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Executive summary

The aim of Healthy Communities Phase 2 was to test and evaluate sustainable and commercially-viable healthy lifestyle interventions, created with - and led by - the local community and local delivery partners.

It builds on Healthy Communities Phase 1, which researched the underlying drivers of childhood obesity and worked with local communities to co-design ideas to tackle this problem.

In phase two of the project, three of these ideas were then implemented and evaluated over a four month period, with the aim of becoming sustainable and scalable models. The three initiatives were:

- **Snack Stop** – a healthy tuck shop utilising local restaurant owners to sell and create hot and cold snacks at the primary school gates at home time.
- **Make Kit** – a healthy recipe pack business that sells pre-made meal kits from convenient places in the community at affordable prices.
- **Active Local Links** – utilises community networks to actively encourage participation in local health and wellbeing activities.

The project has shown that it is possible to deliver health outcomes outside the formal health system, and has evidenced how big businesses, social enterprises and the voluntary sector can positively affect health. In only a short amount of time, these local initiatives demonstrated the potential to reduce childhood obesity within their neighbourhoods and - should they scale - across London. For example, Snack Stop changed pupils' behaviours, swapping unhealthy snacks for more healthy alternatives, and has also prompted the school to re-energise its healthy food provision. Around a third of parents felt that Snack Stop helped them to encourage their child to eat more healthily. Make Kit has increased the confidence of its customers (83% of respondents reportedly felt more confident cooking healthy food). Active Local Links has supported local parents to initiate their own activity classes and has upskilled them through CV classes, which could have wider implications on reducing health inequalities in the longer term.

As well as the potential to impact on obesity outcomes, value was also created through the design and agile methods used to develop these initiatives, activating and engaging local communities around an issue.

All three initiatives were developed through prototyping (a process involving mocking things up in a small way). This process provided a means by which to test out ideas, identify errors without delay, and attract early feedback (and interest). Additionally, it showed that it is possible to progress from insight to idea to implementation and develop social ventures in a relatively short space of time. Prototyping is an important way of drawing in energy and inspiring quick action.

Together with the support of local commissioners, this approach enabled the initiatives to draw on the energy and enthusiasm of the local community, showing them how these initiatives aligned with their interests and providing information on how to get involved. Each project drew in considerable local support. Make Kit crowdsourced an additional £11,500 from local supporters, and Active Local Links and Snack Stop drew on £4,400 of in-kind support. Local commissioners were able to connect local partners, whilst public and environmental health teams in the local councils were able to galvanise local businesses and schools. Moreover, the initiatives were led and supported by social entrepreneurs, local businesses and volunteers.

The response to this project indicates not only how health commissioners can reach out to assets across local communities to deliver health outcomes, but also that - by doing so - they can achieve wider social outcomes. Developing initiatives in such a way imbues them with the potential to boost local economies by creating business, employment and volunteering opportunities, bring people together to reduce isolation, and build stronger communities.

However, though there is potential to deliver health outcomes in new and innovative ways, this also requires new ways of working. Whilst some of this relies on the provision of initial funding, the ultimate aim is for these initiatives to become sustainable beyond more traditional short-term funding cycles.

Executive summary

As such, additional nurturing and a different cultural mindset are required to 'incubate' social ventures, making sure that there are active local communities in the first place, and that the social ventures that do emerge have the right support to evolve in a way that attracts investment. New skills (e.g. design and business modelling) will be required to effect this change. However, there are many ways in which commissioners can draw on their existing skills, networks and assets to support these ventures. Commissioners wishing to support social ventures should consider the following reflections and how they can use their existing skills, adapt their ways of working, or reach out to new partners to make new skills available to the community.

- Enabling rather than leading. An initial injection of energy can be useful in galvanising people around an issue, but to be sustainable ideas need to have local buy-in or - even better - to have been developed by the community itself.
- Meaningful engagement is essential to creating sustainable community-based initiatives. Early investment in identifying and activating local people and assets, understanding people's motivations, and building trusting relationships with people who can support and lead ventures is time well spent.
- Initiatives need to be flexible. A focus on outcomes rather than outputs allows the right service solution to develop iteratively and based on feedback from local people. Taking this kind of agile approach enables faster delivery of early prototypes and is more likely to meet the needs of service users.

- Incubation support is necessary to ensure that social ventures are able to become sustainable and move on from an initial reliance on grant funding. At the early stage, social ventures often focus solely on creating social impact, but demonstrating the potential for return on investment is critical if they are going to become financially sustainable and/or attract private investment. Grant funding is important, but more critical is the provision of skills, assets and connections by the commissioning authority (either directly or indirectly).

Healthy London Partnership will be publishing a new guide in May 2017 to support wider embedding of the overarching model used within the Healthy Communities project. This will include practical information, tools and case studies to support commissioners.

Snack Stop

Snack Stop is a healthy tuck shop utilising local food retailers to create and sell hot and cold snacks at the primary school gates at home time.

Challenge

Parents often bring unhealthy snacks to the school gates or buy cheap takeaways for their children on the way home. Many parents are worried about the health repercussions of this habit, but feel powerless to stop as there is nowhere for them to buy affordable, healthy and tasty food. Both the taste and the colourful branding of fast food and unhealthy snacks make them an attractive option to children.

Opportunity

To break unhealthy snacking behaviour amongst school children and instil positive eating habits by providing a healthier alternative that is affordable, convenient, and tasty.

Impact

- Three quarters of those surveyed said the Snack Stop chicken meal replaced a takeaway.
- Half of parents felt it either had or may have encouraged their child to eat more healthily.
- 94% of students asked gave snack stop 1 or 2 thumbs up (max. of 2 thumbs up available).

Implications

School tuck shops, particularly those that operate after school, have the potential to positively impact on pupils' eating habits. Schools should consider working with local food retailers to initiate their own Snack Stop.



Make Kit

Make Kit - an initiative owned by local social entrepreneurs - provides healthy pre-measured meal kits and recipes from convenient places in the community, at affordable prices.

Challenge

Parents would like to cook healthier meals for their families, but sometimes lack the confidence, time and skills to do so. Instead they often buy ready meals or takeaways which can be high in fat, sugar and salt, and often lack important food groups such as fruit, vegetables and whole grains. Cost is also a factor with healthy food perceived as being more expensive.

Opportunity

There is a rapidly-growing market for recipe kits that deliver pre-measured ingredients directly to the doors of consumers. However there is nothing on the UK market targeted at those with limited budgets. Providing pre-measured, affordable, healthy food kits will support parents to develop the confidence and skills to buy and cook healthy food.

Impact

- 73% of respondents reported eating fewer ready meals and 67% reported eating fewer takeaways. 58% reported eating more vegetables.
- 83% reported more confidence in cooking healthy meals.
- All respondents said it had inspired them to try new recipes and different types of food.
- 83% said they would recommend the pack to a friend or family member.

Implications

The social entrepreneurs leading Make Kit have been successful in securing funding from the local council to refine the business and financial model in light of findings from the pilot, exploring ways to ensure sustainability whilst keeping the packs affordable. In the future, the aim is that Make Kit would scale across London. Make Kit demonstrates there is a market for this kind of recipe kit at a more affordable price point.



Make kit **FALAFEL WITH A TURKISH SALAD**



Falafel is a classic Middle Eastern dish, of which there are thousands of different recipes. This simple recipe is quick to make, using tinned chickpeas rather than the traditional dried. The recipe for the accompanying salad, known as a Tabbouleh, was provided by Jackie Carter, a long standing resident and community leader of Fellows Court.

Serves 2

EQUIPMENT Medium bowl x 3, small bowl x 1, lid x 1, colander, knife, chopping board, potato masher/fork, baking tray,

INGREDIENTS

1 tin	Chickpeas	2	Garlic cloves
1	Falafel mix: ½ tsp plain flour, ½ tsp sesame seeds, ½ tsp baking powder, ¾ tsp cumin, ½ tsp coriander	½ 2 tsp 1 handful 2 tsp 200ml	Lemon Natural yoghurt Parsley *Olive oil *Water *Salt and pepper to taste
75g	Bulgur wheat		
1	Pitta Bread		
1	Red onion		
¼	Cucumber		
1	Tomatoes		

*from your cupboard

Active Local Links

Active Local Links (ALL) utilises community networks to actively encourage participation in local health and wellbeing activities.

Challenge

Whilst there was a clear need to inform parents about groups and activities within their community, this information needed to come from a trusted source to ensure high follow-through rates. Parents often reported feeling nervous attending a group for the first time, which acted as a strong barrier to their levels of physical activity.

Opportunity

Utilising local parents as volunteers to help spread information about activities and groups will improve parents' knowledge about - and their likelihood to participate in - their community. Where there is a gap in provision and volunteers feel motivated to set up their own groups or activities, they will be supported to do so.

Impact

Although too early to gather a conclusive impact, a number of parents were recruited as volunteers, inducted and given training and mentoring support. A number of them are being supported to set up their own classes including a female-only fitness class, cooking and swimming classes.

Implications

The delivery partner will be taking Active Local Links forward and embedding the model into their child obesity offer for local authorities.



The initiatives



Introduction

The aim of the Healthy Communities project was to implement and evaluate healthy and sustainable lifestyle interventions created with - and led by - the local community and local delivery partners.

The overall objectives of the project were to:

- Conduct ethnographic research on childhood obesity at the local community level within Haggerston, Isle of Dogs and Seven Sisters.
- Work with local communities to co-design ideas for initiatives that could potentially reduce childhood obesity levels in their communities.
- Conduct a rapid pilot of three of the ideas over the course of four months.
- Develop each initiative into socially and financially sustainable business models.
- Independently evaluate the impact of each initiative on the local community.

This report focuses primarily on the implementation and evaluated impact of the three initiatives. This process consisted of four phases:

- 1. Set up.** Develop pilot delivery plans and evaluation framework, and establish local partnerships to facilitate delivery mechanisms.
- 2. Co-deliver and evaluate.** Co-deliver solutions in partnership with local delivery partners and communities to build ownership and sustainability.
- 3. Analyse.** synthesise pilot learnings and evaluation data to understand successes and challenges of piloted solutions.
- 4. Report.** Recommend improved approaches for implementation.

The design principles which shaped the way this work was delivered include the following approaches:

People-centred. The work is centred around users, understanding their needs and working with them to co-design and test solutions.

Asset and opportunity-based. There is an enormous amount of energy in communities which can be built on. A lot of time is spent identifying these assets and building relationships with them.

Prototyping rather than strategising. Prototyping (or mocking things up on a small scale) and using the learnings to improve the idea and inspire quick action.

Iterative and agile. Adopting a flexible project approach with weekly reviews as well as adapting to local feedback.

The following pages chart the development and evaluation of the three healthy lifestyle initiatives: Snack Stop, Active Local Links and Make Kit.

Snack Stop



The challenge

The local challenge

In Haringey, one in three children are overweight by the time they leave primary school. This has serious negative repercussions for individual health outcomes in the form of diabetes and other chronic conditions, as well as placing extra burdens on the healthcare system.

Insights from Phase 1

The area surrounding Crowland primary school is one of the most ethnically diverse areas of London and also one of the most economically deprived. Ethnographic research with families revealed that most families do not venture further than 400 metres from their home on a day-to-day basis. Therefore, the resources and food options available on their doorsteps are of utmost importance.

Many families had a desire to be healthy and remain active, but felt their local environment did not facilitate this. The vast majority of food outlets surrounding the local primary school are chicken shops selling high-fat fast food. Parents will often bring unhealthy snacks to children at the school gates after school or will buy takeaways on the way home. Many parents are worried about the health repercussions of this habit, but feel powerless to stop as there are not enough options for buying affordable, tasty. Both the taste and the colourful branding of fast food and unhealthy snacks make such an option very attractive to children. The chicken shops can also act as social hubs for the older children or their parents where they can spend time with friends.

The opportunity

There was an opportunity to provide children with a healthy option for quick, tasty, and affordable food at home time. In addition, this alternative food outlet could become a community hub and safe space in which children and parents could spend time after school and where conversations on healthy eating could be started.

Moving from problem to solution

The long-term aim is to break unhealthy snacking behaviour amongst school children and instil positive eating habits.

To achieve this, Snack Stop was created: a healthy tuck shop selling hot and cold snacks at Crowland school gates at home time. Snack Stop is an alternative to unhealthy snacks or chicken shop meals that is:

Affordable. Hot food is sold at £2 per portion which is in line with that sold by local fast food retailers. Cold food snacks are available from 30p.

Convenient. Snack Stop is located next to the school gates at home time.

Tasty. Options such as jerk chicken, rice and peas, and salad were provided. These are all significantly lower in fat than fast food shop meals while still being full of flavour.

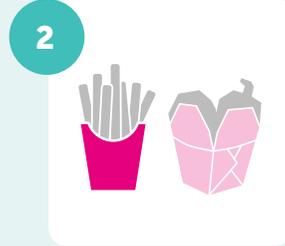
Attractive. Research in Phase 1 revealed that the chicken shop branding is very attractive to children. Based on this insight, a Snack Stop brand was developed that used the classic chicken shop colours of yellow and red, which was applied to the Snack Stop stall and food packaging.



Customer journey



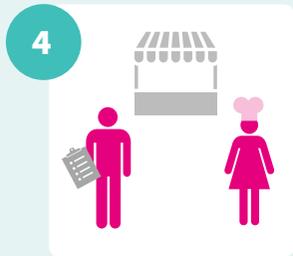
1
Leila always nags her mum on the way home for chips or fried chicken. Her mum Maryam generally gives in because she is busy and it is exhausting to say 'no' all the time.



2
Leila loves chicken shops because the food tastes good and she loves the brightly-coloured boxes. It is also a warm, dry place where she can meet and chat with friends.



3
Outside the school, an interesting stall catches Leila's eye. People are buying hot meals and fruit. It smells really good!



4
The tuck shop, which opens every Friday at home time, is run by a local restaurant owner and volunteers. Maryam chats to a volunteer who gives her advice on healthy eating.



5
Leila can get a small jerk chicken and salad meal for the same price as a box of fried chicken. She also gets a Snack Stop sticker with fun, healthy facts.



6
Leila is happy because it is tasty and fun. Her mum, Maryam is happy because it's healthy, easy and cheap.

Stakeholders and partners

The table below details the different types of stakeholders that were involved in setting up and supporting Snack Stop.

Delivery partners	Champions	Incubation	Sponsors
<p>Local restaurant operator - A local Caribbean restaurant owner - Jeffrey Simon - cooked and sold hot food at Snack Stop during the pilot. He has previously been involved in festivals and community-based projects.</p> <p>Crowland Primary School - An ethically and economically-diverse primary school in Haringey served as the host site for Snack Stop.</p> <p>Snack Stop Coordinator - Year Here graduate and aspiring social entrepreneur Josephine Liang carried out day-to-day operations for Snack Stop. Josephine has previous experience in food innovation and charitable work.</p>	<p>Environmental health officer at local council - Supported recruitment of business operators and facilitated healthy eating workshop at Snack Stop.</p> <p>Charities - supported volunteer engagement through advertising roles and onboarding Snack Stop to a Time Credit system.</p>	<p>Design and innovation consultancy - Stakeholder and supplier engagement, research support, brokering partnerships, service and communications design, branding and business modelling.</p> <p>Evaluators - Designed and delivered behaviour change evaluation with parents and pupils of primary school.</p>	<p>Healthy London Partnership - Grant funding, access to networks, endorsement and pilot strategy.</p> <p>Local Council - Support with stakeholder engagement and strategic advice.</p> <p>Healthy Snack Suppliers - Provided donations of cold snacks which led to an ongoing relationship, both during the Snack Stop pilot phase and with the school's break-time tuck shop.</p>

The model

Key financial, human and operational ingredients needed to implement Snack Stop

Financial	Human	Infrastructure
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Upfront expenses for catering equipment, branding materials and food supplies.• A supply of healthy pre-packaged snacks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support of school management to publicise Snack Stop within school.• Assistance of school grounds staff in weekly Snack Stop set-up.• Support of the senior environmental officer at Haringey Council, in order to encourage local business engagement.• Local charities to support volunteer recruitment.• Snack Stop coordinator, Josephine Liang, to carry out day-to-day Snack Stop operations.• Local restaurant operator, Jeffrey Simon, to prepare food sold at Snack Stop.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to an appropriate space at the school to run Snack Stop.• Use of school building to store supplies.• Tables and other equipment to layout Snack Stop display.• Use of local restaurant operator's kitchen to prepare food.

Other resource:

Access to networks and building relationships:

- Identified and engaged potential delivery or support partners e.g. snack suppliers, local restaurant operator and charities.
- Managed relationships between stakeholders.

Coaching and mentoring:

- Enabled Snack Stop coordinator and restaurant operator to develop ownership over Snack Stop, whilst continuing to provide ad-hoc and strategic support.

Innovation and creativity:

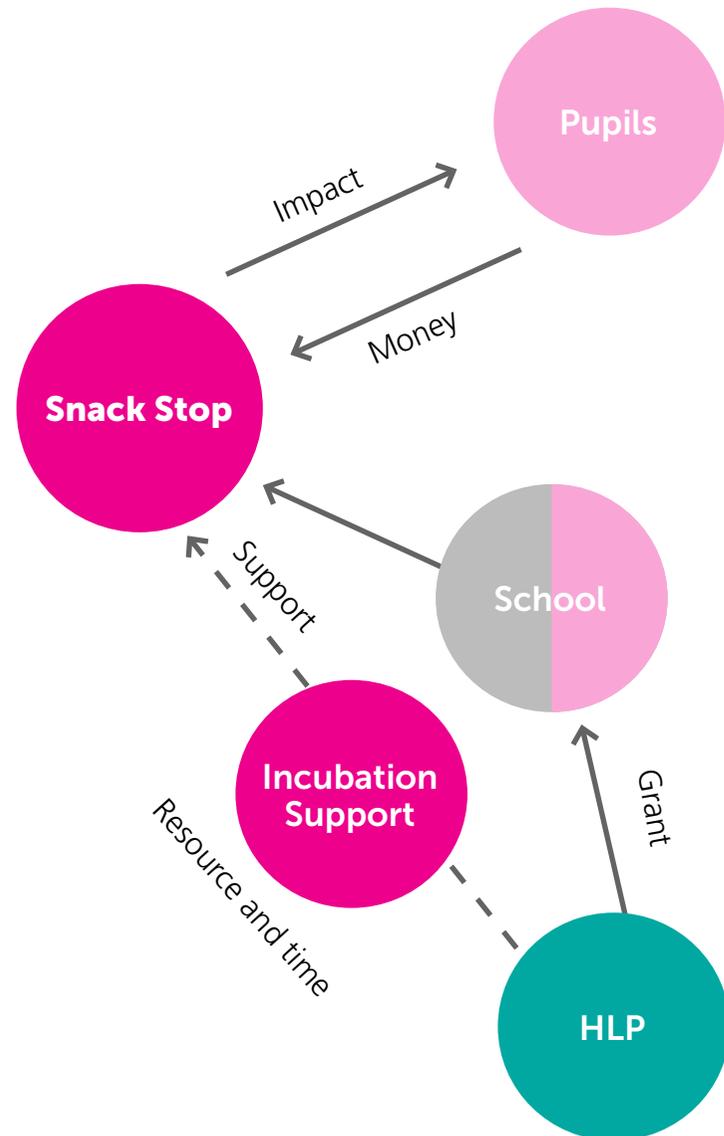
- Developed and applied the Snack Stop brand.
- Generated communication materials which were disseminated through Snack Stop, the school and Haringey Council channels.

Strategy and planning:

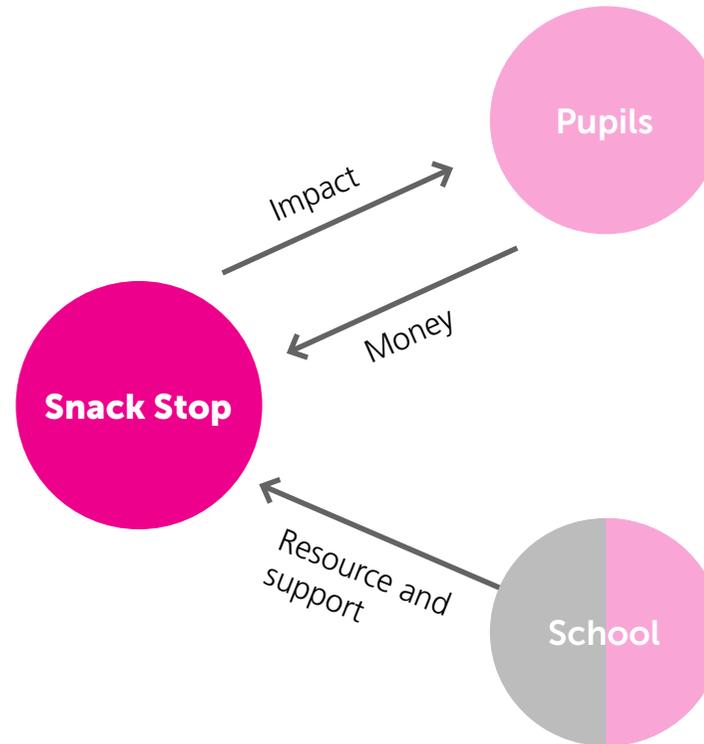
- Developed and iterated business models in response to feedback on the ground .

The model

Start

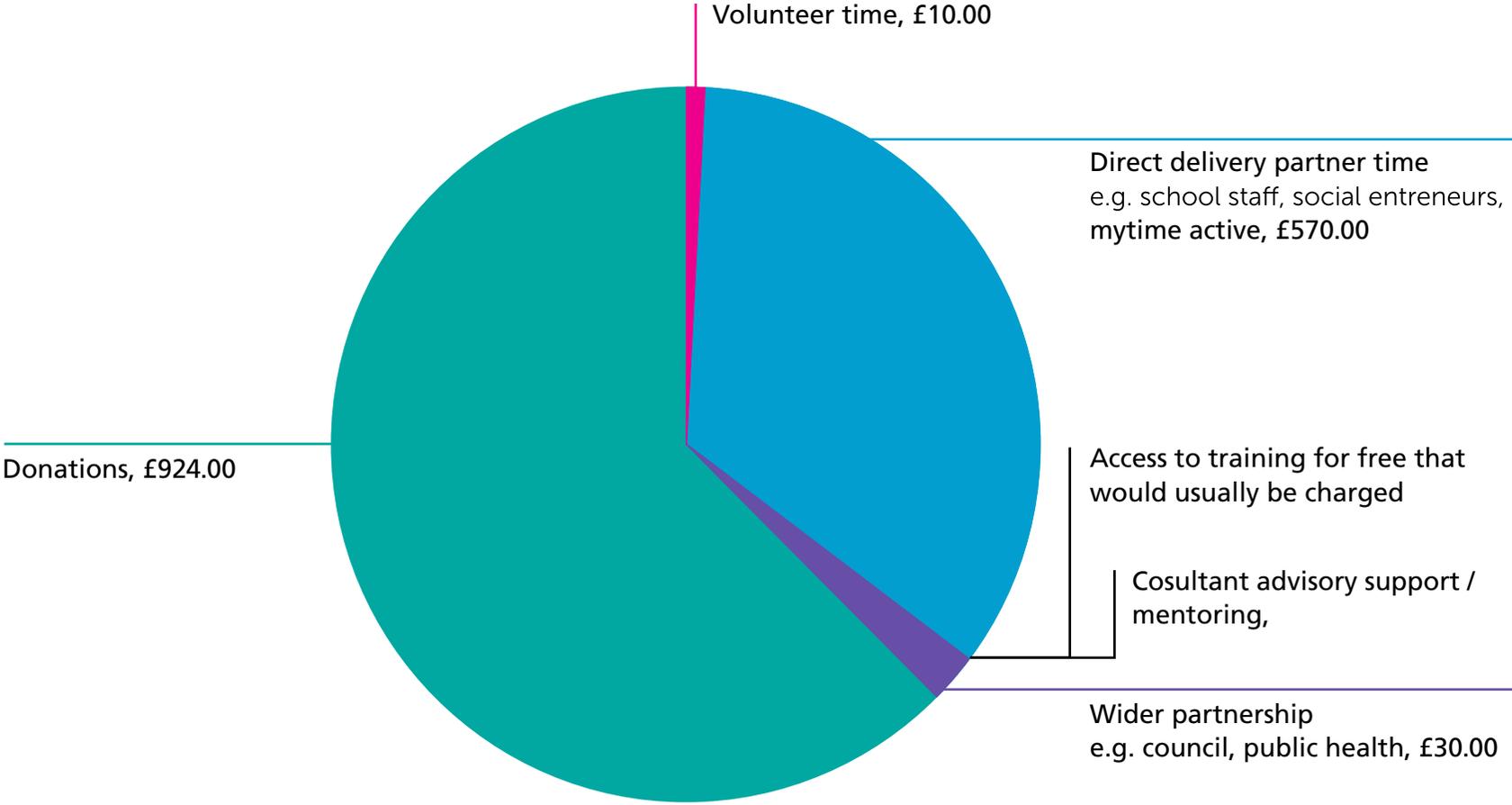


Maturity



In-kind support

Snack Stop benefited from £1,534 of in-kind support and resources



The value of in-kind support was calculated based on assumptions regarding how much would have been paid for various components of the project (had it been necessary to pay for them).



“I used to get snacks for my kids at the corner shop but it’s good to know I can get healthy snacks here instead.”

– Parent and Snack Stop customer

The impact

Behaviour change

- For some pupils Snack Stop is replacing an unhealthy snack with a healthier alternative:
 - Of those who had the chicken meal, three quarters indicated that they would have had a takeaway on the way home if they had not purchased from Snack Stop.
 - Approximately two thirds of the pupils interviewed at Snack Stop reported that they would have had a snack from elsewhere if they had not purchased something from Snack Stop.
 - Within this group, there was a mixed response regarding what it replaced. This range included chicken, fries and meat, sandwiches, crisps, fruit, cheese, rice crisps, yoghurt and cereals.
- Around half of parents felt that Snack Stop had helped or may have helped them to encourage their child to eat more healthily. A quarter felt that their child already ate healthily.
- Parents who had not used Snack Stop usually reported that their child would have a snack at home instead. When asked what they would have, responses included biscuits, crisps, fruit and yoghurt.

Wider impact and value

- 94% of students asked gave snack stop 1 or 2 thumbs up (max. of 2 thumbs up available).
- Anecdotally, parents made enthusiastic comments regarding the convenience of Snack Stop, as this presented an alternative to cooking at home. The children were excited to see the stall open and many became repeat customers. They also reacted positively to the healthy eating stickers.
- The local restaurant owner reported gaining new customers at the restaurant as a result of meeting families through Snack Stop.
- The school has demonstrated that it can run a tuck shop successfully within school time, and that whilst a volunteer-run initiative venturing into fresh hot food was an interesting idea - and one that they were happy to

trial - it was felt to be outside of their perceived core needs. However they adapted components of the Snack Stop model into a tuck shop that is more feasible within their current operations.

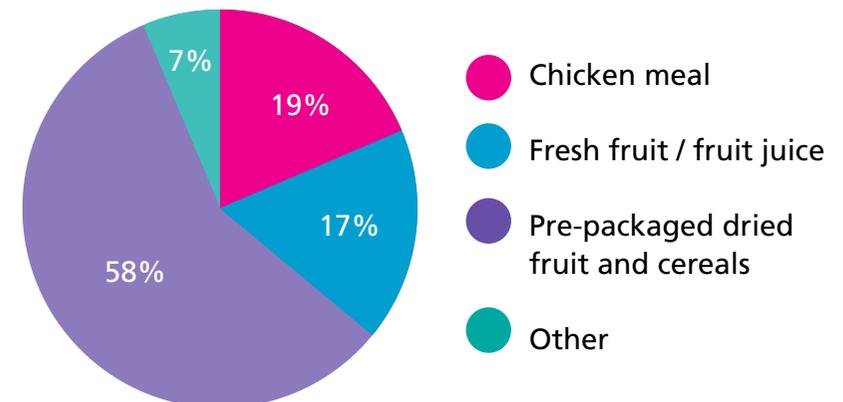
- The Snack Stop pilot was used as a platform for healthy eating workshops run by the senior environmental health officer at Haringey Council.
- The pilot has generated some positive legacy work outside of the school. Haringey Council's environmental health representative is working with a local volunteer to consider putting a healthy tuck shop in place in another school. This indicates how the idea has the potential to spread and change the local food offer for school children on a larger scale.

Sales data

- The volume of sales at Snack Stop was initially high, with over 110 items sold in each of the first three weeks. However, the volume fell after the half-term break, and on average 48 items were sold per week.

800 items sold over 12 weeks

Percentage of sales (number sold)



Learnings

Engagement of delivery partners

- Teachers are not desk based which can cause communication delays.
- It is crucial to have both senior buy-in from school management and a point of contact who has capacity to be involved in the day-to-day operations.
- It is essential that both school management and the day-to-day point of contact have a sense of ownership over the initiative, and this takes time to build. They must feel that they have fed into the design of the initiative and that it is both practical and desirable.
- The value added by a new initiative must align with the values, interests and objectives of the school.
- A new initiative must align with the school's current operations. For example, because Snack Stop's operating times fell slightly outside of school hours, there was a negative impact on the school's sense of control over/ownership of the initiative.

Value exchange for local stakeholders and/or volunteers

- There needs to be a clear value exchange for volunteers. Snack Stop attempted to overcome this issue by offering volunteers Time Credits. This increased interest in volunteering, but converting this initial interest into consistent volunteer numbers proved to be resource intensive.
- It is more effective to recruit from pre-existing networks (e.g. parent associations) but, even so, recruitment takes time.



Learnings

Understanding local passions and motivations

- A bottom-up rather than top-down approach may be more resilient in the long term. By understanding stakeholders and their motivations and capabilities there is a greater chance of building something resilient, rather than creating an initiative and then seeking out the right individuals to make this happen.

Enabling rather than leading

- It is important to ensure partners are supported to set up and run initiatives themselves rather than external partners doing this and then handing over a finished product. This may require more up-front time but will pay off in the longer term.

Flexibility of the model

- It was useful to have an initial business model for Snack Stop to structure its development, but the model needed to be responsive to changes on the ground.

Marketing

- We had a dynamic and engaging Snack Stop seller in our local restaurant owner: there was a notable increase in sales when he (rather than his colleague) was at Snack Stop to sell. His previous experience of selling at markets and festivals was helpful and made Snack Stop a profitable venture for him. Someone without this experience or confidence may struggle to sell enough to make a substantial profit.
- The presentation of the food also affected sales: when the food was displayed in chafing dishes, allowing students to smell and see the hot chicken meal, there was greater uptake.

Opportunities for improvement

- There may be some communication or perception issues around Snack Stop, as some parents reported that they did not use Snack Stop because they were unsure whether the meat was halal. The meat was halal but this could have been advertised more clearly.
- Several parents reported that they would have liked Snack Stop to purvey a wider range of fruit (including dried fruit), to offer options such as sushi or breakfast cereal, and to provide more information on healthy living.
- More extensive marketing of Snack Stop could have increased sales by ensuring that all parents were aware that the food was healthy as well as halal.
- In addition, project timescales need to align with the academic school year. In the case of Snack Stop, project timelines planned for the pilot to be launched in early October. Given that the school year commences in September, this was not enough time to fully onboard the school and gather the momentum required to ensure Snack Stop was well advertised and embedded within the school community.

Implications

What this may mean for different audience groups

For schools

- The evaluation of this initiative demonstrates that healthy tuck shops can act as a catalyst for healthier-eating behaviours among children.
- There is also evidence that the food offered by Snack Stop functioned as an alternative to less-healthy after school snacks. However, to create the best conditions for this type of initiative to generate more sustainable behaviour change across the school community, work should focus on ensuring that:
 - There is a shared understanding between the school and local partners about what Snack Stop is there to achieve, when it will operate and what food will be sold.
 - There is an active programme of volunteer recruitment within the school to help with the running of Snack Stop, including the supply of goods, and linking into other parent-led groups and activities.
 - There is sufficient resource for Snack Stop to be scaled up to a level (i.e. four or five days a week), so that healthy food choices become a daily routine, rather than a one-off.
 - Snack Stop forms part of a wider programme of activity, focused on creating dialogue and sharing information with parents and children about healthy foods, physical activity, and dealing with weight issues early.

For commissioners and government

- The feedback about Snack Stop from students and parents was generally positive, and there is evidence that it has the potential to be a commercially-viable venture.
- For commissioners, Snack Stop could be a cost-effective means of supporting healthier-eating behaviours, and an innovative means of commissioning health outcomes.
- Snack Stop could be an impactful means of spending any increased school funding received through income from sugar tax.

For delivery partners

- Snack Stop has increased the Snack Stop restaurant operator's customer base and established them as a healthy food provider in the community.
- Their involvement in the pilot has promoted their relationship with Haringey Council and provided an opportunity for collaboration with the local environmental health officer on healthy initiatives in the area. For example, they may be able to sell at local food fairs at which the health officer is running healthy-eating workshops.

Next steps

Supporting other schools to set up healthy tuck shops

A Snack Stop toolkit will be made available on the Healthy London Partnership website. The toolkit will contain resources for schools and local business operators who may be interested in setting up a Snack Stop, and will include: branding materials (poster, flyer templates and logos), supplier lists, “tips ‘n tricks” sheets, and a high-level business model.

Embedding healthy eating within the school

Crowland will continue their break-time tuck shop in which cold food snacks from Snack Stop will be sold to children twice a week. This creates an opportunity to generate conversation within the school about healthy eating.

Promoting Snack Stop at borough and national level

Haringey Council are promoting Snack Stop as a case study of an innovative approach to community engagement and tackling obesity. Haringey’s public health commissioner will continue to liaise with the environmental health officer to identify schools and businesses that may be interested in initiating a Snack Stop within their organisations.

Haringey’s environmental health officer intends to promote and applaud the local restaurant operator’s involvement in Snack Stop through her channels. This will generate positive PR for the restaurant whilst also promoting the Haringey Healthier Catering Commitment, as it was through his involvement with this scheme that he was first identified to be part of Snack Stop.





“We don’t know much about vitamin D. That’s something to chat about on the way home.”

– Grandparent and Snack Stop customer on receiving a sticker with healthy facts

Make Kit



The challenge

The challenge

41% of children aged 10-11 in Hackney are overweight or obese, significantly above London and national averages.¹ Children who are obese are more likely to be obese as adults, thus are at greater risk to health problems such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke and several types of cancer, as well as psychological health problems in the short term. In addition, an obese child in London is likely to cost society around £31 a year in direct costs, which could rise to a total (direct and indirect) cost of £611 a year if they continue to be obese in adulthood.²

Parents can have a significant bearing on the food and activity that they provide to their children, but for a variety of reasons may not always encourage the healthiest choices. We know environment plays a significant role: children from more deprived communities are twice as likely to be obese, and childhood obesity rates are higher in urban areas than rural areas.³

Insights from Phase 1 report

Parents in Haggerston engaged during Phase 1 said they would like to cook more healthy meals for their families, but sometimes lack the confidence, time and skills to do so. Instead they often buy ready meals or takeaways which can be high in fat, sugar and salt, and often lack important food groups such as fruit, vegetables and whole grains. Cost is also a factor with healthy food perceived as being more expensive.

Relevant insights from Phase 1 include:

- Opportunity and motivation alone aren't enough to enable parents to buy and cook healthy meals; a sense of capability must be developed, too, which includes the confidence to buy and cook a meal that their children will like (whilst on a limited budget).

- 'Convenience, affordability, familiarity and taste' are more important determinants of food choices than 'healthiness, cheapness or sustainability'.
- Parents are keen to develop resourceful skills, such as cooking on a tight budget.

The opportunity

The idea for a healthy recipe pack business - which sells meal kits from convenient places in the community - came from the families engaged during Phase 1 of the project. Participants felt this approach could support parents to develop the confidence and skills to buy and cook healthy food.

There is a rapidly-growing market for recipe kits that deliver pre-measured ingredients directly to the doors of consumers. Global sales were \$1bn in 2015, and this is expected to rise to \$10bn by 2020.⁴ However there are no products on the UK market targeted at those with limited budgets; the market leader offers meal kits delivered to the doors of customers for approximately £6 per portion.⁵

Community resources - such as underused public buildings, volunteers, and endorsement by schools and GPs - can subsidise a meal kit business if products can be shown to deliver impact for their respective beneficiaries. Furthermore, grants, public funding and impact finance offer support for start-up and transitioning social enterprises.

References

1 National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) 2014/15

2 Childhood Obesity in London (2011), GLA Intelligence Unit

3 RCPH 2015

4 Technomic Study (2015): https://www.technomic.com/Pressroom/Releases/dynRelease_Detail.php?rUID=416

5 Calculated as average across boxes sold by Hello Fresh

Customer journey and theory of change

Customer journey



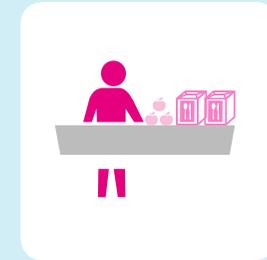
Existing behaviour - buying fast food and ready meals due to convenience, familiarity and affordability.



Discover and buy meal kit - available at a convenient place in the community and, where possible, endorsed by schools and GPs.



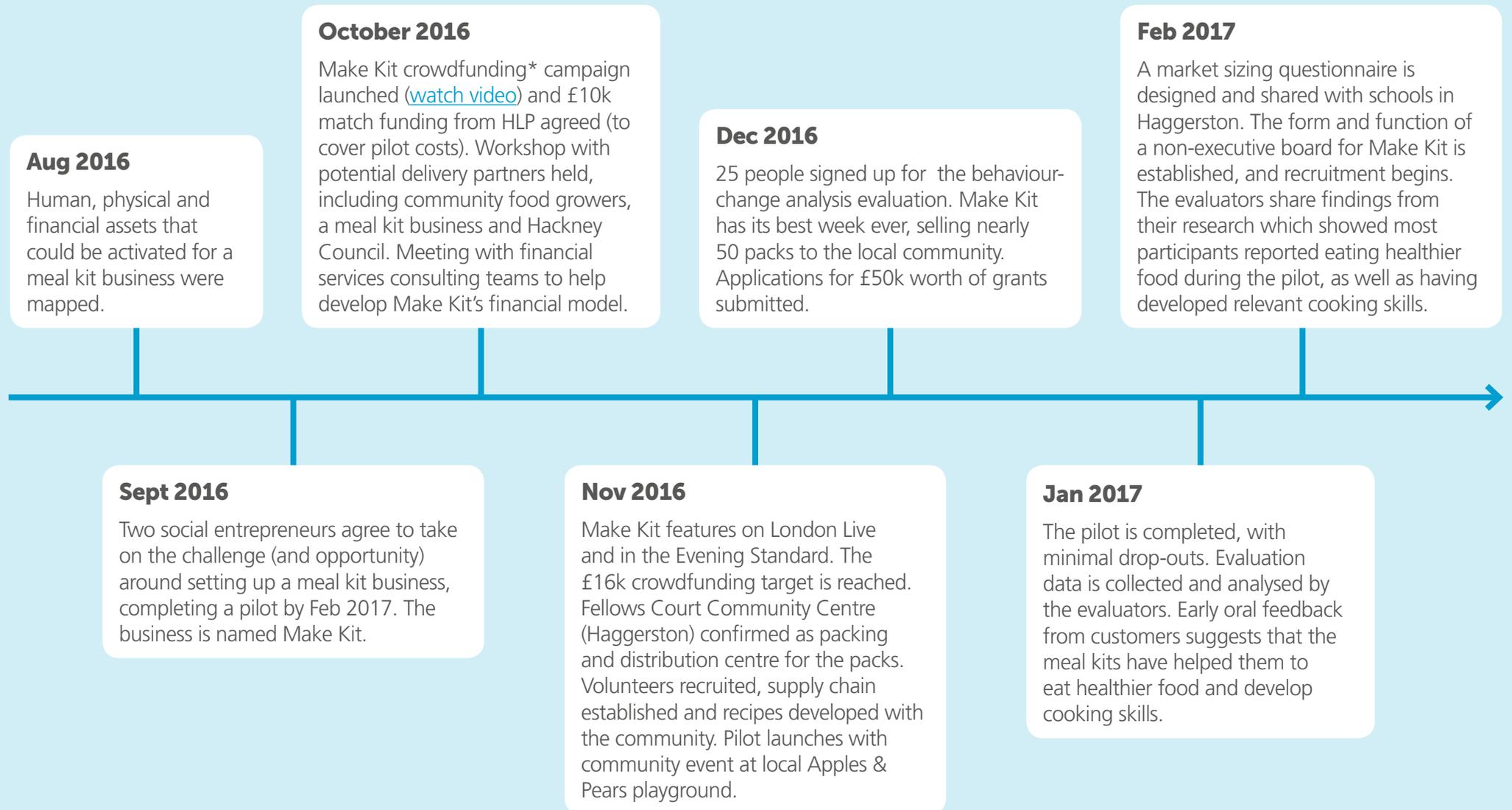
Cook a tasty meal at home - follow simple instructions, tailored to different levels of cooking skill, to cook a meal for your family.



Increase capability to eat healthy food - build confidence and skills to buy and cook fresh ingredients for your family.

Barriers to eating healthy food	How Make Kit will overcome
Healthy food is too expensive	Meal kits are made up of affordable ingredients available on the local high street.
Lack of knowledge about how to cook	Meal kits come with clear instructions and provide a framework for the development of cooking skills, from beginner to more advanced levels.
Buying healthy food is inconvenient	Meal kits are sold from visible places in the community, such as schools and community centres.
Healthy food is unfamiliar	Meal kit recipes are co-created with the local community, reflecting local tastes and cooking styles.
Unhealthy food is "cooler"	Meal Kit recipes include healthy versions of classic takeaway dishes available on the local high street.
Healthy food is "posh"	The Meal kits and promotional materials will speak in terms of 'good food for all at affordable prices'.

Timeline

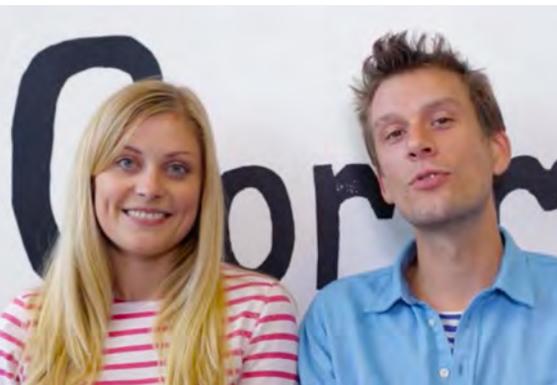


*the practice of funding a project or venture by raising money from a large number of people who each contribute a relatively small amount, typically via the Internet.

Stakeholders and partners

The table below details the different types of stakeholders involved in setting up and supporting Make Kit.

Social entrepreneurs	Volunteers	Incubation	Sponsors
<p>Steve Wilson - Active Hackney resident with experience of setting up three social enterprises: Dalston Cola, The Russet, and The People's Kitchen.</p> <p>Justine Fish - Former management consultant with experience in customer engagement and business planning, including with East London food enterprises.</p>	<p>Team of c.20 supported the assembly and distribution of packs, and promoted the crowdfunding campaign, filming, graphic design and communications materials.</p> <p>Financial services consultancy - Donated c.8 hours time developing financial model.</p> <p>Film maker - Made film for Kickstarter campaign.</p>	<p>Design and innovation consultancy - Business modelling, market analysis, brokering partnerships, service and communications design, stakeholder engagement and research support.</p> <p>Evaluators - Designed and delivered behaviour-change evaluation with 25 participants across the pilot.</p>	<p>Healthy London Partnership - Grant funding, access to networks, endorsement and pilot strategy.</p> <p>Local Council - Access to Fellows Court Community Centre, stakeholder engagement and communications support.</p> <p>Recipe pack company - Established meal kit business, shared meal cost data and modelling tool.</p>



The model

Key financial, human and operational ingredients needed to set up Make Kit

Financial	Human	Infrastructure
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set-up costs for branding and communications, testing different models of distribution with 25 participants, securing suppliers, designing recipes and meals.• Ongoing costs for assembling and distributing packs, business model development, scaling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 150+ days of combined time from the social entrepreneurs.• 45 days of volunteering time to assemble and distribute the packs.• Ad-hoc voluntary support from a filmmaker and PR executive.• Voluntary financial modelling support from UBS business consultants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to Fellows Court Community Centre for assembling and distributing the packs, and a small office for day-to-day operations.

Other support

Access to networks and support for brokering partnerships:

- Identified and engaged social entrepreneurs to progress the meal kit venture.
- Facilitated relationships between entrepreneurs and Hackney Council, UBS, Hackney Cooperative Developments, schools in Haggerston, Social Finance, PwC, Mindful Chef, Made in Hackney and Growing Communities.

Mentoring and operational support:

- Regular support across all aspects of business set-up and operational management, including promoting the crowdfunding campaign, developing communications and day-to-day problem-solving.
- Workshop to identify and mitigate threats to the business (TRIZ exercise).

Business modelling and grant applications:

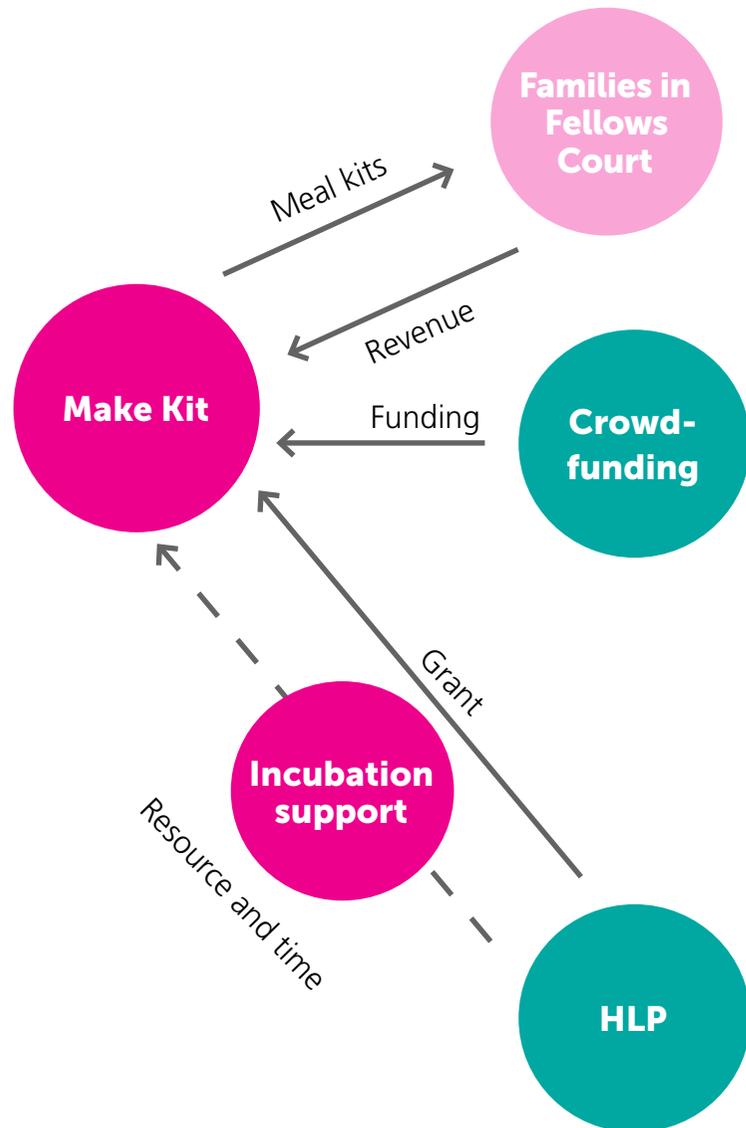
- Mapped human, physical and financial assets that could be activated to subsidise business operations.
- Proposed and developed different business models to support Make Kit to become financially independent.
- Supported the drafting of grant applications for the Healthier Hackney Fund and Big Lottery Fund

Branding and communications design:

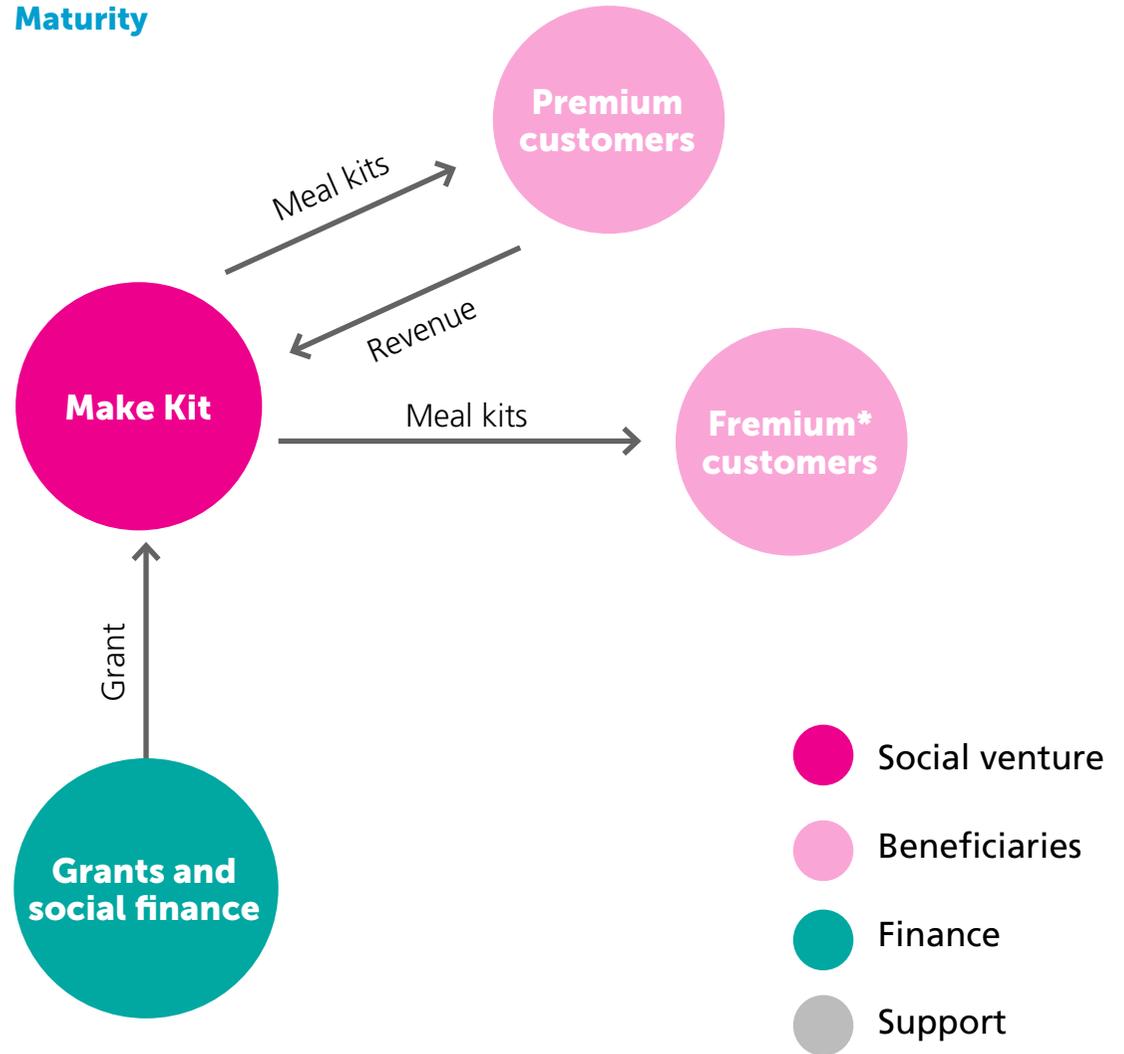
- Co-designed Make Kit website, logo and associated promotional materials.
- Delivered a co-design branding workshop with Make Kit customers.

The model

Pilot



Maturity



* a business model, whereby basic services are provided free of charge while more advanced features must be paid for.



“Some people don’t associate with certain foods. Make Kit gets you used to the ingredients and once you’ve tried it you can tweak the recipes to your own palate.”
– Make Kit customer

The impact

Eating healthier food

- Participants in the pilot reported that they ate more healthily whilst using the meal kits – they ate fewer high-sugar/high-salt foods (such as crisps and sweets, takeaways, and ready meals), and ate more home-cooked meals, vegetables and fruit.
- All of the respondents said that the kits had inspired them to buy more fresh food and eat different types of food.

All of the respondents said that the kits had inspired them to buy more fresh food and eat different types of food.

50% reported being inspired them to get more involved their community.

Satisfaction with the packs

- Respondents were extremely satisfied with the packs. 92% were very satisfied with the look of the packs, 75% were very satisfied with the variation in the recipes available, 67% were very satisfied with how easy the recipe packs were to make, and 75% were very satisfied with the overall time it takes to cook a meal.
- 83% said it was very likely they would recommend Make Kit to a friend.

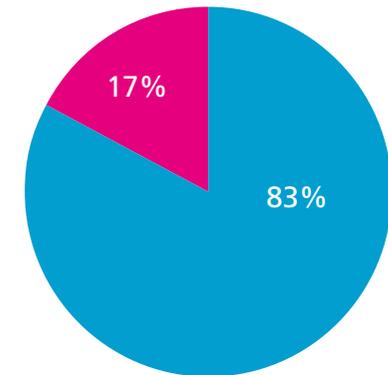
75% were very satisfied with the variation in the recipes available. **83%** said it was very likely they would recommend Make Kit to a friend

57 families reached with **372 packs** distributed

Improving cooking skills and confidence

- 83% of respondents reported more confidence in cooking healthy meals.
- 42% said they were inspired to do more cooking at home, with another 33% saying they were inspired to get their children involved in cooking.

Cooking confidence



● Respondents more confidence in cooking healthy meals.

£67,937 in-kind support

Note: The length of the pilot was too short to be able to comment on whether the increased confidence and knowledge will translate into longer-term behavioural change, and - if it does - whether this will be sustainable.

Learnings

Engagement of delivery partners

It is worth investing time and resource upfront to identify, engage and activate delivery partners and entrepreneurs to lead a new venture - it multiplies the time committed to the venture later in the process. Consider which skills, experiences and networks might be needed before contacting local organisations, businesses and networks as well as social incubators.

Some tips for engaging delivery partners:

- Plan a narrative before engaging potential delivery partners or stakeholders. What challenge is being faced and why is it important? Can it be told through a particular individual or situation?
- Try to enable rather than lead. Remove any pre-existing notions regarding how a challenge should be approached, thus providing space for local entrepreneurs to take it on in line with their passions and skills.
- It can take time to build valuable relationships. Progress and impact will take time: the important thing is to identify local people who understand the journey to get there.
- Understand the life trajectories of the people that are being engaged; after all, the business model will need to fit around them. How will the rest of their year look? Who do they have connections with, and who might they like to spend more time with? What do they want to get out of the process?

Supporting social entrepreneurs

Running a social venture often means that entrepreneurs have to acquire a new skillset around areas such as business modelling, financials and business set-up. It is important to provide tools and resources to develop the capacity and capabilities of entrepreneurs, enabling them to take the business model forward and find their feet as owners of a social business.

Flexibility of the model

A good social business model is one that adapts to market need, operations, and the potential for social impact. Therefore a priority for commissioners should be to allow enough space for the business model to emerge (rather than projecting a model or growth strategy). Furthermore, it is advisable to avoid imposing arbitrary timelines on the venture.

That said, funders and support teams have an important role in helping partners to work at pace and in line with the highest professional standards. Incentivising funding can be an effective way of steering entrepreneurs towards certain desirable activities whilst giving them flexibility to progress the business as they see fit.

Networks and endorsement are important to start-ups

Providing entrepreneurs with access to networks is both highly valued and highly valuable - whether it's potential funders, advisors, mentors or those with assets. The right introduction or conversation can save hours of looking.

Similarly, endorsement from respected organisations (like the NHS or Hackney Council) can help ventures to build productive relationships and unlock different kinds of funding.



“My kids chose them – so it makes it more exciting and they would then try it.”
– Make Kit customer

Implications

For government and commissioners

The Make Kit co-founders are exploring opportunities to partner with CCGs and local authorities to set up Make Kit in their borough, thus delivering benefits for their citizens. There are a number of different ways interested organisations can partner, including:

- Funding to cover core operational costs for set-up in new markets, including engaging schools and GP practices, promotional materials, coordinating volunteers, and developing locally relevant recipes.
- Providing physical assets to host assembly and distribution of packs, including community centres, kitchens, halls and offices.
- Helping to promote Make Kit (<https://www.makekituk.com/>) across all available networks.
- Providing advice on engagement and scaling the business, or joining the non-executive board.

Please contact makekituk@gmail.com with any related enquiries.

For delivery partners

The social entrepreneurs will continue to run Make Kit, using grant funding and existing resources to help scale the business as well as generating revenues from the sales of packs.

In conjunction with local partners, they are having positive discussions about how Make Kit can continue providing packs to Fellows Court residents.



Next steps

Business and financial modelling

The social entrepreneurs leading Make Kit will work with supporting partners to refine the business and financial model in light of findings from the pilot. A key question is whether to continue assembling the packs using volunteers at Fellows Court Community Centre (and other centres as the business scales) or to establish an out-of-town packing centre using paid staff (which would increase capacity but also costs). In addition, a decision needs to be made concerning whether Premium and Freemium versions of Make Kit packs should be offered to customers, with the former subsidising the latter for those who need it most.

A market sizing questionnaire is being shared with parents in two Haggerston schools, generating data around likely uptake, pricing and distribution models. Schools have been used as an appropriate 'market unit' because they are a bounded group of target customers, and findings are more likely to translate to other areas of London than social housing estates, for example.

Accessing transitional funding

The social entrepreneurs have been successful in accessing £30k of additional transitional funding from the local council. The social entrepreneurs are also exploring opportunities around social finance. Balancing the requirements of different grants with other business activities that will support Make Kit, particularly in terms of its development in response to market needs and opportunities, will be a challenge.

Increasing fidelity of products and services

The pilot was successful in generating valuable data around impact and viability as well as establishing important business processes from which to move forwards. However there is much to do in terms of developing and testing products and the distribution model (including both the ordering system and the potential development of a delivery operation).

A non-executive board consisting of experts across relevant fields will be assembled to help negotiate this next stage of Make Kit's growth.

Active Local Links (ALL)



The challenge

Parents in the Isle of Dogs struggle to find up-to-date information for local health and wellbeing groups. Many of them are simply unaware of the variety of low-cost and free activities available locally, and don't know how to find out about them - or how to use the channels the information is disseminated through.

Insights from Phase 1

During Phase 1 it was recognised that whilst there was a clear need to inform parents about groups and activities within their community, this information needed to come from a trusted delivery partner to ensure high follow-through rates. Parents often reported feeling nervous attending a group for the first time, which acted as a strong barrier to their levels of physical activity. Though there are information services online - such as the Family Information Service or Idea Store - these sites often find it a) hard to keep their information up to date, b) to keep a thorough record of what's happening in the area, and c) to keep the community aware of and utilising these groups.

The opportunity

Whilst the focus of the project was to decrease childhood obesity rates, parents who are not physically active themselves are less inclined to encourage their children to be active, as they lack the confidence and capability to undertake physical activity regularly (HM Government, 2008). In light of this, local parents co-designed a service which focused on utilising local parents as volunteers to help spread information about what was happening in the community. The idea was called Active Local Links.

Moving from the problem to a solution

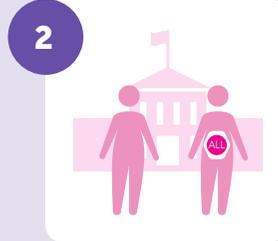
Active Local Links aims to build community networks and enhance the capacity to promote and encourage healthy eating, mental wellbeing, activity and exercise within a local area. It was formed as a way to both improve parents' knowledge about local groups and their levels of participation within such groups, building on the theory that by getting parents more active and educated about health and wellbeing, their children's weight and health would improve.

By supporting, upskilling and building the confidence of local parents who are volunteering, Active Local Links promotes healthier lifestyles amongst families. For many parents who were interested in volunteering their end goal was employment, which if successful would contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of the whole family unit by addressing some of the wider determinants of health.

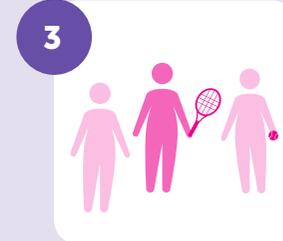
Customer journey



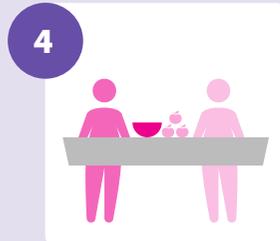
1
Mary has two young girls and often struggles to find fun things for them to do in her area. Recently she's become worried about their weight and wants to join a class but she's nervous about going to new events by herself with the girls.



2
Mary bumps into Sarah, a mum whose children also go to the same school. Sarah is an Active Local Linker and she convinces Mary to bring her girls along to a women's fitness class that's being run nearby.



3
Mary really enjoyed the class and loved meeting new people who live in the area. After speaking to the mum who runs it and hearing about how the set-up was supported by Active Local Links, Mary decides she wants to put on her own class, but for cooking.



4
After training and coaching, Mary is ready to put on her first class and recruit her neighbours and friends to join her. She also lets them know about the other great activities that are happening locally which she finds out about through the Active Local Links network.



5
After a while Mary notices a big improvement in her self-esteem and confidence. Her girls are also eating more healthily and have started attending a local swimming class. Mary is proud of how healthy they have become. She decides to get further training, which helps her acquire a part-time job in the local cafe, and also helps to train up other volunteers to put on their own groups.

Stakeholders and partners

The table below details the different types of stakeholders involved in setting up and supporting Active Local Links during the pilot:

Delivery partner	Partners	Incubation	Sponsors
<p>MyTime Active - A social enterprise which runs preventative health services across the UK.</p>	<p>School - The local school played a key role in helping ALL build trust within the local community, recruit volunteers, and promote its services.</p> <p>Local council public health team</p> <p>A corporate partner - The corporate partner provided mentorship for volunteers and a CV-writing workshop for local parents.</p>	<p>Incubation support - Building the idea, market analysis, brokering partnerships, service and communications design, stakeholder engagement and research support.</p> <p>Evaluators - Designed and delivered behaviour change evaluation.</p>	<p>Project funder - Grant funding, access to networks, endorsement and pilot strategy.</p>



The model

Key financial, human and operational resources needed to set up Active Local Links (ALL):

Financial	Human	Infrastructure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upfront expenses covered by the project funder - used to pay for training, marketing materials and onboarding documents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21 days of the delivery partner's time building and delivering the initiative. Support from the school to host and publicise ALL. Support from the local partner to engage and recruit parents for volunteering and classes. Tower Hamlets Public Health were a key community connector. Support from the corporate sponsors to provide business mentoring and CV-writing workshops. Partnerships with local organisations to recruit volunteers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A dedicated employee of a delivery partner, who acted as the main on-the-ground support and became the main point of contact and physical connection to the volunteers. Access to the local school's community house for ALL meetings. A local inside space in which to hold the female-only fitness class. Local cafes in which to meet with volunteers outside of the Isle of Dogs (those who were not connected with the school).

Other support

Access to networks and building relationships:

- Identifying and engaging potential delivery or support partners e.g. the delivery partner, Tower Hamlets Public Health, partnerships with local organisations.
- Brokering and building up relationships with partners e.g. the local partner or corporate sponsor.
- Managing relationships between stakeholders e.g. the school, Tower Hamlets Public Health, local alliances.

Coaching and mentoring:

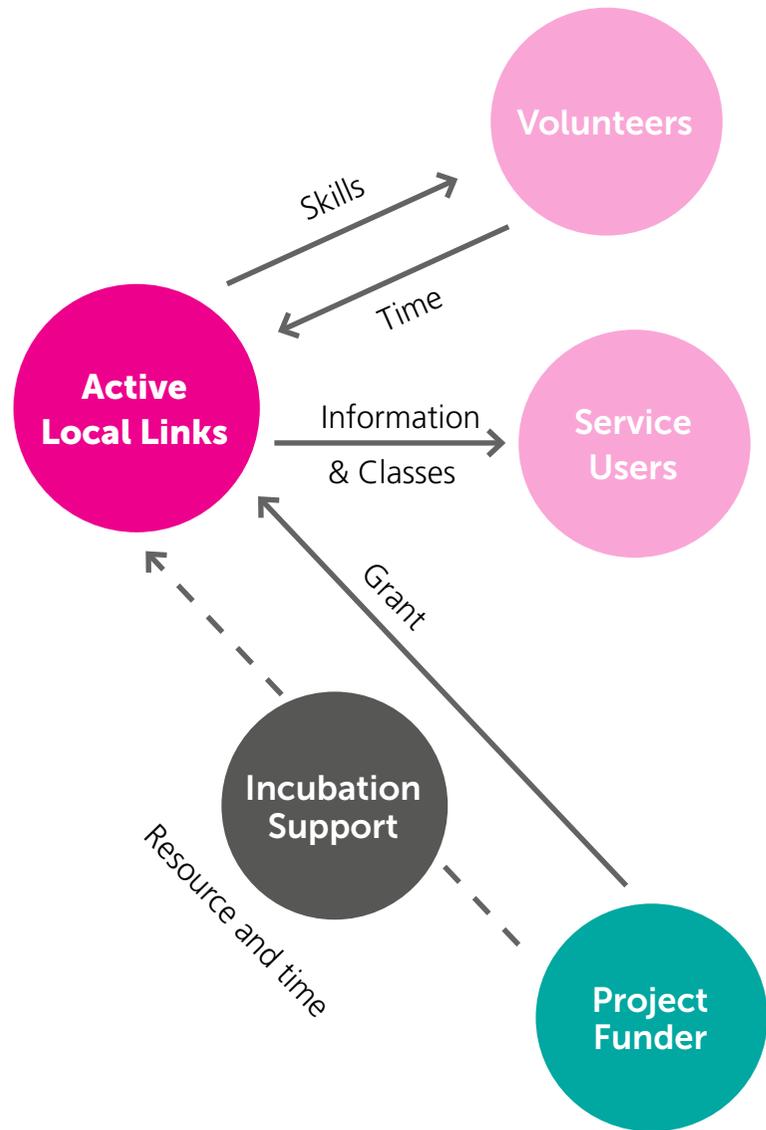
- Providing advice and support on: different methods of engagement, how to creatively and flexibly adapt to challenges ALL faced and will face, and how to find and form partnerships with different types of organisations in the public or private sector.

Innovation and creativity:

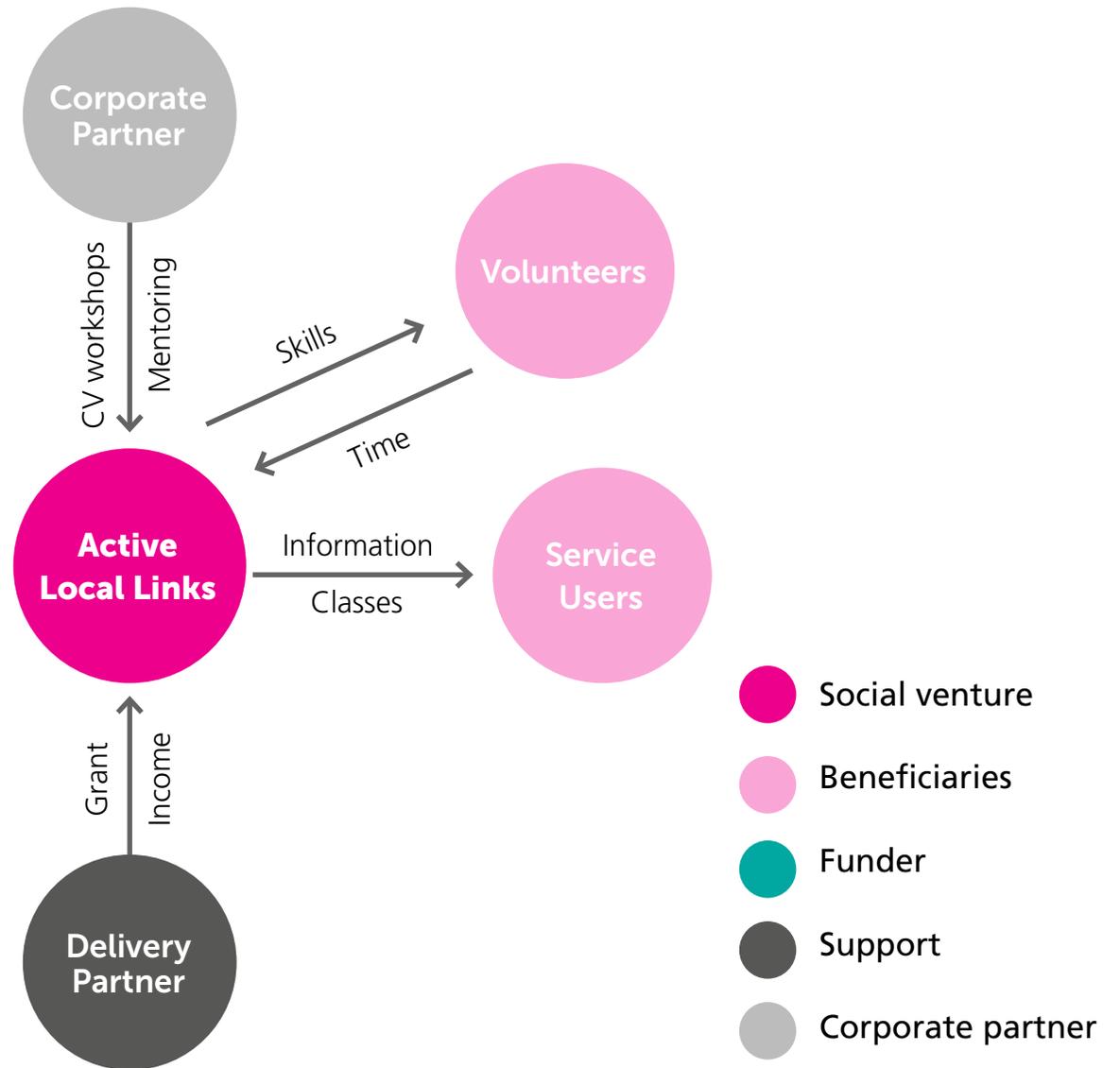
- Developing and applying the ALL brand in line with the delivery partner's branding.
- Developing the vision and mission around ALL to provide a coherent story to take to partners.
- Creating presentation packs demonstrating the impact and vision of ALL.

The model

Start



Maturity



The model

“Rather than just matching the providers with the target group, the project has allowed the mums to steer the project towards what they want to do.”

- Delivery partner

The complexity of place-based approaches

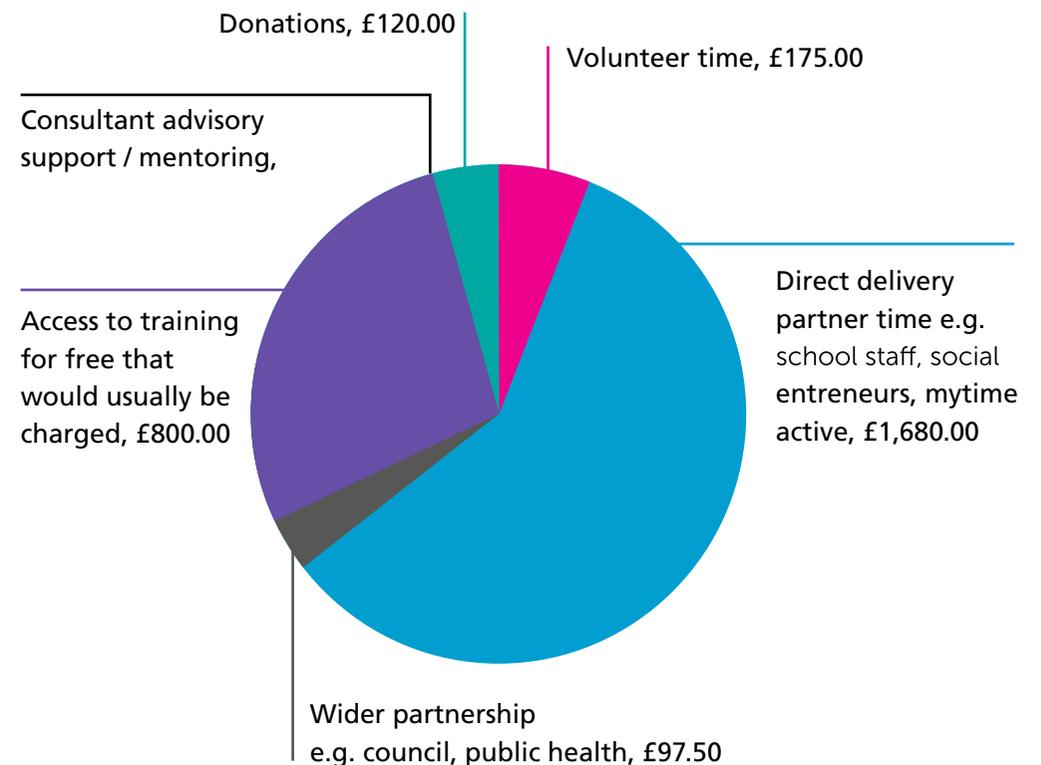
The project started as an attempt to link up local communities with existing health and activity offers and to train volunteers into taking up the role of active community networking, as well as providing information and positive health messages.

Whilst provisions had been made to train and upskill volunteers, the project uncovered a more complex reality of individual needs and expectations, and adjusted its approach to include the setting up of volunteer-run health and activity offers. The focus of training was then widened to include more general confidence-building and employability skills, which were aligned with the expectations of the local partner and many of the local families.

In-kind support

The value of in-kind support was calculated based on assumptions regarding how much would have been paid for various components of the project (had it been necessary to pay for them). Active Local Links benefited from **£2,872.50** of in-kind support.

In-kind support





“We had no idea about the motivation of the volunteers – there was a real learning curve to realise that each volunteer is on an individual journey.”

– Delivery partner

Impact

Evidence and impact

The evidence around the impact of Active Local Links on behaviour in relation to health and wellbeing is mixed. There are a number of very positive views locally about the progress that has been made to engage with individuals and partners (within a very complex local context), and to progress the idea.

However, the pilot has provided a clear reminder of the challenges of community projects – the considerable amount of time and effort it takes to build trust, listen to local stakeholders, and adjust to local needs (whilst keeping to the central objective of the pilot), and the need to create an ‘anchor’ within the community that can help to develop a sustainable solution. It is likely that further work is needed to rethink the blueprint for this idea, which at the same time must ensure that the dual objective of community engagement and reducing obesity remains central to the delivery model. This has already begun with discussions on how to make links between the Active Local Links idea and the child obesity programme run by the delivery partner.

“For such a short amount of time, Active Local Links has had a lot of impact, with fitness classes being held & people coming to the community house.”

- Local partner

“One of our volunteers has unlocked her potential to own something and do something for herself.”

- Delivery partner

“For one champion volunteer, Active Local Links added a purpose to their social networks.”

- Delivery partner

Learnings

Engagement of delivery partners

- An understanding of the delivery partner's strategic aims and where these align with the ambition for the initiative is important. This enables a collaborative process to design the model in a way that meets their needs and well as the objectives for the initiative.

Getting the buy-in of local stakeholders and building partnerships

- Building the initiative: it's vital to get local buy-in from all the necessary groups to ensure support and potential partnerships. Building a foundation of trust and reciprocity with local groups is a key component for ensuring sustainability.
- Minimal finances were needed to start this initiative, but time (to build relationships, spread the idea, etc.) was the most important resource and had the most impact. Building connections and forming relationships is time consuming - and progress can be slow - but it's also crucial in securing a solid base from which to grow.
- Many stakeholders that we worked with had initiative fatigue – they were tired of groups coming in, requesting their support and using their networks, whilst providing minimal exchange and not committing to any sense of longevity. It was important to find a delivery partner that would be able to sustain the initiative after our funding stopped, thus enabling us to gain the trust of established networks.
- It's strongly recommended that local, trusted relationships are fully utilised. Some organisations had spent decades working with the community to create valued relationships with residents, and these foundations are invaluable for getting ideas off the ground.

- Being able to provide support - such as the upskilling and mentoring of volunteers via a local corporate organisation - was a good incentive for organisations to partner with ALL. The value of this support was clear, and as such it became easier to get their buy in as a result.

Understanding local passions and motivations

- Find local, passionate people and build initiatives around them. Their passion will help to spread, support and direct the idea.
- Whilst stakeholders and partners might be committed and motivated to support the initiative, they will each work at their own pace and to their own timescales; as such, imposing deadlines can be a challenge. Volunteers - particularly those who have never been in employment or voluntary work before - are particularly unused to working to a strict timetable and can find such prospects intimidating.

Value exchange for local stakeholders and volunteers

- Relying on the goodwill of local groups and individuals can be difficult - relationships that are formed on this basis are often fragile - so it is important that the relationships are a value exchange.
- Take time to understand the needs of all involved groups, thus ensuring that the right value exchange is offered:
 - Volunteers saw joining ALL as a way for them make new friends or meet people in their area, as well as improving their confidence and chances of employment.
 - Local stakeholders saw ALL as a chance to improve health and wellbeing within the area, as well as improving the confidence, self-efficacy and employability of residents.

Learnings

Enabling rather than leading

- Build capacity and instil a sense of ownership in those taking the initiative forwards; this should allow the work to develop organically in conjunction with local passions and interests.
- On-the-ground staff need to be genuinely passionate about the work. Stakeholders would have refused to form partnerships with a person who exhibited anything less than passion and enthusiasm for the task at hand.

Flexibility of the model

- Expanding the model: each version of the initiative is likely to be different depending on local challenges, partners, volunteers (and their passions) and individuals who are involved. Flexibility is needed within the initiative model to adapt to local challenges and issues and ensure successful growth.
- The key point of contact was the delivery partner. They formed the focal point for Active Local Link's infrastructure, allowing the model and network to grow organically and responsively around them as required.

Understanding user needs

- Service users (parents using the service) desire local, free/cheap classes that they feel comfortable attending. To create this environment, information (or group formulation) needs to be facilitated by a trusted source. If ALL volunteers are not suitable - because they are not yet established - a local delivery partner which has built up the necessary links and relationships will prove a good alternative.
- In communities such as the Isle of Dogs, word of mouth is sometimes the most effective and trusted method of communicating information and spreading recommendations. However it is important to note that this is often a slow process, and as such it can take time for interest in an activity to permeate wider networks.



“For projects to have a sustainable impact, it’s crucial for them to look at behaviour change. Active Local Links enables us to do this.”

– Delivery partner

Implications

What this may mean for different audience groups

For local government

Whilst there is insufficient evidence from the evaluation to demonstrate impact on reducing childhood obesity, there are some simple observations that can guide future commissioning of similar interventions:

1. Projects need sufficient time to be able to listen to local communities and gain their trust, and be flexible enough to adjust to needs as they are identified.
2. Projects need an established local partner, an organisation or individual to act as local 'anchor', and a long-term partner to keep projects running beyond the period of investment.

For potential delivery partners

When building a service or product which is embedded in some way within the local community, it is important to appreciate the value in building trust within that area. For Active Local Links, trust-building with stakeholders and volunteers took up far more time than projected and had to be fostered through one-to-one relationships with key individuals in the local communities. For volunteers this made it possible not only to gain trust but also uncover individual talents and aspirations - something that proved impossible to do through group activities.

A key factor in the success of the project was working through the local partner's community house. The school acted as the first community anchor to foster trust and give the project team guidance and credit within the local community. For the Active Local Links delivery partner, this approach of fostering connections within the local community aligned with their long-standing ambitions for work in the area. It has provided them with the opportunity to strengthen their existing offer around childhood obesity prevention and treatment by integrating Active Local Links into their work, as well as offering the next step for programme graduates.

For local partners

For each of the partners supporting Active Local Links, there was a unique value exchange. The corporate partner, for example, was able to utilise the trust-networks Active Local Links had created within the local community to further their own CSR ambitions and provide real impact. For the local partner (a school), the exchange allowed them to improve the health and wellbeing of both pupils and parents, offer an avenue for personalised support and training, and increase their employability offer and links to the corporate mentoring and CV workshops. Transparency around what each partner wanted in exchange for what they could offer was a key component in the success of partnerships facilitated by Active Local Links.

Next steps

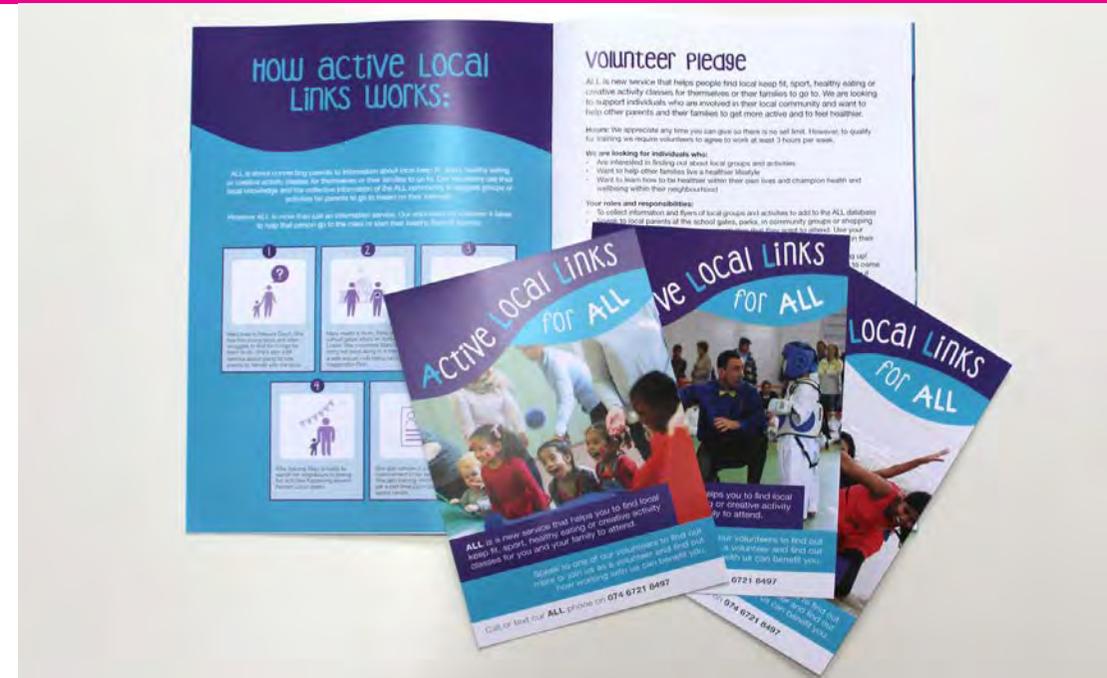
Enabling rather than leading

Embedding and scaling the ALL model

- The delivery partner is considering taking Active Local Links forwards and embedding the model into their offer for local authorities.
- Engage and inspire other mothers to volunteer by using success stories from the pilot phase.
- The delivery partner will continue to recruit volunteers on the Isle of Dogs, but are also starting to branch out to the rest of Tower Hamlets (and potentially further). Three mothers have already expressed interest.
- They will continue to develop and grow their partnerships.
- In talks with Social Finance around future funding for the model.

Supporting local volunteers to thrive

- The delivery partner will work with the corporate sponsor to create a bespoke mentorship model for the most pro-active and passionate volunteers.
- They will continue to support volunteers to initiate new classes and at present are hoping to guide the launch of:
 - a. A cooking class: designed and led by a local mum.
 - b. A female-only swimming club: organised and led by a local mum.
 - c. Pending: adult music group with the first male member of Active Local Links.
 - d. Pending: an arts and craft group with a volunteer mum.
 - e. A monthly CV-writing workshop for Isle of Dogs residents, run by the corporate sponsor and facilitated by Active Local Links.





“A mum came in yesterday looking to find out about local groups. It was great to be able to just hand her your flyer.”

– Local partner

Overarching reflections



Wider reflections

The project has shown that it is possible to deliver health outcomes outside the formal health system, and how local businesses, the voluntary sector and social enterprises can make a difference to young people's health. In only a short amount of time, these initiatives demonstrated the potential to reduce childhood obesity within their neighbourhoods and - should they scale - across London.

- Snack Stop changed pupils' behaviours, swapping unhealthy snacks for more healthy alternatives and prompting the school to re-energise its healthy food provision. Approximately one third of the parents felt that Snack Stop has helped them to encourage their child to eat more healthily; 20% felt it might have. A toolkit is available for other schools to adopt a similar model.
- Make Kit has made its customers more confident about cooking healthy food. 83% respondents reported more confidence in cooking healthy meals'. It has also been successful in securing further funding from Hackney Council to develop its business model.
- Active Local Links has engaged local people and supported them to set-up their own activity classes. Principles of this initiative are being incorporated into the MEND model run by MyTimeActive.

As well as the potential to impact on obesity outcomes, value was also created through the design and agile methods used to develop these initiatives, activating and engaging local communities around an issue. In some cases, these initiatives acted as catalysts to further community action (for example, in activating the Haringey school to reinvigorate its own healthy food offering).

An agile and design approach allowed the project to progress from insight to idea to implementation and develop social ventures in a relatively short space of time. All three initiatives were developed through prototyping (a process involving mocking things up in a small way). Trying

things out allowed the teams to discover what was going to work, quickly, avoiding the need to spend a great deal of time on this at a later juncture (such as when it becomes necessary to scale up). For example, Snack Stop's local food operator was able to try out different methods of presenting the food to make it more attractive and increase uptake.

Prototyping is also an important way of drawing in energy and inspiring action. By creating a tangible prototype or 'thing', people are able to see how it could align with their interests - and how they could get involved - quickly. Make Kit was successful in raising £11,500 additional funding from local supporters to match the Healthy London Partnership grant, and testing out the Active Local Links model highlighted a synergy and partnership with work already taking place in the Isle of Dogs.

An opportunity and asset-based approach allowed the projects to lever in different types of support. Each initiative was created out of an insight about people in the community (from Phase 1 research), and then developed with the local community. As well as the support from local health commissioners, the initial funding and support from Healthy London Partnership, each project levered in considerable local support. Snack Stop attracted £1,534 of in-kind support, and the Haringey's environmental health team galvanised local businesses to get involved. Active Local Links pulled in £2,872 of in-kind support, which included the efforts of the local school in helping to recruit volunteers and promote the initiative. As well as the crowdsourced funding, 150 hours of the social entrepreneurs' time and 45 hours of volunteer time, Make Kit also secured some pro bono business-modelling advice from a corporate partner, and was given use of a space at Fellow's Court, a local community asset. Most importantly, all three initiatives depended heavily on the volunteers and local businesses which led them, all of which invested considerable personal time and energy into making them work. Much of Healthy London Partnership's support to the initiatives was around identifying partners, building relationships and coaching local volunteers.

Wider reflections

Delivering health outcomes through social ventures creates added social value. The project not only indicates how health commissioners can reach out to assets across local communities to deliver health outcomes, but also how they - by doing so - can achieve wider social outcomes. Creating social ventures also has the potential to boost local economies by creating business, employment and volunteering opportunities, and by bringing people together (thus reducing isolation and building strong communities). For example, through involvement in Snack Stop, the local business operator was able to attract new customers to their restaurant. In order to align with the interests of the volunteers, Active Local Links provided not only health activities, but also employment ones (such as a CV-writing workshop). These activities reinforce the added value of this approach by addressing some of the wider determinants of health in tangent to the core initiative objectives.

This new model of delivering health outcomes has great potential but may also require commissioners to work in new ways. The reflection methods implicit in a design and agile approach means that the project has also captured some important learnings for commissioners who want to work in this way. Whilst some of this relies on the provision of initial funding, the ultimate aim is for these ventures to become sustainable beyond more traditional short-term funding cycles. As such, additional nurturing and a different cultural mindset are required to 'incubate' social ventures, making sure that there are active local communities in the first place, and that the social ventures that do emerge have the right support to evolve in a way that attracts investment.

The initiatives in this project were supported in many different ways, often through leveraging in additional skills and resources from relationships created during the projects. The ventures were incubated through support for innovation and creativity, branding and communication design, prototyping, business modelling and grant applications, access to networks and building relationships, coaching and mentoring, and strategy and planning. Some of these are specialist skills (e.g. design and business modelling), but others exist within commissioning teams. Commissioners wanting to work in this way

should consider the following reflections on how they can use or adapt their existing ways of working, and where they might need to reach out to create new partnerships.

Enabling rather than leading

As discussed above, an initial injection of energy and engagement was important to bring local people together, thus activating interest around an idea and inspiring action. In many ways, this is the (relatively) easy part. Sustainability is much harder. It requires local communities or a 'local anchor' to take responsibility for owning and delivering the initiatives in a way that aligns with their interests. An important part of delivering health outcomes through local communities is ensuring that they have the capacity and capability to do so, and that initiatives can come from the ground up in local areas as well as being activated by projects such as these.

Engagement takes time

The creation of sustainable initiatives that are embedded in local communities relies heavily on the enthusiasm and dedication of people delivering them - and those supporting them - on the ground. A significant amount of preparation is required to engage and activate local people, understand people's passions and motivations, comprehend the assets and energy that already exists, and get buy-in from (and build relationships with) local influencers. Underestimating the time this takes in order to get going quickly is a mistake. Even if time is limited, early investment pays off in the long term and will help the initiative to be self-sufficient.

- **Engage to build trust:** identify and engage with trusted and respected people - or 'connectors' - to help build trust and activate others within the community.
- **Go where the energy is:** understand the motivations, aims and ambitions of local delivery partners and beneficiaries, with the aim of inspiring them to engage and participate.

Wider reflections

- **Make use of experts:** identify where there are knowledge gaps and draw in the necessary expertise early on to build capability (e.g. around business modelling or idea prototyping).
- **Create a value exchange for local stakeholders and volunteers:** it is important to be clear about what volunteers get in return for their time and energy, whether it is a social activity, employment skills or a free meal.

Ventures need to be flexible and asset based

Commissioners will have clear outcomes that they want to achieve through supporting social ventures (e.g. reducing childhood obesity). They might also have some insight about user needs that might inform their ideas (for example, that families are more attracted to messages about convenience than health when choosing food). It is important to start with this, but also to recognise the local context (e.g. the motivations of local people and initiatives that already exist within the community) and be pragmatic about what it is possible to deliver with available resources. Commissioners should consider recognising that initiatives might need to morph and adapt so that they can deliver impact that is meaningful to their local context first, before potentially offering a financial return on investment in the longer term.

Business support is necessary to support social ventures to become sustainable and move on from initial grant funding

There is the potential for social ventures to deliver health outcomes: however, this can be a high risk process. Half of UK start-ups fail within the first five years and the challenge of establishing a business with a social purpose is even greater. Social ventures need to both deliver social impact and return on investment. Often the initial focus is more around delivering social impact (in order to lever in initial public grants and commissions to establish the initiative) rather than financial ROI (which will attract longer-term investment). If moving towards private investment, caution must be applied in order to ensure that they do not compromise their social purpose.

To maximise the chances of success, commissioners need to support social initiatives to develop their financial models from the start. There is evidence that social intermediaries who provide expert support, networks and financing can significantly improve the chances of social business succeeding.[1] As well as offering financial support, commissioners wishing to assist social initiatives should consider how they could also provide business development support (e.g. by partnering with specialist providers).

There are many ways in which commissioners can respond to the information in this report and - indeed - apply it to their own methods of working. Some commissioners may wish to look at the examples of Challenge Prizes or Accelerator Programmes for inspiration.

Healthy London Partnership will be publishing a new guide in May 2017 to provide further guidance and inspiration for how commissioners can lever in energy, enthusiasm and ideas from local communities, and deliver health outcomes in new and innovative ways.

For further information or to provide feedback on this report, please visit our website at www.healthy london.org

Appendix



Thank you

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Growing Communities

Made in Hackney

Mindful Chef

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www.healthy london.org
england.healthy london@nhs.net
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