THINKING
ACTION
CHANGE

# Conclusions from the report

**1. Do not ignore the quiet communities**

Just because problems are not being voiced does not mean that they do not exist.

**2. Develop localised micro funds to seed voluntary sector activity**

Small amounts of investment can make a big difference and send important signals to communities.

**3. Invest in community leadership**

Where the voluntary sector activity is absent or weak, activity can be kick started through neighbourhood managers to build up the capacity of community leaders.

**4. Focus on places *and* people**

Community resilience does require public spaces but it is more than about building a new community centre, you need the people to run them.

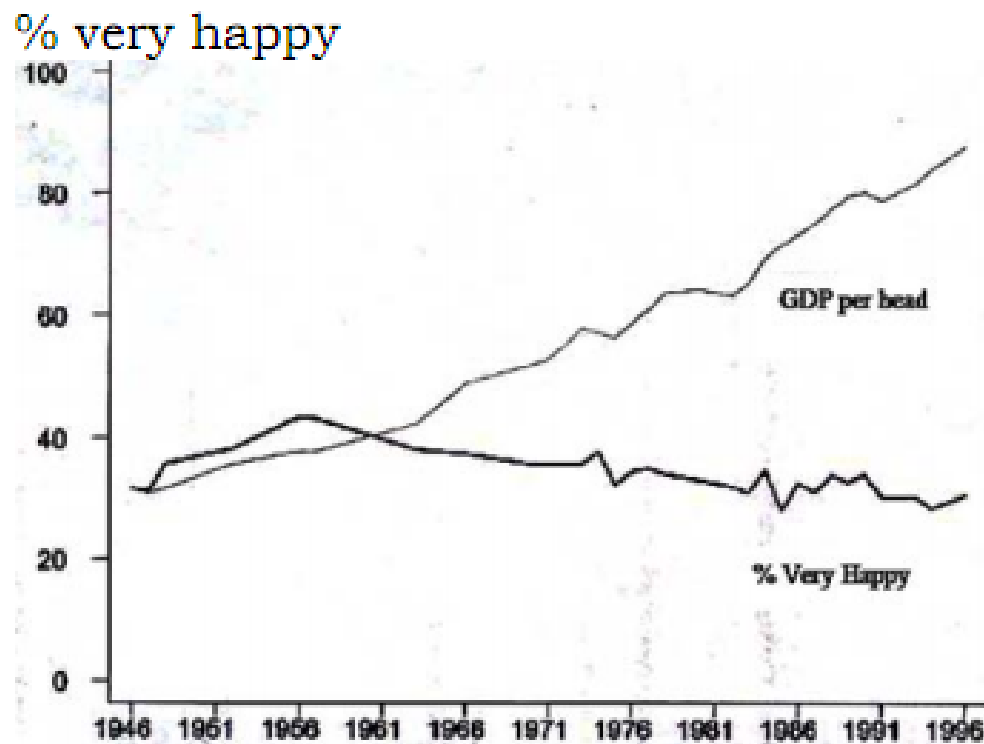**5. Strengthen public and voluntary sector partnerships**

As cuts impact on both public and voluntary sector services, it is more important than ever forge new links and protect existing ones between the sectors.

**THE YOUNG FOUNDATION**
THINKING
ACTION
CHANGE

# Example 2: Beyond GDP in Europe

"*Understanding the links between resilience and wellbeing can sharpen our focus on the protective factors which help communities to cope in the face of adversity.*"

**THE YOUNG FOUNDATION**
THINKING
ACTION
CHANGE

# Beyond GDP – the challenge

Figure 1 Income and happiness in the USA

% very happy

# Beyond GDP project aims

Greater use, consistency and development of measures of social progress across municipalities, cities and regions

- Develop WARM framework building on empirical evidence
- Identify available data and gaps at pan-European level and in two case study sites – as well as build on UK work
- Stocktaking on small area methods for poverty and living conditions

Identify areas for further research and recommendations

**THE
YOUNG
FOUNDATION**
THINKING
ACTION
CHANGE

# Case studies



**Lindangen**, Fosie, Malmö



**Les Roquetes**, Nou Barris, Barcelona

THE
YOUNG
FOUNDATION
THINKING
ACTION
CHANGE

# Pressure points…

# ..and building the community

# Moving the community resileince agenda on…

- Resilience resonates but is a contested concept

- There has been over-reliance on a negative definition of community resilience, which focuses on deficits, rather than assets, and on survival, rather than adaptation

- Agencies need to identify assets and champion the organic, networked responses

- Work that aims to build community resilience needs to seek to establish trusted relationships between community, state, voluntary and private sectors

**THE YOUNG FOUNDATION**
THINKING
ACTION
CHANGE

Laura Dosanjh, Director of Applied Innovation, Young Foundation
November 2012
www.youngfoundation.org