

Cynefin Cardiff Solutions Report

Luke Rice 2013



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1.0 - Introduction

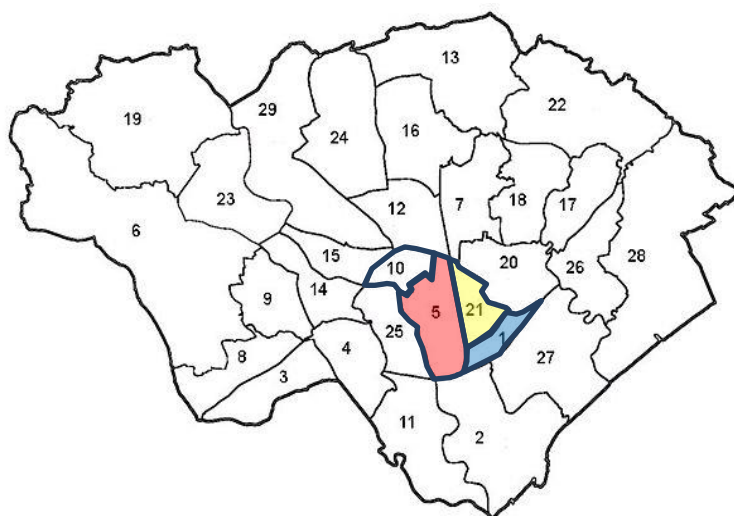


Cynefin is a Welsh Government funded programme managed and co-ordinated by Severn Wye Energy Agency.

The aim of Cynefin is to test and develop new processes for supporting people in local places and to engage them in effective policy making for sustainability, in order:

1. To build on people's sense of pride in place and environment
2. To enable policy making at all levels to better understand and respond to the needs of local people and places
3. To develop new processes by which local people can identify and feel empowered to negotiate their shared priorities and draw down support they need from government and other agencies.

The south east Cardiff ward cluster of Adamsdown, Cathays and Plasnewydd has been chosen as the place of focus. The area offers a unique opportunity to explore the 'sense of place' for transient communities and students living in these areas (as well as longer term residents affected by the constantly changing population).



- | |
|--|
| 1. Adamsdown
5. Cathays
21. Plasnewydd/Roath |
|--|

Around 49,000 people live in the three wards (37,000 in 2001) with a mean age of 25 years old (32 in 2001). Those living in the areas are mainly young, transient residents including: students, professionals, families and Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups as well as the established (but shrinking) proportion of long term 'born and bred' residents.

The cluster is one of the most densely populated in Wales with little green space (although there are large parks in the adjacent wards and in the commercial section of Cathays). There is a high proportion of rented terraced housing (privately in Cathays and Plasnewydd – social housing in Adamsdown) much of which has been converted into flats and/or houses of multiple occupancy (HMO).

Initial analysis highlighted that the wards suffer from similar issues facing inner city suburbs throughout the UK. There are problems with alcohol related anti-social behaviour, waste and local environmental quality (waste/litter/fly tipping/graffiti), poor quality housing stock, fuel poverty, pockets of deprivation and burglary. However, there is a great pool of young, highly-educated, talented people living in the area that come from many different places and backgrounds. Residents are attracted to the area due to its close proximity to the city centre/university campuses and have an abundance of local amenities closely available to them.

On the 15th August 2013, after three months of place based research, a Cynefin Cardiff Community Visioning Event was held in the Gate Arts Centre. The main aims of the event were to:

1. Discover:
 - What residents felt were the main social, environmental and economic challenges currently facing the Cynefin Cardiff areas
 - What opportunities exist that could address these challenges
 - What risks are involved in making these opportunities a reality
2. Gather ideas/visions regarding what would make the areas greener, better, healthier, happier... places to live and work
3. Establish some potential project ideas to try and make these visions a reality
4. Gain commitment from residents to form future working groups
5. Create an environment where people could meet, have fun, eat nice food and talk about shared goals

In total 50 residents turned up for a 2.5 hour evening session. The aims were largely achieved thanks to a passionate and enthusiastic response from all who attended.

Immediately after the event all the data and information was compiled, analysed and presented in a short report (available on request). Certain similar themes, visions and priorities emerged frequently and these were presented in the report, which was distributed to all attendees for comment.

Following this a further event was organised with professionals (linked to the emergent themes), politicians, academics, businesses and a small sample of residents invited to discuss possible solutions.

On the 26th September 2013 a Cynefin Cardiff Solutions Event took place in the National Museum Cardiff. The main aims of the event were for the audience to:

- Hear about the challenges facing the Cynefin Cardiff areas
 - The effects of resource depletion/litter/fly tipping, rising transportation costs, food poverty/lack of growing space & skills, urban blight, rising energy costs, community breakdown etc.
- Hear about the priority visions that emerged from the community event:
 - Cynefin Cardiff areas will be: **clean & attractive (Increase recycling/reuse – decrease in litter/fly tipping), safe/easy to walk and cycle, beautiful and artistic, free from urban blight and will have easy access to more growing space.**
- Come up with ideas about how we can make these visions a reality/tackle the challenges.
- Commit to join working groups, which involve residents, to move the project ideas forward (planning and delivering using co-production).

Over 40 professionals took part in a 3 hour session that was full of energy, vibrancy and good ideas. In addition, the event created some interesting links between attendees that might not have happened otherwise.

With the correct professional support, co-ordination and community enthusiasm the Cynefin Cardiff programme can make a real difference to the residents living in these areas.

The remainder of the report will present the project ideas, on a vision by vision basis, that emerged from the Solutions Event. Much of the report represents my interpretation of what was said at the event and comprises the information that could be deciphered from notes that were produced on the day. Interestingly, many of the project ideas overlap many of the themes.

2.0 - Table 1: Waste and Local Environmental Quality



The community vision: Cynefin Cardiff will be a clean and attractive place.

Contributors: Cardiff Council (Waste Management), Welsh Government (Waste Management), Keep Wales Tidy, Fly Tipping Action Wales, Wales Millennium Centre and Recipro (Construction Waste Reuse).

2.1 - Background

Traditionally, residents who live in the Cynefin wards separate less of their waste for recycling (dry recycling, food waste and garden waste) than almost all of the other wards in the city. Throughout the Cynefin wards food waste is collected in a solid plastic container and dry recycling is collected mixed, in green bags (both collected weekly). General waste is mainly collected in black wheeled bins in Cathays but is generally collected in black bags in Adamsdown and Plasnewydd (collected fortnightly). Additionally, some households have green wheeled bins for garden waste but most households present this waste in biodegradable bags (collected fortnightly). One result of the variant collection frequencies is that waste bags and bins are regularly placed out for collection on the incorrect day or week.

Local environmental quality (LEQ) is mainly associated with fly tipping, litter, dog fouling and graffiti and these issues are prominent in all of the wards. This is partly due to the transient nature of the population (not understanding the collection system), the presence of many fast food outlets and issues involving vermin, pets and seagulls ripping open waste bags.

Furthermore, the area suffers from regular incidents of fly tipping and graffiti. Collectively the 3 wards received nearly 16% of the city's recorded fly tipping and graffiti reports. It must be noted that Cardiff Council do a lot of work trying to mitigate these issues. However, waste and LEQ came up very prominently in the community visioning event.

2.2 – Project Considerations

- With all projects it is important to prioritise the waste hierarchy (promoting prevention, reuse and recycling over other waste disposal options).
- Residents have a Duty of Care to always use registered waste carriers and to check where their waste is going (particularly with bulky waste disposal such as furniture and white goods).
- It is important to remember to make use of Cardiff Council's existing Education and Enforcement team who work in the Cynefin areas.

- Proper utilisation of the Cardiff Green Map, which has been populated by Transition Cardiff, should be considered.
- The effective use of social media and attendance at PACT meetings to communicate project ideas is essential.
- Any project ideas should expand links with the Environmental Champions (the student environmental volunteering group).
- The organisation Recipro can offer surplus building/construction/trade materials to community groups.
- It is important to consider how authorities/communities get residents to accept responsibility for waste and vulnerability to change is accepted.
- It is important to tackle issues at street level.

2.3 - Potential Project Ideas

1. The student led 'Environmental Champions' community volunteering programme could be developed further. Environmental Champions could be utilised to conduct street cleanliness surveys and work with relevant agencies to develop and implement intervention strategies. This would both teach volunteers new, transferable skills that are attractive in a competitive job market whilst improving their local environment. This could also be expanded to include local residents.
2. There could be an increase in planting flowers around tree bases on streets (lots of household waste gets placed around the bases of trees). A small trial on Bedford Street – Plasnewydd suggests that planting in this way can reduce incidents of incorrect waste presentation.
3. Partners and the community could run a waste 'swap shop/stuff for free/swishing' style event. This could be done in one of the many empty buildings or in existing community centres.
4. Partners and residents could trial a project that aims to improve the cleanliness of front gardens (in some streets many front gardens are full of waste). Potentially, there could be an offer of incentives to those who participate. This could link with DIY streets, which is a Sustrans led programme.
5. Residents could reuse old wool to decorate trees (tree art/yard bombing).
6. A series of up-cycling events could take place where residents are taught skills in repairing, maintaining and re-designing their existing products/clothes etc.
7. Relevant partners could run a 'design a litter bin' competition.
8. Partners could run a 'creative bin storage' competition, perhaps with a grass roof (collaborative working between Cardiff Council, Recipro and property owners).
9. A scheme could be set up whereby a 'cargo' bike could be hired by or lent to residents who don't have a car (and who are fit enough) to take any bulky waste to a local Civic Amenity site.
10. The development of a 'Litter Champions' group in the area could be beneficial.

2.4 - Key Partners

- Residents
- Community groups
- Communities 1st
- Cardiff Council
 - Waste Management
 - Neighbourhood Management
- Keep Wales Tidy
- Tidy Towns
- Ward Councillors
- Recipro
- Universities
- Recreate
- Education establishments
- Cardiff 3rd Sector Council
- Sustrans
- Arts/growing groups
- Fly Tipping Action Wales

3.0 - Table 2: Sustainable Transport and Active Travel



The community vision: Cynefin Cardiff will be a safe place to walk and cycle.

Contributors: Cardiff Council (Cycling Officer), SWEA, Welsh Government (People and the Environment), Ramblers Cymru, Pedal Power/Parish Warden for Cathays, Cardiff University (Sustainable Places Institute).

3.1 - Background

The Cynefin Cardiff wards are inner-city, residential suburbs and there are many busy roads running through the area. There are bike lanes on some of these roads, but many do not have any provision for cyclists. Cardiff Council has produced a map that highlights safe cycling and walking routes around the city and currently offers free 1:1 cycling training for those who do not feel confident enough to cycle on the road.

The 2011 census statistics highlight that (significantly) more people living in the Cynefin Cardiff areas cycle and walk to work than the average Cardiff resident. In addition, more people commute by bus (Cathays aside) and relatively low amounts of residents drive to work when compared to the Cardiff average. Furthermore, the statistics show an increase in sustainable and active commuting and a decrease in using cars when compared to the 2001 census. This can partly be explained by the demographic (students, young professionals, deprived communities), geographical positioning (close to the city centre) and the abundance of local amenities in all three wards.

Despite the positive statistical evidence, many residents that attended the Cynefin Community Visioning Event stated that they did not feel safe when walking and cycling. Increasing the amount of bike stands, improving road and pavement surfaces, having accessible (and interesting) alleyways, improving cycle routes and addressing accessibility/navigation issues particularly around the Newport Road/Albany Road junction were some of the concerns discussed that evening.

3.2 - Potential Project Ideas

1. Develop and implement a “way marking” programme to help promote active travel and better connect the community with its assets.
2. Many dead ends have high kerbs in the Cynefin Cardiff area. A project that maps out these dead ends and installing drop kerbs would make cycling easier.

3. Improving the journey experience by making routes more attractive/green/artistic. It might involve the introduction of the Sustrans led DIY street concept. The land between dead end streets could provide an opportunity in this respect.
4. There is a new focus on the 'student experience' in Cardiff University. This could be capitalised on to promote sustainable transport use. *It should be noted that there is a Student Liaison Officer already working on a campaign that aims to tackle students bringing cars with them to university. In addition, Cardiff Council's Travel Planning Team will add this to work already being done with higher education institutions.
5. A project could develop where alley ways are 'Greened Up' in order to make them more attractive to walk and cycle through.
6. Projects that work with institutions and their Corporate Social Responsibility agendas to promote active travel to work could reduce traffic. This could be more than just a behaviour change project as it might include increased cycle storage/ showers – i.e. overcoming the barriers to behaviour change. *Similarly, the Travel Planning Team is currently doing some work in this field.
7. It was highlighted that the junction around Newport Road and Albany Road is very difficult to navigate for pedestrians/cyclists (parts have up to 6 lanes and it is very busy). This is acting as a barrier for people living in Adamsdown who might want to access the green space on the Penylan/Plasnewydd side of the road. A project aimed at addressing these issues could make the area easier to navigate and make green spaces more accessible.
8. Getting from the east of Cardiff (Cynefin areas) to the west of the city (and vice versa) is very difficult and can be unsafe when traveling on bike. Increasing the amount of 'shared use' paths (particularly on wide paths with low footfall) or relocating road space could make these routes more attractive for cyclists.
9. Run a series of bike shows (perhaps in schools) that promote different types of bikes (and alternative forms of transport) to the community.
10. Work with Cardiff Bus and local artists/local businesses to improve the 'waiting experience'.

3.3 - Key Partners

- Residents
- Community groups
- Communities 1st
- Cardiff Council
- FCFCG
- Ward Councillors
- Universities
- Ramblers Cymru
- Education establishments
- Cardiff 3rd Sector Council
- Sustrans
- Arts/growing groups
- Cardiff Bus
- Big Blue Bike

4.0 - Table 3: The Arts



The community vision: Cynefin Cardiff will be a beautiful and artistically thriving area.

Contributors: Adamsdown A3, Arts Council, Wales Millennium Centre, Cardiff University, Cardiff Council (Ward Councillors), Modern Alchemists (local arts collective), local artists/residents.

4.1 - Background

Many artists live in the Cynefin Cardiff area and many art galleries, theatre spaces and music venues are based in the area. In addition, there is a large art college in Adamsdown, a performing arts college in Cathays and an annual community art festival is held in Plasnewydd.

An increase in art projects emerged as priority from the community visioning event, particularly focusing on transforming unused buildings/land. Currently, some of these buildings are falling into disrepair and land is overgrown and full of rubbish due to long term neglect. This urban blight can attract anti-social behaviour such as fly tipping, graffiti tagging, arson and illegal drug use that can perpetuate the problems.

There are examples of projects in other parts of the UK (such as Stokes Croft, Bristol) which have shown how art led projects can 'turn areas around' and kick start regeneration. Some who attended the community visioning event cited Stokes Croft as an example of best practice and suggested that it could/should be emulated in Cardiff.

Rather than focusing on specific project ideas, attendees situated on the Arts Table discussed potential areas/buildings and the potential use of these buildings. In addition, much time was spent discussing the processes of delivering what could be a complex project.

4.2 - Processes and Considerations:

- Some buildings are being left to crumble and are currently blighting the community when they could be a community asset.
- Firstly, it is important to establish who the landlord/landowner is and to attain agreement to use the building and/or land for community purposes.
- Some buildings/land might be going through the planning stages – this could be problematic for long term solutions, however a 'meanwhile use' could still be agreed for temporary projects.

- Legal issues and concerns about health/safety/insurance when using these buildings or the empty land would need to be addressed.
- The cost associated with renovating a building to a standard that can be used by the community could be prohibitive.
- The community will (with the support of relevant agencies) need to show the potential by running small scale projects initially and by writing clear project proposals. Factored into any project proposal would need to be an awareness of the many funding options that are available for projects like these.
- It is important to attain 'buy-in' from the residents if community or social entrepreneurs are to use/run the buildings.
- In order to get advice it might be useful to visit and/or research places where this type of work already exists (e.g. Stokes Croft – Bristol).
- Is there demand for artist studio space? There are currently local art facilities/galleries that could be used/are underused (g39/The Gate) are more permanent spaces needed?
- The demographic has changed/changes regularly in the area. How do you maintain support for projects like this?
- This type of project will need the support and lobbying of Cardiff Council and Welsh Government.
- It is difficult to find a point of contact at Cardiff Council who can offer advice on these types of project.

4.3 - Potential Buildings/Areas of Focus:

- Former bowling alley (City Road)
- Former paint warehouse (City Road)
- Former wholefood outlet (City Road)
- Land next to Texaco petrol station (Newport Road)
- Empty bingo hall (Cathays Community Centre)
- Former garage (Albany Road)

4.4 - Potential Uses of the Buildings/Areas:

- Arts centre/gallery/café
- Artist studios
- Cinema/theatre
- Rehearsal space
- A combination of the above
- The land could be used for temporary displays/'pop up' exhibitions/restaurants (bowling alley/Texaco/garage)
- Land could be used for performance art

4.5 - Key Partners

- Arts Council for Wales
- Sherman Theatre
- g39/Gate/M.A.D.E
- Cathays Community Centre
- Local residents/artists
- Made in Roath (local arts festival)
- Adamsdown Arts Association
- Cardiff Council
- Ward Councillors
- Community groups
- Wales Millennium Centre
- Landlords
- Students/universities
- Schools/colleges
- Communities 1st
- Local businesses

5.0 - Table 4: Community Growing



The community vision: Cynefin Cardiff will be a place where people can easily grow food/plants.

Contributors: Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens (FCFCG), Cardiff Council (Parks and Allotments), Communities 1st, Transition Towns, Cathays Community Centre.

5.1- Background

The Cynefin Cardiff area is one of the most densely populated parts of Wales with nearly 50,000 people living in the three wards. Access to growing space for food and plants is very limited in the Cynefin Cardiff areas. There is no allotment space, gardens are often small, many people live in purpose built apartments or converted houses/bedsits that have little or no growing space.

There are three small community garden projects already operating in two of the wards. In Plasnewydd there is the Mackintosh Community Garden (currently not constituted) and the more established Plasnewydd Community Garden. In addition, an Environmental Action Group run a community garden in Adamsdown. All three operate slightly differently and have varying levels of successful engagement with the local community.

There appears to be a real desire from residents, Cardiff Council and other agencies to increase access to growing space Cardiff generally. Although the Cynefin area is much urbanised there is an aspiration to use the small amount of available land for food growing, even if it is on a temporary basis.

5.2 – Project Considerations

- There are a lot of potential links with the arts/urban regeneration and waste management.
- It is important to bring communities together (those with growing skills and those without).
- The promotion of any project could be disseminated by Communities 1st ‘Street Reps’, through door knocking or through distribution of small promotional growing packs.
- It is important to support the existing keen residents as well as recruit new members to projects.

- Some of these projects will have to have the consent of landowners and assurances will need to be given to Cardiff Council.

5.3 - Potential Project Ideas

1. Temporary raised beds could be placed on unused land for growing food/plants.
2. Installation of a 'roving orchard': fruit trees on pallets, placed on unused land in an area. When land is needed they can be moved to another location.
3. Groups/residents could plan and deliver a 'Green Alley' (Gully Gardens) project.
4. There is a potential opportunity to work with a local charity (e.g. Llamau or YMCA) to develop temporary allotments on land off Oxford Street. Work could be carried out with their service users and other relevant partners. This could be organised in a similar way to the Swansea based 'Vetch Veg' project (where individuals are responsible for their own small patches of land).
5. A project could develop whereby vacant shop windows are used to display growing installations.
6. Community groups could take over vacant buildings (on a temporary basis) and use the space as community garden centres.
7. A project could develop whereby groups install temporary planters along transport links/streets with high footfall. These planters would 'green up' the areas and provide information about planting/community gardens etc (perhaps using QR code?). Key streets to include:
 - Clifton Street
 - City Road
 - Albany Road
 - Cathays Terrace
 - Salisbury Road
 - Crwys Road
8. Residents and community groups could be provided with planter 'start up kits' to encourage growing.
9. A project could be set up to help connect those who 'cannot/do not want to' use their front/back garden space with those who would like land to grow produce.
10. An event like Made in Roath (arts festival) called Grown in Roath could be developed to celebrate private and community garden projects.

5.4 – Key Partners

- FCFCG
- Communities 1st
- Transition Towns
- Cardiff Council
- Groundwork
- Community groups
- Residents
- YMCA
- Ward Councillors
- LLamau

6.0 - Table 5: Urban Regeneration and Community Energy



Community vision: Cynefin Cardiff will be a community free of urban blight.

Contributors: Cardiff Council (Strategic Planning/Sustainable Development), SWEA, Wales Millennium Centre, Prince's Trust, Renew Wales, Local businesswoman and resident.

6.1 - Background

During the first months of Cynefin Cardiff area research, it quickly became apparent that there are many empty, vandalised and underutilised buildings as well as various patches of undeveloped land in the three wards. Contact with Planning Department at Cardiff Council revealed that many of these vacant properties have been so for many years. The issues associated with these vacant properties and a desire that they should be brought back into use emerged from the Cynefin community visioning event.

In addition, research has shown that fuel poverty is prevalent in the Cynefin areas. There is a desire to see the development of community renewable energy schemes.

6.2 - Processes and Considerations

- It is essential to acquire or develop a list of the owners of vacant properties in the area.
- Invite landlords/landowners to a focus group, with professionals who can give advice on what can happen with the buildings.
- Survey the community, organisations and arts community to establish what the buildings/land could be used for and where the greatest demand is.
- Research best practice (Jacobs Market - Cardiff, Hamilton House – Bristol)
- Investigate and present current business rates/benefits for landowners (If the vacant property is occupied for non-commercial use there are certain tax benefits).
- Get support through organisations Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to support technical elements of the process.
- Investigate what grants/funds and support for communities is available (Big Lottery, Prince's Trust etc).
- Write business plans to propose to council/landowners.
- Support needs to be provided to set up a social enterprise to take over a building or existing organisations/groups need to be found.

- Identify community buildings that could be improved (energy efficiency/renewables).

6.3 – Potential Urban Regeneration Project Ideas

1. To bring old buildings back into use (some on a long term basis and some on a 'meanwhile use' basis) Ideas could include:
 - Artist studios
 - Community hub space
 - Social entrepreneur office space
 - Cinema
 - Gallery
 - Other use
2. To use empty shops for community use/artistic displays/for temporary “try out” shops.
3. Use empty land for growing or artistic projects (on a short/medium/long term basis).

6.4 – Potential Community Energy Project Ideas

1. Create an energy club to:
 - Bulk buy photovoltaic panels
 - Bulk buy insulation
 - Switch energy collectively
2. Organise an “Energy Neighbourhoods” competition. This involves a group of 5-15 households coming together as a team with the aim of reducing their individual and collective home energy consumption.
3. Help a community building or buildings become more energy efficient.

6.5 - Key Partners

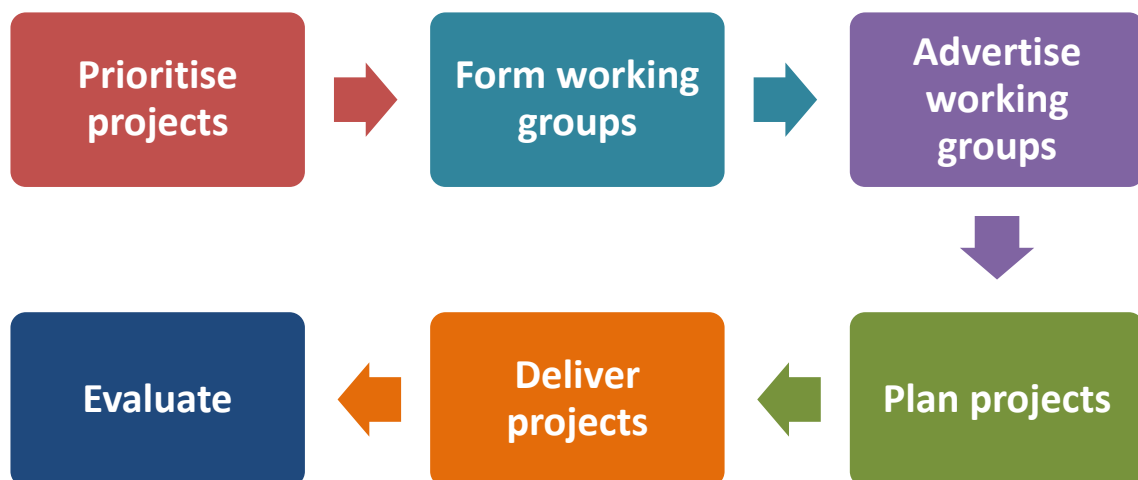
- Landowners/landlords
- Arts Council of Wales
- Community groups
- Residents
- Cardiff Council
- Local Councillors
- Development Trust Association
- Prince’s Trust
- Big Lottery
- Universities
- FCFCG
- Communities 1st
- Renew Wales
- Art groups
- Cardiff 3rd Sector Council
- Energy Saving Trust/SWEA

7.0 – Conclusion and Next Steps



The Cynefin Cardiff Solutions Event was a successful exercise which largely achieved its aims. Professionals and a small selection of residents joined together to focus on the current challenges and visions that emerged from the community visioning event. Some interesting potential project ideas developed and participants appeared genuinely excited by the opportunities that arose.

The next steps will involve prioritising project ideas and forming working groups that include professionals and residents. A simple flow chart below highlights the upcoming milestones:



This programme is still in its relative infancy but there are clear signs that residents, with the support of relevant professionals can make a positive impact on the areas in which they work, live and play.