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MONEY
FOUNDATION

EVALUATION OF LEADING THE WAY

September 2023

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CHAMPIONING
VOLUNTARY
ACTION
NCVO

 **COMMUNITY
FUND**

ABOUT **POWER TO CHANGE**



Power to Change is the independent trust that strengthens communities through community business. We use our experience to bring partners together to fund, grow and back community business to make places thrive. We are curious and rigorous; we do, test and learn. And we are here to support community business, whatever the challenge.

We know community business works to create thriving places when local people take ownership of spaces that matter and deliver services that communities need. Our 2021-26 strategy sets out how, using strategic funding, trusted partnerships, rigorous research, policy insight, and a strong network of remarkable community businesses we will back the sector, creating the ideas, evidence, and exemplars that make the case for others to back them too. Ultimately, we will amplify the efforts of community businesses and put them at the heart of a fair economy.

ABOUT **VIRGIN MONEY FOUNDATION**



Our ambition is to make a real and lasting difference in the places that need it most by working in partnership with organisations who are committed to regenerating their area and investing in community activities that have a meaningful impact.

We want to see vibrant, flourishing and diverse local communities exist in places once impacted by social and economic decline. So we back people who are proud of their local area and are leading social change.

ABOUT **NCVO**



NCVO is the membership community for charities, voluntary organisations and community groups in England. Together we champion voluntary action.

At NCVO's consultancy service, we work with our clients to develop ideas, create solutions, implement change and deliver for impact. We're with you every step of the way.

We're uniquely placed to give your organisation the consultancy expertise you need. As a membership body and charity, we're rooted in the daily experiences of charities and voluntary organisations. And this shapes everything we do - because we're there, by your side, every day.

Our bespoke consultancy, tailored training and practical resources and toolkits are all designed to meet the needs, realities and ambitions of organisations like yours. And what we do is shaped together with our clients - whether that's giving an honest and expert assessment, establishing a new organisational strategy, delivering in-house training, report writing or much more.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NCVO was commissioned to act as the Impact and Learning Partner for a new programme, Leading the Way, designed and funded in partnership by Power to Change and Virgin Money Foundation. This programme ran from June 2022 to September 2023.

Leading the Way aims to increase the confidence, resilience, networks and skills of people leading community enterprises working in the 30% most deprived neighbourhoods across two regions: Yorkshire and the Humber and the North East.

The programme was designed to bring together support elements individually proven impactful in earlier work by Power to Change and Virgin Money Foundation. Over a 16-month period, participants were supported through:

10
in-person learning days,

monthly
mentoring,

£5,500
budget for commissioning specialist support for their team and organisation,

10 hours
of professional coaching, and a

£8,000
grant to enable their engagement in the programme.

This evaluation aimed to understand the extent to which the Leading the Way programme has helped:

- to develop community leaders' confidence, resilience, networks and skills
- bring about positive change within the leaders' community enterprises, and potentially their wider community.

It also aimed to learn about the best ways to deliver support to community enterprises to enable effective leadership, and ways to improve the structure and processes of Leading the Way. It drew on a range of data, including a pulse survey, site visits, focus groups, in-depth online interviews and secondary data, and two co-production workshops held with key stakeholders to explore the findings and co-produce recommendations.

Impact of the Leading the Way programme

What impact did Leading the Way have on participating community enterprise leaders, their organisations and their communities?

- The programme positively impacted the **confidence, connectedness, wellbeing and resilience** of community leaders. The changes for leaders came about as a result of the combination of elements of the programme – mentorship and peer learning were particularly impactful.
- The opportunity for leaders to **connect with their peers** in other community enterprises contributed to better wellbeing and to leaders feeling less isolated. Community leaders learnt from their peers through visits to other community enterprises and opportunities to reflect in groups on particular issues they were facing.
- **Community enterprises benefited from the programme's positive impact on their leaders**, and from the **additional support** the programme offered to the organisations, including through grant funding and one-to-one specialist support. The community enterprises were more resilient and had improved organisational confidence.
- One of the key strengths of the community enterprises prior to participation in the programme was their understanding and engagement with the communities in which they work. As a result of Leading the Way, community enterprises were able to **formalise their processes** for engaging with communities.
- It was too early to identify the impact of the programme on local communities, however, there were some indications that work emerging as a result of the programme could have a positive impact on the leaders' communities in the future.

Learning from the Leading the Way programme

What programme elements of Leading the Way worked well?

- **A holistic approach to programme delivery:** Leading the Way provided learning in group and one-to-one settings, and a grant to facilitate participation. The programme sought, not only to support the community leader, but also their community enterprise and the local community in which they work. The holistic approach helped to embed the learning with the participants and supported the practical implementation of that learning within their organisation.
- **Mentorship:** In order to make mentor relationships work well, the programme built in time to allow for relationship building. The time taken at the start of the programme to build mentor/mentee trust, as well as the mentors' commitment to maintaining regular contact with mentees was very important in maintaining the relationship and ensuring the success of mentorship within the Leading the Way programme.
- **Peer networks and peer learning:** Many changes for leaders came from their relationships with other leaders on the programme. The in-person learning days provided opportunities to learn from peers, and to foster a feeling of "connectedness" and reduced isolation in their leadership roles. Visits to other participant's community enterprises also helped the leaders learn from real-life experience and expand what they thought was possible.
- **Flexibility and adaptability:** One of the strengths of the Leading the Way programme was the ability to adapt and be nimble in the support provided. The programme design and delivery showed an understanding that flexibility and a tailored approach works best when working with a diverse range of leaders on a group programme.

What learnings and recommendations should be applied to future rounds of the Leading the Way programme or other capability or leadership-focused programmes?

- Build in **flexibility and adaptability** to the design of cohort- or group-based activities or learning days, to ensure that the full range of delivery partners can bring meaningful input, as they get to know and understand the programme's participants, their needs and their interests. In the Leading the Way programme, this would involve building in data from the self-diagnostic tool and feedback from mentors to the design of the learning days from the outset.
- Be aware of the time limitations of people leading community enterprises in the design of a programme and its application process, to ensure it doesn't become inaccessible. Leaders in community enterprises tend to be **time poor**. Future programme design should take this into account while also acknowledging the important benefit of having time away from the day-to-day organisational pressures, of in-person learning from other participants, and the range of support for participants. This can partly be achieved by ensuring the **application process is accessible to busy leaders, and streamlining access to the different elements** of the programme.
- If coaches are being used for programme delivery, it is important to remember that a one-size-fits-all approach will not work in the community enterprise sector, and the coaches involved should understand this. A **diverse range of coaches** who understand the needs and context of this subsector, should be available to meet the needs of the leaders and their organisations.
- Recognise and harness the **depth of expertise and the knowledge of participants** as practitioners in programme design. Use external consultants or practitioners to supplement and build on that existing knowledge and prioritise session formats where participants can discuss and develop their knowledge in a way that is practically applicable to their organisation and community.

Conclusion

The Leading the Way programme was successful in delivering change for the participating community leaders and the community enterprises in which they work. The combination of learning days, mentoring, coaching and specialist support helped to ensure that participants remained engaged and that positive change was achieved. Many of the community leaders would not have been able to participate without the £8,000 flexible grant provided to support their participation in the programme. The relationship between the mentors and the leaders was particularly strong, and the commitment of the mentors was one of the key elements of the success of the programme.



1. INTRODUCTION

Leading the Way has been developed in partnership with **Power to Change**, the independent trust that supports community business in England, and **Virgin Money Foundation**, an independent charity with an ambition to make a real and lasting difference in the places that need it most. Both organisations share a vision of the sustainable regeneration of communities, led by people who love the places in which they live and work.

1.2 Leading the Way

The Leading the Way programme focused on the **development of community enterprise leaders** and the impact of their organisations.

Who participated in the programme?

The eligibility criteria for the leaders and their organisations were:

- Based in an area in the North East of England or Yorkshire and Humber ranked within the top 30% of the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation
- Generating some of their income from contracts, products or services
- Community focused and operating within a local area
- Incorporated, for at least two years
- Not a sole trader
- Have a charitable purpose and meet a charitable need in your community
- For public benefit.

The first round of the programme was delivered to:

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leaders from different community enterprises across the North East and Yorkshire and the Humber, with 11 participants in the North East cohort, and eight in the Yorkshire and the Humber cohort.

A diverse range of community leaders were selected for the programme:

- **Experience:** The leaders had a range of experience, from those who were new to leadership to those with many years of experience who wanted to refocus their leadership.
- **Turnover:** Turnover within organisations ranged from approximately £30,000 to £1.7million.
- **Activities:** The focus of the leader's organisations ranged across: arts and culture, community cafes, community hubs or centres, education or education support, employment support or training, physical and mental health and wellbeing, housing, and natural environment.
- **Structure:** The participating organisations were charitable companies, charitable incorporated organisations, and community interest companies. One participating organisation was a private company limited by guarantee.

What support was provided?

The participating organisations were offered support with a value of approximately £25,000 across a 16-month period. This support comprised of:

10 learning days (in-person approximately every six weeks)

mentoring (one-to-one mentoring approximately every four weeks, with mentors also attending learning days and advising on appropriate one-to-one specialist support)

10 hours Professional coaching support (10 hours of one-to-one support with a budget of £1,275)

£5,500 Specialist support (one-to-one support with a budget of £5,500)

£8,000 grant to support each leader's participation in the programme

More detail on the different elements of support is provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Delivery elements

Delivery element	Description
Learning days	There were 10 learning day sessions; three delivered to both cohorts at a central location, seven delivered in-person to each cohort at a location in North East and Yorkshire & the Humber, and a final celebration event for the combined cohort. The learning days gave the leaders the opportunity to build technical management skills, leadership skills, and work with peers to share, learn and problem solve together
Mentoring	Through one-to-one mentoring, each leader worked with a mentor dedicated to their region. At the start of the programme, each leader worked with their mentor to complete a 'self-diagnosis', reviewing their and their organisation's relative strengths. Together they identified the leader's goals for the programme and co-produced an action plan. The mentors offered support and advice which was directive.
Coaching	The one-to-one coaching supported the leaders' professional development, with 10 hours available. The coaches worked closely with each leader to help them embed learning from the programme and address challenges or opportunities specific to them and their organisation. Coaching was used to build self-awareness, empower choice and lead to change. The coaching differed from mentoring in that mentoring was intended to be directive and coaching non-directive. The coaching asked leaders and organisations to reflect. However, there was also an element of reflection through the mentoring sessions, and within learning days.

Delivery element	Description
Specialist support	<p>There was also one-to-one specialist support which leaders could use to work on their goals for the programme and to respond to challenges or opportunities identified with their mentor. Support needs were identified through the self-diagnosis and each leader's priorities for the programme, and new needs were met as they came up for the leader and their organisation.</p> <p>The specialist support was provided through a network of consultants and support organisations initially built by School for Social Entrepreneurs. The network was further developed through the mentors' knowledge of people and organisations, either based locally to the leaders or better able to match the needs of their small, community-focused enterprises. Each leader had a flexible budget of £5,500 which could be used for one large piece of work or several smaller commissions, and on any timescale. Support accessed included marketing, income generation, business development, financial systems and accounting, governance, HR/staff management, funding bids and tenders.</p>
Grant	<p>Each organisation was provided with a grant of £8,000 to enable the leaders to participate in the programme and to embed their learning within their organisation.</p> <p>Grant reporting information shared by leaders with Leading the Way showed that the grant was primarily used to backfill the time of the leader, cover travel costs and for the purchase of IT hardware/software to support participation. Other uses of the grant were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● sharing learning and implementing changes/learning with the staff ● employing a bid writer ● developing new job descriptions for the leadership team ● developing a new product for the community enterprise ● exploring governance, health and safety and physical structural issues ● contributing to stronger local volunteering networks.

Who delivered the support?

The programme partners took on different roles throughout the delivery of the programme, and contracted delivery partners for each element of the support. At the launch of the programme the delivery roles were:

- Virgin Money Foundation – programme oversight
- Power to Change – programme management
- School for Social Entrepreneurs – design and delivery of learning days, and management of specialist support (with exception of coaching, managed by Power to Change)
- Pam Hardisty – mentor to the Yorkshire & Humber cohort
- Julian Prior – mentor to the North East cohort

1.2 The evaluation

In the summer of 2022, Power to Change commissioned NCVO as an Impact and Learning Partner for the first round of the Leading the Way programme to understand the extent to which the programme has helped to develop the leaders, their organisation, and their wider communities, and also to learn about the processes associated with the programme.

In July 2022, a workshop was held to develop an evaluation framework with Power to Change staff and mentors, and stakeholders from Virgin Money Foundation and organisations. The evaluation framework was finalised in August 2022 and used for reference when planning and conducting this evaluation. The learning questions were divided into two overarching outcome and two process related questions, outlined in Table 2.

Table 2: Evaluation framework learning questions

Learning questions (LQ)		
LQ 1	Outcome	The extent to which the programme has helped to develop community enterprise leaders' individual level outcomes (skills, confidence, resilience and networks)
LQ 2		The extent to which these individual level outcomes bring about positive change within the community enterprise (and potentially the wider community)
LQ 3	Process	How best to deliver support to community enterprises to enable effective leadership (as our theory of change suggests, this will contribute to a more resilient sector)
LQ 4		How the Leading the Way programme can be improved to better serve community enterprises and the places that they operate in

The evaluation was designed to gather data through a series of pulse surveys, interviews with delivery staff, focus groups, site visits and secondary data analysis. More detail on each data collection method is provided in Table 3.

Table 3: Data collection sources

Data	Description																
Pulse survey	<p>The pulse survey was launched at three points throughout the project. Additional questions were added to the third pulse survey about changes that happened as a result of the programme and attribution of changes (see Appendix 3 for the first and third pulse surveys). Changes attributable to the programme were mostly identified in the third pulse survey.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="483 757 1477 1025"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="491 768 595 824">Pulse Survey</th> <th data-bbox="651 768 722 790">Date</th> <th data-bbox="914 768 1098 824">Respondents North East</th> <th data-bbox="1137 768 1469 824">Respondents Yorkshire and the Humber</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="491 857 507 880">1</td> <td data-bbox="651 857 882 880">September 2022</td> <td data-bbox="914 857 930 880">8</td> <td data-bbox="1137 857 1153 880">8</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="491 902 507 925">2</td> <td data-bbox="651 902 834 925">January 2023</td> <td data-bbox="914 902 930 925">2</td> <td data-bbox="1137 902 1153 925">6</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="491 958 507 981">3</td> <td data-bbox="651 958 786 981">June 2023</td> <td data-bbox="914 958 930 981">6</td> <td data-bbox="1137 958 1153 981">7</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Pulse Survey	Date	Respondents North East	Respondents Yorkshire and the Humber	1	September 2022	8	8	2	January 2023	2	6	3	June 2023	6	7
Pulse Survey	Date	Respondents North East	Respondents Yorkshire and the Humber														
1	September 2022	8	8														
2	January 2023	2	6														
3	June 2023	6	7														
Delivery staff interviews	<p>In-depth interviews were carried out remotely in November and December 2022 for the interim report, and June 2023 for the final report. The two mentors working with leaders were interviewed at both points, a delivery partner from School for Social Entrepreneurs (SSE) was interviewed for the interim report and a delivery partner from Power to Change for the interim and final report.</p>																
Focus groups	<p>Focus groups for the interim report took place during learning days, one in the North East and one in Yorkshire and the Humber, during November and December 2022.</p>																
Site visits	<p>Site visits, comprising of a walking interview with the leader, an interview with a colleague of the leader and an observation of an activity, took place between June and July 2023 to two organisations from the North East and two from Yorkshire and the Humber. The sample for site visits was chosen based on the location and size of the organisation, and the experience level of the leader.</p>																
Analysis of secondary data	<p>Secondary data from participating organisations and delivery partners included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Feedback forms from learning days ● Miro board notes from delivery partner meetings ● Grant reporting from organisations to funder ● Diagnostic tool data ● Data provided directly from participating organisations demonstrating the impact of the programme. 																

There are several limitations to consider when interpreting the findings in this evaluation, particularly around data collection methods:

- The programme was being delivered as organisations were beginning to recover from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and facing into a cost-of-living crisis. This presented a **uniquely challenging set of circumstances** for the leaders and may have had an effect on the impact of the Leading the Way programme.
- The **very small sample size** for this evaluation prevented us from conducting meaningful quantitative data analysis.
- **Not all participants completed the pulse surveys**, and the scores didn't always improve significantly over time. The mentors suggested that this may be because as participants learned more from the programme, they understood their abilities better and realised there was still more to learn.
- The self-diagnostic tool that mentors co-produced with each leader at the beginning of the programme – requiring leaders to reflect on and score their own leadership styles and their skills for leading their community enterprise – was **being revisited as the evaluation was ending**. Some data from the self-diagnostic has been incorporated into this report, however, this was limited to seven out of 19 leaders and has to be interpreted cautiously.
- It was decided that **focus groups three and four would not take place** as this took learning time from leaders during their learning days. This meant that data collection methods had to be adapted towards the end of the evaluation project.
- Only two organisations responded to the request to provide additional information.

1.3 The report

Chapters two to five of the report comprise of the following:

Chapter 2: Processes: This chapter reports on what was delivered and how to best to deliver support through the Leading the Way programme.

Chapter 3: Outcomes: This chapter looks in detail at the outcomes achieved for participating leaders, their community enterprises and the communities in which they work.

Chapter 4: Learning: This chapter summarises what it was about the Leading the Way programme that worked well and why. The chapter also provides suggestions on the future development of the programme.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations: This chapter draws together the findings from the evaluation. It also reports recommendations co-produced in a workshop held on 8 August 2023 with delivery partners.

2. PROCESSES

2.1 What was delivered

As discussed in Chapter 1.1, the programme was delivered to leaders from 19 different organisations across two cohorts, with 11 from across the North East and eight from Yorkshire and the Humber. The participating organisations were offered support with a **value of approximately £25,000 across a 16-month period**. The support comprised learning days, one-to-one mentoring, coaching and specialist support, and a grant to support participation in the programme.

How best to deliver support

The success of the Leading the Way programme was enabled by some key delivery elements that supported the leaders, their organisations and their communities to achieve the outcomes set out in the Chapter 3.

The strengths of the programme were full, **face-to-face learning days hosted by other participating leaders at their organisations**, individually **tailored support**, especially from the **mentors**, and the **reflective, action learning, peer supported approach**:

- The **face-to-face learning days** provided leaders with an opportunity to be away from their daily work. This allowed them space to think about their organisations in a strategic way outside of the day-to-day pressures that are often prioritised.
- The **peer learning** opportunities for leaders through the learning days came from having safe spaces to share struggles, feel less isolated and build networks. Leaders learnt different ways of doing things, solutions to problems and examples of good practice. Leaders also found value in supporting others facing an issue to problem solve.
- Leaders found **visits to other organisations** hosting the learning days gave them the chance to see how things are done differently, and to learn from each other. At least one leader who hosted a learning day stated that these visits also benefited their organisation by providing the opportunity for independent voices to suggest solutions to problems.
- Leaders found that **being active at the learning days** facilitated better learning. One leader said of the 'walk and talk' sessions 'it does you good to get up and move'.
- **One-to-one mentoring support** was tailored to the needs of the leaders, through the self-diagnosis tool and the **understanding and relationship between the mentor and the leader**. Leaders were able to draw on the knowledge and experience of the mentors, who were knowledgeable both about the sector and their region. Leaders found the self-diagnosis process itself useful as it was the first time many of them had been prompted to reflect on their leadership and their organisation in this way.



The relationship between the mentor and the leaders was very important for the success of the programme. This was reported in all site visits including one leader who said:

“**it’s been huge having a mentor [...] actually targeting things I want to grow in**

(leader, site visit)

- Learning was facilitated through a **reflective, action learning approach**, rather than being directive. This allowed leaders to make a shift from ‘doing’ reactively to thinking about what they wanted to achieve and how they wanted to do it.
- The combination of different elements created **holistic support** for leaders, with one leader saying that ‘the whole is greater than the sum of its parts’.
- The **grant** enabled leaders to participate in the programme and implement learning from the programme within their organisations.

The reception of the learning day sessions was mixed, but overall positive. There was a session on **mission, vision and values**, which was particularly well received, and referenced by leaders throughout the pulse survey, leaders’ interviews and learning day feedback. This session focused on unifying people through a common language of mission and values, and therefore creating a mission- and values-led culture. However, leaders and delivery partners identified that some of the learning day sessions did not meet the needs of the leaders or the expectations of the leaders and some of the learning partners. In particular, there was a session on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) that was not well received by the first cohort. Feedback indicated that it was being poorly delivered by the specialist brought in, and pitched at a level below what was needed by the leaders.

Although the range of elements was seen as a benefit, the time pressures on leaders meant that **fitting all the support elements into the timeframe was difficult** for some leaders and added pressure. One leader suggested that this pressure could be relieved by allowing access to some of the one-to-one support after the end of the programme, particularly coaching or specialist support. One mentor suggested that a single point of contact for leaders would have simplified the process and made all elements more accessible for leaders.

Satisfaction with the programme was high and was assessed through feedback in the surveys, site visits, learning day feedback, direct feedback from leaders to NCVO and feedback to mentors. The mentors also stressed the importance of receiving and listening to constructive criticism in feedback. The leaders were willing to challenge some aspects of the learning day delivery, and provided ideas, such as how best to deliver effective sessions to support neurodiversity through having more variety in activities throughout the day. Where there was criticism, this was acted upon and changes were implemented, as set out in the following section.

2.2 Adaptation

One important aspect of the programme was the **adaptability of delivery partners**. The delivery team met roughly fortnightly and captured their learning from the programme on a Miro board.

An example of the programme's adaptability was a change in the delivery of the learning days. Initially designed and delivered by a contracted delivery partner, Power to Change and the mentors identified that the content delivered was too 'off the shelf' and not sufficiently tailored to the particular needs and interests of the leaders and the community enterprise sector. The team felt a responsibility to use the leaders' time wisely and that:

“**some of the people running the sessions weren't always great, it's a shame when you have time to listen about a subject that the delivery wasn't fantastic all the time** (mentor, in-depth interview).

Power to Change worked with the delivery partner on options for improving the delivery of the learning days. Following these conversations, Power to Change decided, alongside the mentors, to take on responsibility for delivering the learning days. This allowed for the mentors' knowledge of the leaders' needs and interests to be better reflected in the content and facilitation.

As previously mentioned, the first **EDI session** delivered was seen as ineffective as it was not adapted to the current level of knowledge or specific interests of the leaders. A new speaker was brought in for the second cohort, and the content updated. This second EDI session was delivered online and targeted at the level needed by the leaders, and was available to both cohorts. This second session was more successful than the first, as it was more interactive and built on questions brought by the cohort.

Mentors carried out **extensive consultation with leaders** at the start of the Leading the Way programme and used this to tailor their sessions, to support leaders in choosing the one-to-one coaching and specialist support they would receive, and to identify priority areas.

“**Our conversations have been fairly fluid, but nevertheless, at various points I keep coming back to how you're doing on this priority** (mentor, in-depth interview).

Mentors fed back needs and priorities to the delivery partners, although this could have been better incorporated into the learning day design.

The **brokerage of the specialist support** did not take place as quickly or efficiently at the start of the programme as delivery partners would have liked. The process was described as 'a bitty process, lots of connections to be made' (mentor, Miro board). The process for this was adapted through the programme so delivery partners felt it was a more user-friendly process although, one leader reported that they had still not taken up the offer of coaching due to time and:

“**when I've looked, I've gone on the list and so none of them are particularly relevant to what you need** (leader, site visit).

When the initial match between participant and coach did not work out, Power to Change and the mentor worked with the leader to identify a different and more appropriate coach.

3. OUTCOMES



Outcomes for the programme were identified in the evaluation framework for Leading the Way (see Appendix 1) and assessed against changes to leaders, and changes to the organisations and wider communities they worked in.

3.1 Leaders

All leaders experienced positive changes as a result of the programme. The level of the impact was dependent on their experience at the start of the programme, although mentors felt that those with more experience also benefitted from the course with one mentor reporting that it helped get them 'out of a rut'.

Increased confidence in leadership ability

The most common change for leaders as a result of the programme was in relation to their confidence. Leaders and mentors gave examples of changes in confidence as a result of the programme including:

- being able to stand up and talk in front of their peers
- having confidence to have better conversations with their boards
- making key decisions.

One mentor shared:

“**I would say for almost everybody without ... exception ... their confidence has grown for sure, some significantly, some perhaps less so, but I think everybody would leave the programme ... [with] confidence in their own ability or confidence in their organisation or what they're doing has grown** (mentor, in-depth interview).

Colleagues, interviewed during the site visits, also noticed increased confidence in the leaders as a result of Leading the Way. One colleague reported that the leader's increased confidence had **helped the organisation to prioritise**, while one leader reported to their mentor that:

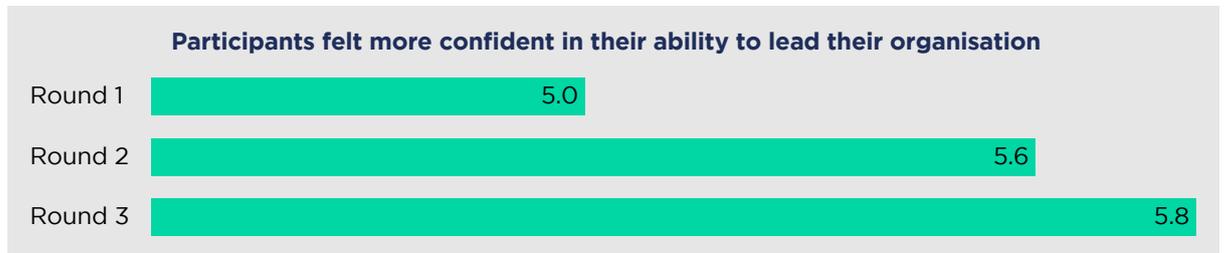
“**growth in confidence in the role [as a result of the mentoring] has benefited the organisation as I feel more confident and supported to make key decisions** (leader, site visit).

Increased confidence, however, was not a linear journey. Some leaders experienced challenges within their organisations or communities which slowed progress. For example, one leader commented:

“**I feel confident most days but have the occasional day where things are more challenging** (pulse survey respondent, third pulse survey).

Leaders were, on average, more confident in their leadership abilities at the end of the programme, according to the pulse survey. Leaders were asked to rate their confidence in their ability to lead their organisation between 1.0 (not at all confident) and 7.0 (very confident), with 4.0 being a neutral answer. The average response increased by 0.8 to 5.8 in third pulse survey.

Figure 1: Confidence in leadership ability



There was also an increase in leaders' confidence in handling unexpected events, increasing by 0.3 across the three pulse surveys. One participant said that they:

“**feel more confident about the role I'm doing, and I've been doing it for quite, you know, for a few years now** (pulse survey respondent, third pulse survey)

and another said:

“**The programme has given me confidence in myself as a leader and decision maker** (pulse survey respondent, third pulse survey).

Better connected leaders, with stronger networks

The programme had a strong impact on leaders' connections and networks with other community leaders and enterprises. The leaders valued the opportunity to connect with other peer leaders. One leader commented that 'talking to others in a similar situation makes it feel less lonely' (leader, learning day feedback), and another shared:

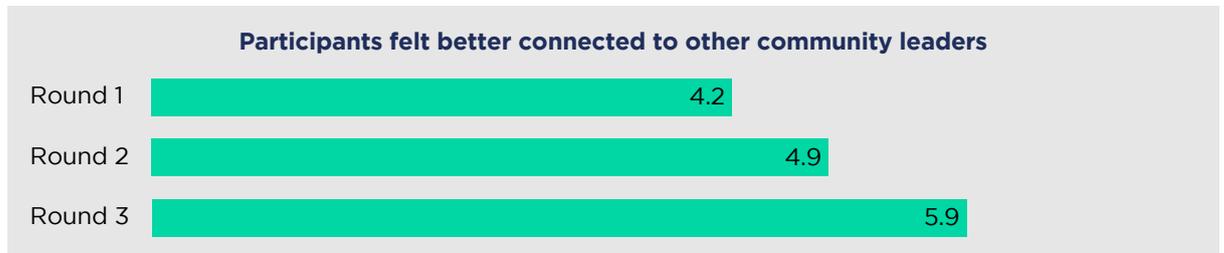
“**It can be a lonely place as a general manager even with the support of a great board. The 1-2-1s and support from group members has been particularly helpful and much needed** (pulse survey respondent, third pulse survey).

Learning days gave the leaders the opportunity to discuss challenges they were facing and to hear how others approached their own challenges. One leader who hosted a learning day spoke about how much he appreciated the advice, knowledge and prompts from other leaders to an issue he presented at his organisation while another commented on the benefit of the:

“**Opportunity to host and get support with problem solving. Fair bit of prep required but worth it** (leader, learning day feedback)

Leaders reported an increase in their connection to other peer leaders from the first pulse survey to the third (+1.7) to just under agree (5.9), using the same scale where 1.0 is strongly disagree, 7.0 is strongly agree and 4.0 is neutral. This was as a direct result of the programme bringing leaders together to develop those connections within the learning days.

Figure 2: Connection to other leaders



There were multiple instances of the leaders connecting outside of the learning days. WhatsApp groups enabled quick and easy communication and visits to other community enterprises on the programme, co-ordinated by the leaders themselves.

Leaders also provided support to each other. For example, a link was made between two organisations in the North East that were carrying out similar projects, one of which was further along in the process. It was agreed that, with support from their mentor, the leader from the more established organisation would provide specialist support to the other leader, with funding through the Leading the Way programme.

Delivery partners reported a difference in the connection between leaders **across the two cohorts**, with the Yorkshire and Humber cohort having stronger connections outside the learning days than the North East cohort. The first pulse survey also showed this difference (leaders in Yorkshire and Humber slightly agreed that they felt connected to other leaders (5.3) and leaders in the North East slightly disagreed with the statement (3.1)).

However, the third pulse survey showed that this gap had narrowed towards the end of the Leading the Way programme. In fact, leaders in the North East were slightly more positive about their connection to other leaders compared to their peers in Yorkshire and Humber (6.0 in the North East and 5.9 in Yorkshire and Humber). One leader from the North East said that, without the programme:

“

I wouldn't have made connections with other organisations facing similar challenges

(pulse survey respondent, third pulse survey).

The differences in connectivity across the two cohorts may have been, at least partly, a result of **geography**. One leader stated during a site visit that theirs was the only organisation taking part in Leading the Way in their city, whereas some organisations had more than one other organisation close by. This meant that it was more difficult for this leader to make site visits outside of the programme. Another factor that may have had an impact on the connectivity of leaders was the approach taken by the mentors.

For example, from the beginning of the programme, the Yorkshire and Humber cohort were encouraged to keep in touch via a WhatsApp group, whilst the North East cohort only formed a WhatsApp group later on.

Leaders reported making **connections beyond their peers on the programme**. Leaders responding to the pulse survey agreed that they had more connections with people in a similar leadership position to them (5.8). One respondent was neutral in response to the question with the remainder agreeing to some extent. One leader said:

“**The programme has taught me to ... consider the different people we can connect with and other ways we can explore working together** (pulse survey respondent, third pulse survey).

Improved wellbeing

The programme had a positive impact on the wellbeing of leaders. This was reported by mentors, leaders, delivery partners and colleagues of leaders. This impact came from having **time to come together** away from the distractions, and from the **empathy** they felt through knowing that they **shared challenges and frustrations** with the other leaders. One leader said:

“**I've not felt lonely. I know there are other leaders who are experiencing some of the challenges and difficulties I have** (pulse survey respondent, third pulse survey).

Many leaders stated their **wellbeing was affected by the 'challenging times'** they operated in, such as the Covid-19 pandemic and cost-of-living crisis. One commented on:

“**the challenging times we are in, which makes it hard to focus on leadership** (pulse survey respondent, third pulse survey).

Knowing other leaders faced the same challenges meant the leaders felt less lonely. One mentor also stated that the one-to-one mentor support also gave the leaders:

“**space to reflect and get things off your chest or to be able to externally process things** (mentor, in-depth interview).

The diagnostic data showed a significant increase in how leaders support their own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others with one reporting they had moved from 'survival mode' a year ago to being 'much better now'.

Although it was difficult to attribute to the Leading the Way programme, leaders' reported satisfaction with life changed by 0.9 to somewhat agree (5.3) across the three pulse surveys. Leaders responding to third pulse survey somewhat agreed (5.0) with the statement:

“**I feel less stressed these days in my leadership role** (pulse survey respondent, third pulse survey).

Leaders are more resilient

Although leaders themselves **did not report a significant increase in their resilience** in the pulse surveys, evidence from site visits and delivery partner interviews suggested that **leaders had underestimated their increased resilience** as a result of the programme. Interviews with mentors, leaders and their colleagues, and comments within the pulse survey, suggested that the change in resilience for leaders was stronger than shown by data from the pulse survey.

One leader stated that the programme had helped with:

“**growing confidence, confidence in my own decisions and feeling like I actually am entitled to be here in this leadership space** (leader, site visit).

Mentors reported doing a lot of work with leaders to **solidify boundaries** between their role and what others should be doing, and mentors had an impact on mindset shifts through being able to dedicate time to unpicking problems. One leader said that:

“**the learning days and sessions I have been through, have helped me grow and become better in leadership and resilience** (pulse survey respondent, third pulse survey).

The reported resilience from the pulse surveys showed only a small increase (+0.2) in overall resilience, with the change coming between second pulse survey and third pulse survey.

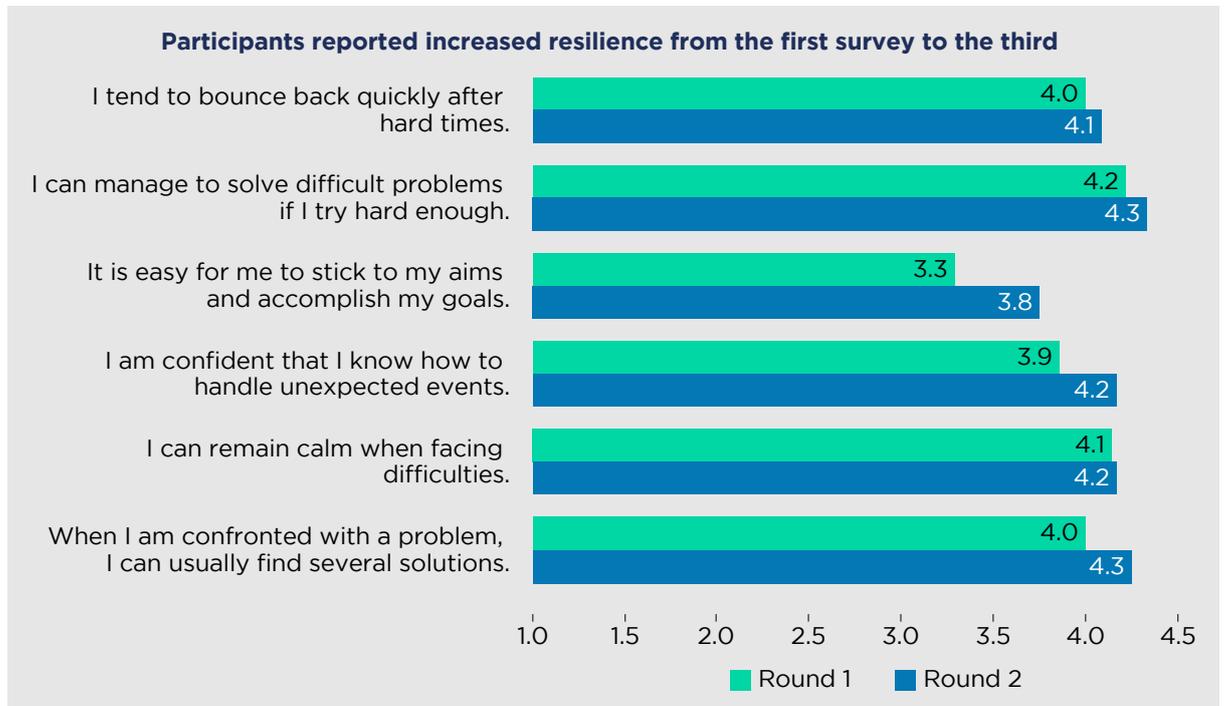
To assess changes in resilience in the pulse surveys, we asked leaders the extent to which they agreed with the following statements using a 5-point Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to agree (5):

- I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times
- I can manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough
- It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals
- I am confident that I know how to handle unexpected events
- I can remain calm when facing difficulties
- When I am confronted with a problem I can usually find several solutions.

There were very small changes to the reported resilience of leaders in the areas of ‘bouncing back’ (+0.1), ‘being able to solve difficult problems’ (+0.1), and no change in the area of ‘calmness in the face of difficult situations’. For these three areas, leaders agreed to some extent with the statements. There was a slightly greater improvement for ‘finding several solutions to problems’ (+0.3), ‘handling unexpected events’ (+0.3), and ‘sticking to aims and accomplishing goals’ (+0.5). Again, leaders tended to agree to some extent with the statements (averages from 3.8 - 4.2).

Confidence, resilience and wellbeing developed as a result of the programme were closely linked. Leaders interviewed during site visits often talked about them together. Empathy from others helped leaders to understand they were not on their own and that it was normal to feel powerless, angry or upset at times and this, in turn this has helped with personal resilience.

Figure 3: Leaders' resilience



Improved technical skills required for effective leadership

Results suggest that leaders **honed their technical skills** as a result of the programme, particularly through the various **one-to-one support sessions**. Data from the pulse surveys, site visits and delivery partners showed that some of the technical skills developed included:

- understanding the importance of long-term planning
- identifying where processes presented a risk
- acquiring the necessary technical skills to effectively mitigate risks associated with particular challenges
- having the confidence and understanding to identify and invest where support was needed
- understanding the value of staff as a major resource and cultivating that resource

- talking about the organisation in a coherent way
- having difficult conversations, particularly with boards
- understanding the value of collecting and using information beyond monitoring and evaluation to planning.

An example of how a **more experienced leader improved their leadership skills** was through a discussion with their mentor about a particularly difficult problem they had been faced with. The discussion led to a change in approach to recruitment which, in turn, led to the recruitment of a skilled and competent new member of staff who was able to free up capacity of the leader.

The mentor identified this as a relatively small change that resulted from a discussion within a mentoring session but had a big impact on the leader and the organisation.

Mentors addressed **leadership style** through their one-to-one sessions with leaders, and leaders agreed that, as a result of the programme, they had an increased understanding of their leadership styles in the pulse survey (average score of 6.0). One leader said:

“**[t]his has been a very valuable opportunity to better understand my leadership style and to improve it** (pulse survey respondent, third pulse survey).

The diagnostic results available showed the strongest increase for leaders was in the technical skills needed for leadership – developing staff, managing income and finances and decision making.

However, delivery partners felt that understanding of leadership styles was not effectively addressed through the learning days. The hope was to encourage a leadership style that was ‘empowering, democratic and transformational’, but one delivery partner felt they were not there yet. The same delivery partner acknowledged that:

“**lots of the [learning] sessions and all other sessions really relate to leadership capabilities** (delivery partner, in-depth interview).

Better able to respond to the needs of their community and wider societal challenges

At the end of the programme, leaders agreed that the programme had increased their ability to respond to the needs of their community (average score of 5.7 in the third pulse survey).

One leader interviewed at a site visit spoke of the **issues that had been faced within the community** in which they worked. Taking part in the programme, particularly through mentoring sessions, helped them to understand how this affected the community and staff in their community

enterprise, and how they could respond to the particular needs of the community. This leader felt that they benefited from participation in the programme in being **able to respond to the challenges faced**, and this outweighed the pressure of needing time to participate in the programme.

However, it was difficult to attribute this to the Leading the Way programme as leaders felt they **were already well connected to and understood the needs of their community** at the beginning of the programme. One leader, who scored their ability to respond to the needs of the community at 7.0, said they had:

“**always had a good ability to respond to community needs and its flexible and responsive approach has continued to support the Partnership to meet community need** (pulse survey respondent, third pulse survey).

However, another respondent said:

“**The programme has taught me to think of the community as a whole ... making sure community needs are met** (pulse survey respondent, third pulse survey).

Despite the **difficult circumstances** in which many of them were operating, leaders all agreed to some extent that the programme had increased their ability to respond to wider challenges (average score of 5.8). One said that, as a result of the programme:

“**I have a better understanding of the national picture and I have stepped forward locally to join teams so I have a stronger position in the district** (pulse survey respondent, third pulse survey).

Case example: REfUSE

REfUSE is a community enterprise based in Chester-le-Street in Durham. They focus on reducing waste by redistributing food that would otherwise go to waste and educating people about the value of food. REfUSE run a 'pay as you feel' community café, themed restaurant nights, a Waste Not Box scheme and an education project. REfUSE uses paid staff and volunteers to deliver the services.

Impact on the community leader

Bethan was appointed operational manager during a period of change for the organisation about six months before she joined the Leading the Way programme. As Bethan was relatively new to her role, and to managing a community enterprise, the programme started at a good time for her:

“it's been really helpful ..., a huge support along that first year of leadership ... it's helped me to be a better line manager, to kind of understand the role that I have in the organisation a lot better and just grow personally.

Bethan said that the biggest change for her from the programme was in terms of building her confidence, but that she has also learnt to put in better boundaries and have a better balance between work and life, which she attributes to the programme.

Bethan and her mentor spent a lot of time working on developing the technical skills needed for management, such as developing strategy and long-term planning, and the skills needed to run a team. In terms of the new connections Bethan has made, she said:

“

It's been really surprising actually that a couple of them are literally on our doorstep and I had no idea about that ... really eye opening ... there's so much going on locally.

The connections she has made have helped her to understand that some of the struggles they face are shared with others and she had opportunities to collaborate, talk through problems and empathise. She said that it has been really encouraging.

Impact on the community enterprise

REfUSE was going through a transition while the two founders of the organisation were taking a step back and Bethan was stepping up to fill some of that role. Bethan's participation in Leading the Way provided a structure to the transition. Practically, the grant allowed them to create a new role to support organisational management which also gave Bethan space to be involved in the programme.

REfUSE is beginning to understand how to support the wellbeing of staff and volunteers and is employing the services of a consultant through Leading the Way to work on this. There is more structure and understanding of people's roles across the organisation as a result of the programme – 'people know what they're doing, which therefore helps wellbeing'.

REfUSE is about to start work on a five-year plan which would not have been possible at the start of the programme.

In terms of our ethos and where we sit and what we're doing, that's really grown, I think, and we know here we are and what we want to do because we've been allowed to have that time.

Other factors

Community engagement has increased in the year of the programme, but it is hard to say if that has been down to Leading the Way or the fact that people were beginning to return to normal life in the post-COVID-19 era. Similarly, the organisation has been going through a transition – Bethan’s is a new role – and there would have been changes whether Bethan took part in the programme or not.

Bethan suggested that 90% of the changes in her leadership have been down to the way she has ‘had encouragement to grow myself as a leader’ through the programme.

Summary

REfUSE has been going through a potentially difficult period of transition. The support Bethan received from the Leading the Way programme has eased that transition and supported the staff and volunteers through what could have been a difficult time. Bethan, as a new leader, has received much needed support through Leading the Way to develop her leadership skills. The encouragement from the delivery team and her new connections have been central to Bethan’s ability to lead her organisation through this period of change, and to take her organisation forward with confidence.

3.2 Within the community enterprise

Changes to community enterprises came about both through the improved leadership of the leader and through the additional resources to support the leader to implement their learning.

Community enterprises are more resilient

As well as level of individual resilience of leaders, we explored the potential impact of the programme on organisational resilience. Despite increasing external pressures and ‘challenging times’ as mentioned earlier, the biggest change for community enterprises has been in resilience.

Mentors reported doing a lot of work with leaders around long term planning for the organisation, encouraging them to see beyond what funders’ needs are. Specific examples of the work done have been:

- support around fundraising, with one organisation reporting that they used the grant to pay a bid writer to write bids the leader did not have time to write
- updating HR systems to put the organisation in a position to expand
- employing the services of a consultant who confirmed the need for strategic planning, enhancing the voice of the leader to the board.

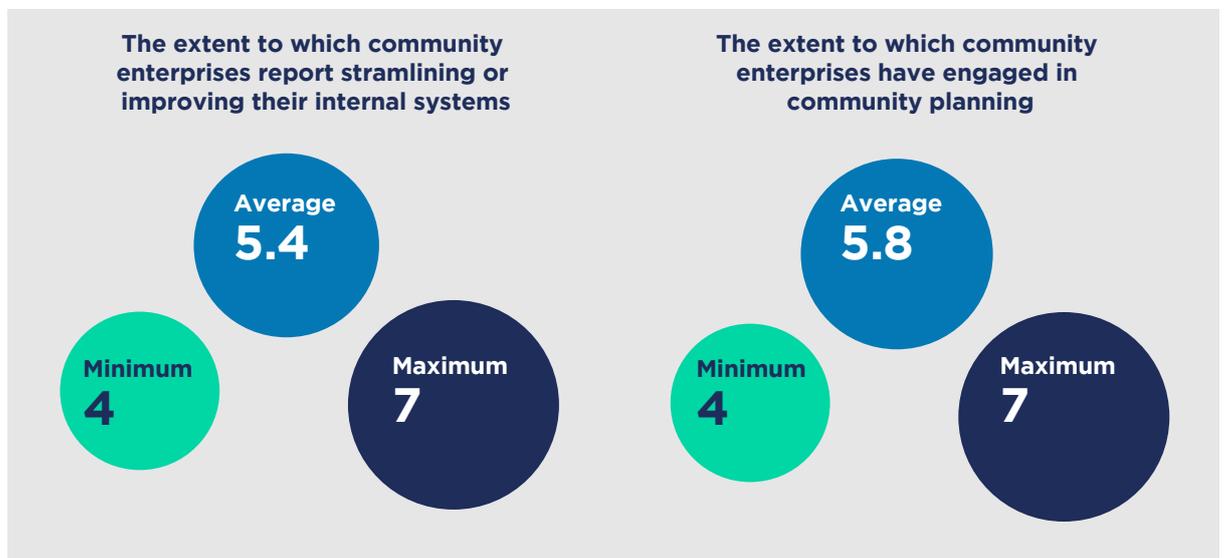
Mentors said that there was a chance that, without the programme, some of the organisations might not have survived, and one organisation said:

“**it is no exaggeration that support from Leading the Way has enabled us to survive the last year and will enable us to again operate next year** (leader, site visit).

One organisation said that the benefit of having a more confident leader had filtered down to the rest of the organisation, and that the leader now has the confidence to carry out tasks that had been identified previously but never prioritised.

Most leaders completing the third pulse survey reported that their organisations streamlined or improved internal systems and engaged in future planning (12 out of 13 agreed to some extent with one or both of the statement ‘our internal systems have been streamlined or improved’ or ‘we have engaged in future planning e.g., developing a new strategy’).

Figure 4: Improved internal systems and future planning



One respondent said, 'it feels like we have become a lot more stronger and put in place systems to help us be sustainable' (pulse survey respondent, third pulse survey). Although the leaders' reported a stronger change in their organisation's resilience than their personal resilience in the pulse surveys, qualitative data from leaders and delivery partners suggested that they had underestimated their personal resilience (see Chapter 3.1 above).

Increase in organisational resilience has, in turn, increased organisational confidence. Activities such as working on the organisation's mission and values gave organisations more direction and helped to make sure that everyone in the organisation was working with the same purpose, which increased confidence in what the organisation was doing. One leader said that one of the first things they did was:

“**think what the values meant to them and how we can work together to strengthen them [...] because I wanted to be sure that people have had the same passion and drive as me to move the charity forward [...] now we all have an understanding of the vision of what we want to do** (leader, site visit).

Leading the Way's focus on wellbeing and EDI, influenced the leaders and their organisations to prioritise these themes.

Mentors said that this was achieved by having the space to talk about wellbeing in the organisation. As small organisations with limited resources and time, wellbeing was not always a priority. Having time to focus on topics, such as wellbeing, in the learning days and mentor conversations prompted the leaders to think about wellbeing. At least one organisation identified wellbeing as one of their priorities, and applied for and successfully pursued additional funding outside of the Leading the Way programme to work on this.

The pulse survey also indicated that leaders somewhat agree that levels of wellbeing have improved within their organisations (5.2).

In terms of EDI, there was some evidence that the understanding of the positive benefits of good EDI within the organisation was beginning to increase, and implementation of improved EDI policies was also beginning to increase. Mentors reported that, as a result of the revamped EDI sessions and one-to-one work with mentors, leaders had developed a more sophisticated understanding, for instance around the difference between visible and invisible diversity. Leaders reported a need to diversify their boards and their volunteers, that they included this in their plans, and that it was beginning to happen – one organisation had more than doubled their volunteers and these volunteers varied in terms of age, background, learning disability and mental health. Another organisation was recruiting more young people to their board to reflect the people they wanted to work with.

As with wellbeing, having the space to think enabled organisations to recognise the importance of diversity and how they could improve in supporting their staff. From the pulse survey, eight out of 13 respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that there were more diverse skills among volunteers (average 4.4). The responses for the board were slightly more positive (average 4.8), and on average they agreed that there were diverse skills amongst staff (5.2). Mentors suggested that this was an area where leaders and organisations overestimated where they were at the start of the programme and:

“**now they come to think about it, and now they've been on this journey for a year, actually, there's a lot more work to be done** (mentor, in-depth interview).

Case example: Family Voice Sheffield

Family Voice Sheffield is a community enterprise that works with families around the Sharrow, Lowfield and Nether Edge areas of Sheffield to reduce the disadvantages people face because of their background. They do this through a range of activities, including running a community kitchen, community lunches, delivering English language classes, yoga, drama work, directing people to where they need to be and bringing people together. The organisation sits in the heart of a community which is very mixed racially and economically.

Impact on the community leader

Janine is one of three directors for the organisation and took part in the Leading the Way programme. Janine's confidence grew as a result of the programme and she started to see herself as a leader in a way she didn't before the programme.

“**Previously I didn't see myself as a leader, I thought this was someone wearing a suit, sitting in a big office. Leading the Way has not only helped me view myself as a leader but also helped shape the type of leader I want to be.**

The programme has helped Janine to develop the technical skills she needs for leadership, such as planning her time to be able to focus on the priorities that support organisational resilience and development.

Janine recognises that her confidence to speak in the group at the learning days was improved by having a smaller group.

She has built informal relationships with other community leaders from her cohort outside of the programme and has found opportunities to learn from her peers and hear from people who might approach a problem in a different way.

Being able to take time out of her working week to think about the strategic planning for the organisation has also had an impact on Janine's wellbeing.

Impact on the community enterprise

The skills and confidence Janine has developed have helped the Family Voice Sheffield to deal with the extra work and responsibility that have come their way from the Covid-19 pandemic. Family Voice Sheffield had identified strategic areas they should be focusing on before Janine joined the Leading the Way programme, but had not prioritised them as they were responding to the need and 'hands on' work that was in front of them. Through her participation in the programme, Janine has been able to prioritise and make changes in certain areas that previously had been pushed down the priority list. For example, Janine was able to keep the focus on wellbeing, something that would not have happened without 'the confidence and the sticking power' developed through Leading the Way.

The grant that provided to Family Voice Sheffield allowed Janine to take time to participate in the programme and put her learning into practice in a way she would not have been able to without it.

Demand for the organisation's services is 'huge'. The directors want to make sure all the systems and processes are stronger in order to hold the new expansion and possible further expansion. The support Janine has had through the Leading the Way programme is ensuring that this happens.

Impact on the wider community

Family Voice Sheffield already had a good understanding of the needs of the community in which they work and were very responsive to those needs. One change the organisation is making as a result of the Leading the Way programme is to formalise the way the community feeds into Family Voice Sheffield's activities, by developing a user group of women who use the organisation's services.

That the organisation is now stronger and more sustainable, which means that they will continue to be able to provide support and services to the community – 'the impact on the wider community is the fact that we'll still be here'.

Other factors

Alongside the grant from the Leading the Way programme, Family Voice Sheffield has received additional funding from their main funder to support work on wellbeing, while another director is receiving coaching through another source. All of these have come together to improve the organisation.

Summary

Janine's participation in the programme gave her the time to stop and focus on what was important, and it provided her with the confidence and knowledge to take Family Voice Sheffield along with her. The strategic planning that Family Voice Sheffield has worked on because of Janine's improved leadership skills, and through the Leading the Way grant, means that, not only can Family Voice Sheffield continue to serve the needs of its community, it is now in a strong position to serve that community.

3.3 Within the wider community

As expected, it was too early to see significant changes in communities at this time. However, there were some examples of good work being done in individual communities as a result of the Leading the Way programme.

Community enterprises deepen their impact in communities

Most of the organisations which participated in Leading the Way felt their strength, pre-programme, lay in knowing, and being known, in their communities, and in understanding the needs of their communities. One way the programme has helped with this is by putting this work on a more formal footing, so organisations are capturing and harnessing that knowledge and understanding.

Some examples of improved practice as a result of the programme were:

- one organisation set up a user group to better understand the needs of the community and help to develop activities
- increased use of social media to co-ordinate local action
- using the grant which 'has allowed us to continue and extend our support for local residents catering for their multiple needs' (grant recipient)
- being able to continue delivering their services into the future.

One leader said:

“

Bit early to say but hopefully greater efficacy in community settings and more activity in community settings will follow the improved planning processes

(pulse survey respondent, second pulse survey).

Communities are better to live and work in

We came across work taking place within organisations, either as a result of or enhanced by the programme, that would, if successful, have a positive effect on communities. For example, one organisation is working to redevelop their local high street and make it a more pleasant place to be. Early work on this has included ensuring the local council cut the grass in communal spaces. The leader was being coached by another leader on the programme to make bigger changes, but it was too early to say what the positive effect of this work would be on the local community.

3.4 Attribution for leaders, organisations and communities

One leader interviewed during a site visit said they would estimate positive changes for their organisation to be 60 or 70% down to the Leading the Way programme, and positive changes for themselves to be about 90% down to the programme.

It was difficult to attribute some of the changes to the Leading the Way programme. A mentor said that leaders do not live in a bubble and the challenging times will have a counter-effect. They felt that, for example, having the programme might not always have increased resilience but meant it did not decrease as much as it would have without the programme.

One mentor commented that it was:

“

Difficult to attribute, you know, because somebody may suddenly appear much less resilient and it's nothing to do with us, you know, so life happens [...] the input that we have is one thing, but people are facing all sorts of issues, quite massive issues

(mentor, in-depth interview).

Some leaders were involved in other programmes that would also have had an impact, meaning that the effect of the Leading the Way programme was harder to isolate and also more difficult to attribute. One leader, however, said that:

“**I took part in another similar funding programme shortly before applying to [Leading the Way]. This program blew it out of the water**
(pulse survey respondent, third pulse survey).

Eleven out of twelve leaders who answered the question ‘to what extent can these changes [to leader’s resilience] be attributed to the Leading the Way programme’, attributed it to some extent (average of 5.3).

One leader said that, without the programme, they would have:

“**muddled along as I have always done but would be in a worse position**
(pulse survey respondent, third pulse survey).

Another leader said:

“**The programme has given me an opportunity to more fully understand how I work and how I manage my work. It has also given me a chance to meet other people and learn**
(pulse survey respondent, third pulse survey).

Figure 5 Increased resilience



4. LEARNING

4.1 What worked well

The Leading the Way programme consisted of a number of different activities that linked together and combined to deliver the outcomes discussed in the previous chapter.

The peer learning was particularly important to the leaders and was mentioned in the pulse survey and site visit interviews. It was clear that the leaders appreciated discussing challenges with peers and learning from how others would respond to those challenges. Small group discussion at the learning days was described as 'really useful' by one leader. In the learning day feedback, one leader said that they liked 'the opportunity... to get support with problem solving' at a learning day they hosted. Outside of the learning days, the cohorts communicated differently, and this was possibly due to geography and the different approaches of the mentors.

The learning days provided valuable opportunities for leaders. They were able to have the 'space away from the day-to-day' that it afforded them. This gave them time to think strategically about their organisations rather than dealing with everyday pressures and problems that they faced at their organisation. The learning days were also key drivers of community learning. Feedback from learning days showed that the leaders enjoyed learning about other organisations and benefitted from the chance to 'see new ideas and approaches' (leader, learning day feedback). One topic from the learning days that came through strongly was the session on mission and values. This was apparent from the survey, with one leader saying, 'we have a set of values that we want to be the core of

how we work and we think these will help the community', from the learning day feedback – one leader said that they learnt about 'the importance of it being a 'current conversation'.

The effectiveness of the support from the mentors was important and one leader said, 'I felt that the personal mentoring ... was excellent' (pulse survey respondent, third pulse survey) the time and space were built into the programme to allow relationship building, and the persistence of mentors. Mentors spent time initially developing their relationship with each leader, and to build trust. They quickly developed their understanding of the leaders and organisations they were working in. Mentors were persistent in ensuring that they maintained regular contact, followed up with leaders and challenged them where necessary. Both mentors spoke about how they encouraged leaders to use reflection to develop their leadership skills. The regular delivery partners meetings also gave the mentors the opportunity to come together to share learning about the approach to mentoring on the programme.

One mentor identified that the leadership style of the Power to Change team involved was very important in modelling what leadership should look like. They said that their 'openness and values-led leadership were very important to the success of the project' (mentor, in-depth interview).



The ability to be nimble in working with the different organisations was also very important, as was an understanding what that meant in relation to each organisation. For example, the mentor learnt that one organisation was only able to dedicate a limited amount of time to an individual activity and so the length of all sessions delivered to that organisation were restricted to match the organisation's capacity.

One mentor described the importance of interpersonal connections in the programme. This included discussions at learning days, and one-to-one discussions between leaders and mentors, and leaders and coaches. The mentor said that 'the personal is what makes this programme sing' (mentor, in-depth interview).

Leaders identified the importance of the grant to support their participation in the programme. One organisation said:

“**being able to pick what the priority is for us ... and have funding to do it. It's huge ... that's made huge change to our organisation**
(colleague, site visit).

Another leader said that, without the grant, they would not have been able to spend the time attending the Leading the Way programme and putting what they learnt into practice.

4.2 Unexpected learning

Mentors were surprised at the extent of the need for human resources and 'back office' support for the community enterprises (programme Miro board). Having the external support in these areas freed up the time of the leader to make an impact in other ways. Technology was also useful in facilitating this support, for example very simple interventions such as using an iPad to collect and monitor data on an ongoing basis.

Although the leaders at the early stages of their leadership got a lot of value from the programme, delivery partners were surprised by how much value most of the more experienced leaders seemed to get from the programme. Some of them used the programme to get themselves or their organisation 'out of a rut' (mentor, in-depth interview). Some experienced leaders were also facing new challenges which the programme helped with. One leader who had been a leader for many years and was confident in their own abilities, said that 'there has been so much change within the team in the last 8/9 months which has unsettled me' (pulse survey respondent, third pulse survey).

Some leaders said that they were surprised at how hard it was to create time for the programme, whilst recognising how valuable that time out was.

“**When I looked at it, I thought it's a day a month. That's fine, should be all right? But actually it's been really difficult to create that time for it and when you apply for it, it sounds reasonable [...] but it has been really hard to properly prioritise the time.**
(leader, learning day feedback)

4.3 Suggestions for improvement for any future planning

The Leading the Way programme delivery team have been adaptive and responsive throughout delivery, responding quickly to any difficulties or issues that were identified. However, this section outlines some changes that could further improve programme delivery:

- It is necessary to emphasise to leaders from an early stage in the programme the importance of being honest and open in feedback and evaluation of the programme. Mechanisms for gathering robust feedback might include a shift to anonymous and online feedback to gather simple, regular feedback on each element of the programme. It was through feedback provided by leaders that Power to Change and the mentors were able to make changes to the delivery of the learning days. The relationship between mentors and leaders is a key aspect of the programme – leaders should be encouraged to share all relevant information with their mentor from the outset.
- The data from the self-diagnostic tool and the feedback from mentors should be built into the design of the learning days from the outset.
- Future programmes should take into account the time needed by leaders to participate. Although the different elements of the course combined well to provide a rounded experience for participants, time was often a major barrier to participation. One leader said:

“

There is a lot of things to juggle at the same time with attending the programme and also lots of things to participate in and attend and if it could be spread out even after the programme, it would help

(pulse survey respondent, third pulse survey).

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

The first cohort of the Leading the Way programme worked with 19 leaders and their community enterprises to support the development of the leaders and their organisations through a mix of one-to-one development, group learning and a supporting grant.

Participants were positive about the mixed approach of the programme, and benefitted from the group learning, various one-to-one support elements and the grant which enabled participation and embedding the learning from the programme. The support from the mentors and the delivery team was particularly strong and helped to drive the programme forward, ensuring participants remained engaged to a greater or lesser extent. Some of the learning day content was identified as a weakness but the adaptability of the delivery team meant that this was addressed and improved.

Outcomes from the programme were measured for leaders, their community enterprises, and the wider community. As to be expected, it was too early to understand the impact that Leading the Way had on communities, but there was some evidence of emerging changes, such as stronger and more formal community connections and improvements to the local infrastructure.

The biggest outcomes for leaders were:

- increased confidence in their own leadership ability
- better wellbeing
- better connected, with stronger peer networks.

Leaders were also more resilient and developed their technical skills as a result of the programme. Community enterprises benefitted from having more skilled, confident and resilient leaders. This resulted in improved organisational resilience, which was the strongest outcome for the community enterprises. The support the community enterprises received as part of the programme enabled them to focus on and develop their key priorities.

Evaluation evidence suggests that the Leading the Way programme was largely successful in developing leaders and strengthening the organisations in which they worked.



5.2 Recommendations

We facilitated a workshop with Leading the Way delivery partners in August 2023 to share the evaluation findings and to co-create key recommendations for how to develop the programme in future.

Recommendations for Leading the Way and future capability and leadership-focused programmes

- Build a peer network, considering geography which keeps in mind willingness and ability to travel, and demand across regions, maintaining small numbers to make a network manageable for participants, encouraging co-commissioning, and use of technology such as WhatsApp for quicker and easier communication. Also consider how an established peer network can be managed after the conclusion of the programme.
- Recognise and harness the depth of expertise and the knowledge of practitioners within the cohort in programme design. Visits to others' sites promotes learning from real-life experience and expands what people think is possible, as well as overcoming criticism that this expertise is not recognised. Use external consultants to supplement and build on that existing knowledge.
- Consider how to manage the different elements of the programme without overburdening leaders. This could be done by:
 - streamlining the contact points for leaders – rather than having a different contact for the grant, coaching, mentoring etc, have one person with oversight keeping in mind that this will be an extra burden for that one person
 - having a diverse pool of specialist support providers and professional coaches who understand this particular sub-sector to provide support
 - ensuring that communication around the separate elements is clear and that participants understand how the grant can be used, how to access coaching so it happens from an early stage, and what will happen, when and why.
- Consider evaluating the longer-term impact of the Leading the Way programme, potentially with an element of peer-research. This will help to understand the effect of the programme, if any, on the wider community
- Build equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) throughout the programme, recognising the visible and invisible diversity in the group, and recognising that skills such as having difficult conversations are EDI skills. All this can be done while remembering that leaders will need more than 'the basics' and EDI sessions will be more effectively delivered as a workshop than a talk. Consideration should also be given to offering an EDI audit through one-to-one support, and ensuring providers are diverse.

Learning and recommendations for the wider community enterprise sector

- Understand that flexibility and a tailored approach works best when working with a diverse range of leaders on a group programme. One of the strengths of the Leading the Way programme was the ability to adapt and be nimble in the support provided.
- Be aware of the limitations leaders have on the time available to participate in a programme and design the programme and application process so it does not become inaccessible to busy leaders.
- In order to make mentor relationships work well the programme should build in time to allow for relationship building. Mentors should be persistent in maintaining regular contact with mentees, and take time initially to build a trust. The programme should provide meaningful opportunities for the mentors to feed into the programme content.
- If coaches are being used for programme delivery, it is important to remember that a one-size-fits-all approach will not work in the community enterprise sector, and the coaches involved should understand this. A diverse range of coaches who understand the needs and context of this community enterprise subsector, should be available to meet the needs of the leaders and their organisations.



APPENDIX 1: EVALUATION FRAMEWORK



Introduction

Background to this framework

Power to Change, which supports community businesses in England, is looking to address issues faced by community enterprises due to the pandemic, and the need for greater social cohesion and support networks, through their 2021-26 strategy, which focuses on three key areas:

- Putting community business at the heart of a fairer economy;
- Building resilient community businesses and equipping them for the future; and
- Driving a more diverse and equitable sector.

As part of this new strategy, Power to Change are looking to support community enterprise leaders and provide them with the space, time and skills to drive forward solutions to address society's biggest challenges. 'Leading the Way' is a new programme focusing on strengthening community leadership across the North East and Yorkshire and the Humber. It offers a tailored learning programme and a grant to support the development of community enterprise leaders and the impact of their organisation. According to the Virgin Money Foundation and Power to Change theories of change, this will then lead to more resilient and durable community business sector and places.

NCVO have joined the Leading the Way programme as their learning and impact partner. There are four priority learning objectives for this work, to capture both process and formative learning, as well as summative (outcome) learning focussed on the programme as a whole. We framed these as learning questions which are summarised in the table below.

Learning questions (LQ)		
LQ 1	Outcome	The extent to which the programme has helped to develop community enterprise leaders' individual level outcomes (skills, confidence, resilience and networks)
LQ 2		The extent to which these individual level outcomes bring about positive change within the community enterprise (and potentially the wider community)
LQ 3	Process	How best to deliver support to community enterprises to enable effective leadership (as our theory of change suggests, this will contribute to a more resilient sector)
LQ 4		How the Leading the Way programme can be improved to better serve community enterprises and the places that they operate in

The first step in this work was to review the existing Leading the Way and Power to Change theories of change, as well as the Power to Change impact and learning plan, to gather an initial list of draft outcomes. In a subsequent outcomes framework workshop, key Leading the Way stakeholders took part in activities to refine and prioritise outcomes, and review proposed data collection tools.

Data collection tools

The data collection tools outlined in the original learning and impact partner proposal are as follows:

- A 'pulse' survey to be run three times with each cohort of enterprise leaders
- Interviews with delivery staff in each region to focus on learning in the first round, and outcomes and the implementation of recommendations in the second round.
- Focus groups with enterprise leaders to focus on learning in the first round, then the implementation of recommendations and exploration of outcomes in the second round. Focus groups will also explore the impact of peer relationship and networks.
- Site visits of cohort 1 organisations (x4 in June/July 2023) to include:
 - Walking interviews with the enterprise leader to allow for an exploration of the community whilst exploring the leader's relationship to the area, spatially locating the learning and focusing on the connection to place. This method allows for a collaborative meaning-making process, highly relevant due to the place-based nature of this programme. Accessible options/alternatives can also be provided.
 - Outcome mapping workshop with the enterprise leader, organisational stakeholders and community members to explore the mechanisms by which the top level organisational outcomes have been achieved, and why. This is a crucial opportunity to bring community stakeholders together and reflect on the programme.
 - If possible, we would also use this opportunity to observe any programme delivery that is happening on site, or an organisational activity.
 - Secondary data analysis, using monitoring and evaluation data collected by delivery partners and community enterprises themselves.
 - Additionally, we are collecting reflections, feedback and learning through a Miro board at the fortnightly delivery partner meetings.

Learning Domains

Process learning and iterative feedback will predominantly focus on specific learning domains and associated questions. These questions will primarily be answered through initial data collection from September 2022 – January 2023. In the early stages of the project, some of the key learnings can be captured in the fortnightly delivery partner meetings. The interim report will feed back on some of the key learnings.

N.B. These are not questions that would necessarily be asked directly to individuals/groups. They are overarching learning questions to guide our work and inform the design of data collection tools.

Domain	Associated questions
Effectiveness	<p>How is support most effectively delivered? How is the effectiveness of support affected by: Method of delivery (one to one; presentations; workshops; Q and A sessions) Location of delivery (online or face-to-face) Topic of delivery (financial sustainability; leadership styles; EDI etc) What skills are the leaders developing? Are these skills that they want or need to develop? To what extent are the leaders able to apply their new/improved skills in their roles? What effect is this having on their organisation/community?</p>
Adaptation	<p>To what extent is the programme being delivered according to plan? What has been the impact of any changes made to the programme as it is rolled out? How has the programme been adapted for each community leader and their different contexts? How has the process of adapting the programme gone? Are the iterative feedback loops working? What has been learned from adapting the programme?</p>
Quality	<p>What are the emerging strengths of the programme? How can they be built on for the second cohort? What are the emerging areas of development for the programme? How can they be integrated for the second cohort?</p>
Attribution	<p>How much can any changes experienced by leaders, organisations and communities be attributed to the LtW programme? What else is influencing any changes (external and internal context, other programmes or funding)?</p>
Reach / Responsiveness	<p>Is the programme reaching its intended audience? What aspects of the programme are leaders benefiting the most from? Is this different for different leaders/organisations? Have leaders felt able to step back from day-to-day work to formulate solutions to issues? What has enabled or inhibited their ability to step back from day-to-day work for the programme? How effective are the relationships between the community leaders and delivery partners? How much have leaders engaged in activities? What did/didn't they like?</p>

Domain	Associated questions
Networks and place	<p>How are peer networks developing? What is enabling and/or inhibiting the development of peer networks?</p> <p>What are the community leaders gaining and learning from their peers? How is this support different to that provided more formally through the programme?</p> <p>How important is geography/location to the development of peer networks?</p>
Unexpected learning	<p>What is happening as a result of the programme that we didn't expect? What changes have been observed (for leaders, organisations, communities)?</p> <p>What has surprised partners, community leaders and the Power to Change team?</p> <p>How does the programme compare to the initial expectations of community leaders, partners and the Power to Change team?</p> <p>How do any unexpected outcomes fit within our theories of change?</p> <p>What do any unexpected outcomes mean for building the evidence base in this area?</p> <p>What would have happened in the absence of the LtW programme?</p>
Outcomes	See below framework

Outcome framework

An outcome framework was devised to guide the impact element of this plan. We are defining some outcomes up front to help guide the work and the initial design of data collection tools. We are also keen to focus on allowing space for unexpected and emerging outcomes, which will in turn influence the design of further data collection tools. This framework can be updated as part of the learnings co-production workshop scheduled for January 2023 to integrate emerging outcomes and re-prioritise depending on what we have learnt so far.

Community level outcomes are not the main focus of this work, and as such, there is a line of accountability for this framework and the programme, between the organisational and community level outcomes. This means that the programme is not making claims of attribution to any changes above this level, and that this approach is not primarily designed to collect data about impact above this level. We will however capture any insights that do surface at this level, particularly through the case study site visits.

Outcome level	Outcome	Indicator	Data collection approach/ tool
Community leader	Leaders have better wellbeing	Self-reported levels of: 1 Stress Satisfaction with job Feeling that their job is worthwhile	Pulse survey Community leader focus groups Walking interviews
		Self-reported answers to wellbeing questions ²	Pulse survey
Community leader	Leaders are more resilient	Whether or not leaders have access to the tools they need to lead	Community leader focus groups Self-diagnostic tool (qualitative)
		Whether or not leaders have access to the resources they need to lead	Community leader focus groups Self-diagnostic tool (qualitative)
		Self-reported answers to resilience scale questions ³	Pulse survey
		What increased resilience means to the leaders	Community leader focus groups Walking interviews
		If leaders have engaged in future goal and strategy planning	Delivery partner interviews Pulse survey Walking interviews
Community leader	Increased confidence in their own leadership ability	How well leader understands their own leadership style	Learning day evaluations Delivery partner interviews Walking interviews
		How confident the leader feels about their ability to lead	Walking interviews Pulse survey
		Self-reported answers to self-efficacy questions ⁴	Pulse survey

1 Adapted from: <https://measure.whatworkswellbeing.org/measures-bank/job-satisfaction/>

2 Adapted from: Tinkler, L., & Hicks, S. (2011). Measuring subjective well-being. Office for National Statistics

3 Adapted from: <https://measure.whatworkswellbeing.org/measures-bank/brief-resilience-scale/>

4 Adapted from: <https://measure.whatworkswellbeing.org/measures-bank/gse/>

Outcome level	Outcome	Indicator	Data collection approach/ tool
Community leader	Better connected community leaders, with stronger peer networks	If the leader knows people in similar situations	Leader focus groups Walking interviews
		If the leader knows where to go for support if they need it ⁵	Leader focus groups Walking interviews
		How much the leader is sharing skills and knowledge with their peers	Leader focus groups Delivery partner interviews
		Self-reported: how connected the leader feels whether they report having stronger networks	Pulse survey Walking interviews
Community leader	Leaders feel better able to respond to the needs of their community and wider societal challenges	Whether leader feels they understand the needs of their community	Leader focus groups Walking interviews
		Whether leader feels they can respond to the needs of their community	Leader focus groups Walking interviews
		Whether the leader reports feeling they can respond to wider societal challenges	Leader focus groups Walking interviews
Community leader	Improved technical skills required for effective leadership	Identification of technical skills required	Self-diagnostic tool (qualitative) Delivery partner interviews
		Change in level of technical skills	Self-diagnostic tool (qualitative) Learning day evaluations Delivery partner interviews Walking interviews
Community leader	Unexpected/emerging outcomes	What other changes leaders report experiencing	Leader focus groups Walking interviews
		What other changes delivery partners report observing	Delivery partner interviews Miro reflective board Workshops
		What other changes Power to Change staff report observing	Monthly catch-ups Miro reflective board Other informal feedback Workshops

Outcome level	Outcome	Indicator	Data collection approach/ tool
Organisational	Organisations are more resilient	If organisations are more financially sustainable	Delivery partner interviews Self-diagnostic tool (qualitative)? Walking interviews
		If internal systems have been streamlined or improved	Delivery partner interviews Self-diagnostic tool (qualitative) Leader focus groups
		If the requisite staff/volunteer roles are in place	Delivery partner interviews Self-diagnostic tool (qualitative) Leader focus groups
		Whether there are more diverse skills among: Staff Volunteers The board	Delivery partner interviews Self-diagnostic tool (qualitative) Leader focus groups
		If levels of wellbeing have improved within the organisation	Leader focus groups Walking interviews
		Whether or not there are succession plans in place	Delivery partner interviews Self-diagnostic tool (qualitative) Walking interviews
		What increased resilience means for organisations	Community leader focus groups Walking interviews
		Confidence in the future of the organisation	Walking interviews Case study site visits - workshops
Organisational	Unexpected/ emerging outcomes	What other changes leaders report observing in their organisations	Leader focus groups Walking interviews
		What other changes staff/ volunteers/board members report observing in their organisations	Case study site visits - workshops Case study site visits - observations
		What other changes delivery partners and Power to Change staff report observing in their organisations	Delivery partner interviews Miro reflective board Monthly catch-ups Other informal feedback

Outcome level	Outcome	Indicator	Data collection approach/ tool
Community	Organisations deepen their impact in communities	Whether or not there is increased engagement with community What organisations demonstrate in their own impact reports	Case study site visits – workshops Case study site visits - observations Organisation's own impact reporting
Community	Communities are better to live and work in	What people in the community say about their community	Case study site visits – workshops Case study site visits - observations

APPENDIX 2: ADAPTATION TO EVALUATION DESIGN



Initial design of the evaluation

The evaluation was initially designed to gather data through:

- a 'pulse' survey administered by NCVO to all participating leaders at three different timepoints
- interviews with delivery staff to focus on learning at the interim evaluation, and outcomes and the implementation of recommendations at the final evaluation.
- focus groups with leaders to focus on learning in the first round, then the implementation of recommendations and exploration of outcomes in the second round
- three site visits with case study organisation to include:
 - participatory outcomes mapping workshops with stakeholders at each organisation
 - walking interviews with stakeholders at each organisation
 - observations of delivery if possible
- analysis of secondary data from participating organisations and delivery partners.

Changes from the initial design

Leaders felt the focus group for the interim report ate into their learning time and, in consultation with Power to Change staff, it was decided that the second round of focus groups would be replaced with extended interviews with delivery staff, additional questions on the third pulse survey and a fourth site visit.

By the time the interviews took place for the final report, SSE were no longer involved in delivering the programme and so the third interview took place with a delivery partner from within Power to Change.

APPENDIX 3: PULSE SURVEY



Leading the way Community leaders survey: 1 of 3 August 2022

Introduction

Hello Community Leaders. This survey is part of the learning and impact process for the Leading the Way programme. NCVO are acting as the learning and impact partner for the programme, and we are carrying out this survey which aims to:

- Gather learning around what changes are happening for you as a result of the programme
- Identify any insights about how the programme is going which would help improve it for the future

Please fill out this survey by the 8th of September. It should take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete.

We will anonymise your answers so you will not be identifiable in any reporting. If you have any questions, please get in touch with Lucy, Evaluation Consultant at NCVO: lucy.lernelius@ncvo.org.uk

Basic information

1. Which region is your organisation based in?

- a. North East
- b. Yorkshire and the Humber

2. Which events have you attended as part of the Leading the Way programme so far?

- a. Learning day 1
- b. Learning day 2
- c. Learning day 3

About you

First, we'd like to ask you some questions about how you feel about yourself and your life

3. Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?

a. A scale of 0 to 7, where 0 is "not at all" and 7 is "completely".

4. Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are worthwhile?

a. A scale of 0 to 7, where 0 is "not at all" and 7 is "completely"

5. How strongly to you agree or disagree with the following statements (5 point likert scale answer, strongly disagree to strongly agree):

- a. I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times.
- b. I can manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.
- c. It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.
- d. I am confident that I know how to handle unexpected events.
- e. I can remain calm when facing difficulties
- f. When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.

About your role

6. How satisfied are you with your present job overall?

- a. A scale of 0 to 7, where 0 is "not at all" and 7 is "completely"
- b. 7. Please explain the rating you've given yourself

How confident do you feel in your ability to lead your organisation?

- a. A scale of 0 to 7 where 0 is “not at all” and 7 is “completely”
- b. Please explain the rating you’ve given yourself

About the programme**8. We’re interested in the development of peer networks through the programme. Can you tell us about:**

- a. How connected you feel to the other community leaders
- b. How strong you feel your networks of support are

9. Have you noticed any changes as a result of the programme so far?

- a. For yourself
- b. For your organisation
- c. For your community

10 Has anything happened that has surprised you, or that you didn’t expect?

- a. Comment box

Thank you very much for filling in this survey. We’ll be in touch about further learning and impact evaluation activities. In the meantime, do get in touch with Lucy at NCVO if you have any questions: lucy.lernelius@ncvo.org.uk

Community leaders survey: 3 of 3 July 2023**Introduction**

Hello Community Leaders. This survey is the final of a series exploring the learning and impact for the Leading the Way programme. NCVO have been acting as the learning partner for the programme, and we are carrying out this final survey which aims to:

- gather learning around what changes have happened for you as a result of the programme

- identify any insights about how the programme is going which would help improve it for the future.
- Please fill out this survey by 16 June 2023. It should take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

We will anonymise your answers so you will not be identifiable in any reporting. If you have any questions, please get in touch with Carol, Evaluation Consultant at NCVO: carol.jennions@ncvo.org.uk

Basic information**1. Which region is your organisation based in?**

- a. North East
- b. Yorkshire and the Humber

About you

First, we’d like to ask you some questions about how you feel about yourself and your life

2. Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?

- a. A scale of 0 to 7, where 0 is “not at all” and 7 is “completely”.

3. Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are worthwhile?

- a. A scale of 0 to 7, where 0 is “not at all” and 7 is “completely”

4. How strongly to you agree or disagree with the following statements (5 point likert scale answer, strongly disagree to strongly agree):

- a. I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times.
- b. I can manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.
- c. It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.
- d. I am confident that I know how to handle unexpected events.
- e. I can remain calm when facing difficulties
- f. When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.

5. How strongly do you agree that any positive changes to the above scores between the surveys to your participation in the Leading the Way programme?

- a. A scale of 0 to 7, where 0 is “strongly disagree” and 7 is “strongly agree”
- b. Please explain the rating you’ve given yourself

About your role

6. How satisfied are you with your present job overall?

- a. A scale of 0 to 7, where 0 is “very dissatisfied” and 7 is “very satisfied”
- b. Please explain the rating you’ve given yourself

7. How confident do you feel in your ability to lead your organisation?

- a. A scale of 0 to 7 where 0 is “not at all confident” and 7 is “extremely confident”
- b. Please explain the rating you’ve given yourself

The following questions are new. As above, we’d like you to explore what has changed as a result of the Leading the Way Programme.

8. How strongly to you agree or disagree with the following statements (a scale of 0-7 where 0 is “strongly disagree” and 7 is “strongly agree”):

- a. I have increased understanding of my own leadership style
- b. I feel less stressed these days in my leadership role
- c. I have more connections with people in a similar leadership position to me (beyond my peers on this course)
- d. I know of new resources or channels of support, should I need them

About your community

9. How far do you feel you agree that you can better respond to the needs of your community?

- a. A scale of 0-7 where 0 is “strongly disagree” and 7 is “strongly agree”
- b. Please explain the rating you’ve given yourself

10. How far do you feel that you are in a better position to be able to respond to wider challenges now?

- a. A scale of 0-7 where 0 is “strongly disagree” and 7 is “strongly agree”

About your organisation

11. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements (a scale of 0-7 where 0 is “strongly disagree” and 7 is “strongly agree”):

As a result of this programme ...

- a. Our internal systems have been streamlined or improved
- b. My organisation has a stronger staff base
- c. There are more diverse skills among staff
- d. There are more diverse skills among volunteers
- e. There are more diverse skills among the board
- f. Levels of wellbeing have improved within the organisation
- g. We have engaged in future planning eg developing a new strategy

About the peer networks

12. We're interested in the development of peer networks through the programme. Please tell us how much you agree with the following statements (a scale of 0-7 where 0 is "strongly disagree" and 7 is "strongly agree"):

- a. I feel connected to other community leaders
- b. I have strong networks of support in my work life
- c. I plan to maintain contact with my peers from the programme once it is finished

13. Do you have any examples of skills and knowledge gained through the programme that you have shared with your peers?

- a. Comment box

Final questions

14. What's the biggest change that's happened as a result of the programme?

- a. Comment box

15. Have you noticed any other changes as a result of the programme so far that we have not covered above? (comment boxes)

- a. For yourself
- b. For your organisation
- c. For your community

16. Is there anything else that may have contributed to any of the changes above, beyond your involvement in the programme?

- a. Comment box

17. Is there anything that may have hindered any of the changes listed from happening?

- a. Comment box

18. What do you think would have happened in terms of your professional and organisational development if you had not participated in this programme?

- a. Comment box

19. Do you have any other feedback you would like to share about the Leading the Way programme?

- a. Comment box

Thank you very much for filling in this survey. Do get in touch with Carol at NCVO if you have any questions: carol.jennions@ncvo.org.uk

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