People's Voice Media
Learning, Impact and Evaluation Report
2025/2026

THROUGH STORYTELLING, PEOPLE'S VOICE MEDIA CONTINUES TO CHAMPION SOCIAL JUSTICE, FOSTER INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES, AND DRIVE SYSTEMIC CHANGE ACROSS SECTORS.



Sarah Henderson
Head of Knowledge, Insight & Practice
People's Voice Media
October 2026

https://peoplesvoicemedia.co.uk
https://communityreporter.net
enquiries@peoplesvoicemedia.co.uk

People's Voice Media
Connecting Communities

Esmée Fairbairn FOUNDATION

Head Office: The Fort Offices, Artillery Business Park, Park Hall, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY11 4AD.
Email: enquiries@peoplesvoicemedia.co.uk
Website: https://peoplesvoicemedia.co.uk
Company No:3083575
Charity No:1059681

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Executive Summary

This report brings together learning gathered between April 2025 and March 2026 to understand the impact of People's Voice Media's work and our progress towards our strategic goals. Through Community Reporting, lived experience storytelling, and collaborative learning processes, we continue to work towards a future where lived experience is valued as evidence, embedded into decision-making, and used to create more equitable research, services, and policies.

The evidence gathered this year demonstrates that what we are doing works. Our methodologies are helping people to be heard, supporting organisations to listen differently, and creating opportunities for communities to influence the decisions that affect their lives. At the same time, our learning has highlighted important challenges that we must address if we are to create the long-term systemic change we ultimately seek.

Key Numbers

During 2025/26, People's Voice Media:

- **Published** 201 lived experience stories
- **Delivered** 44 events, workshops and training sessions
- **Trained** 95 Community Reporters and 11 Community Reporter Trainers
- **Worked on** 11 social change projects
- **Engaged** approximately 700 people through activities and events
- **Continued** to strengthen and grow the Community Reporter Network across the UK and Europe

Where We Are Having Impact

Positioning lived experience as evidence

We continue to make significant strides in positioning Community Reporting as a valuable research tool and lived experience as a credible form of evidence. Our work is increasingly being recognised by researchers, academic institutions, and public sector organisations as a methodology that helps move research from studying people to positioning people as experts in their own lives.

Key indicators include:

- **97%** of participants reported a better understanding of how lived experience can be used as a research tool.
- Community Reporting was cited in the Social Care Wales Storytelling Framework.
- Our methodology was referenced in NHS publications seeking to improve services through lived experience insights.
- Partnerships with universities and research organisations continue to develop and grow.

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Whilst progress is strong, lived experience is not yet routinely informing research agendas and funding priorities from the outset. Achieving that shift remains an important next step in our direction of travel.

Humanising service development

Our work continues to support organisations to move beyond consultation and towards genuine co-production. Across multiple projects, we have seen professionals and organisations develop a deeper understanding of the value of listening to lived experience and involving people in decisions that affect them.

Key indicators include:

- **91%** of participants reported a better understanding of how lived experience can be used to improve services.
- Partners reported increased confidence in engaging communities and creating opportunities for people to influence change.
- The Lincolnshire project demonstrated the potential of local Community Reporter Networks to amplify voice and support lasting change.

The evidence suggests that where organisations genuinely buy into lived experience and Community Reporting, there is a real shift towards more equitable, inclusive, and responsive service development.

Influencing policy and decision-making

We are continuing to bridge the gap between communities and decisionmakers. Stories and insights gathered through Community Reporting are increasingly being used to influence conversations at local, regional, and national levels.

Key indicators include:

- **93%** of participants reported feeling better equipped to influence policy through storytelling.
- Learning from our projects has been used in policy discussions, parliamentary submissions, and sector-wide conversations.
- The Equipment Matters project led to further work supporting evidence-gathering for parliamentary lobbying activity.

Whilst we are seeing encouraging examples of policy influence, we continue to work towards a future where lived experience is routinely used to shape policy, commissioning, and funding decisions from the beginning rather than being brought in later in the process.

Advancing anti-racist practice

Being actively anti-racist remains central to our work. Throughout the year, we have continued to create spaces that platform Global Majority voices, support learning around structural inequalities, and encourage organisations to reflect on their own practice.

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Key indicators include:

- **100%** of respondents reported an improved understanding of how they and their organisations could tackle inequalities and be more inclusive.
- Our Anti-Racism in Co-Production work generated significant engagement and positive feedback.
- Anti-racism continued to inform our approach across projects, partnerships, and events.

Our learning shows that this work is valued and impactful. However, it has also prompted an important question: how do we move beyond learning and further into action that helps dismantle structural inequalities?

Challenges and Learning

Taking a Human Learning Systems approach means recognising that social change is rarely straightforward. Alongside evidence of impact, our learning identified several key challenges.

Information overload

Feedback highlighted that some training participants can experience information overload, particularly when support needs and digital confidence vary across groups. We also received feedback that elements of the Community Reporter website can act as barriers to participation and accessibility.

The challenge of the "empty chair"

Even when projects generate valuable insights and strong engagement, it can remain difficult to ensure that key decisionmakers are present to hear, reflect on, and act upon lived experience evidence.

Digital barriers and the AI question

The Community Reporter website no longer fully reflects our ambitions around accessibility and inclusion. At the same time, the rapidly evolving AI landscape presents opportunities and ethical challenges that require careful consideration. We remain committed to ensuring that technology enhances, rather than replaces, meaningful listening.

From learning to action

Our anti-racism journey has generated significant learning and reflection. The challenge now is understanding how we translate that learning into practical actions that help challenge and dismantle structural inequalities.

Creating transformative change

Whilst we continue to generate strong examples of transactional and transitional change, achieving transformative systems change remains a long-term ambition. We are still working towards a future where lived experience routinely informs funding, commissioning, policy, and research agendas from the outset.

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Priorities for 2026/27

Drawing on the learning from this year, we have identified four priority areas for action.

1. Enhancing Community Reporting as a research tool

- Improve our understanding and practice of knowledge mobilisation through co-production with our network.
- Create resources for academics and researchers on the use of lived experience in research.
- Launch Responsible Storytelling and Ripple Effect Mapping workshop offers.

2. Embedding lived experience in service development

- Develop a local authority model based on learning from Lincolnshire.
- Strengthen long-term impact planning within partner projects.
- Improve impact evidence-gathering methods and embed them within our offers.

3. Strengthening policy influence

- Produce resources focused on lived experience in policy and decision-making.
- Develop a long-term digital strategy for the Community Reporter platform.
- Improve how we evidence and track long-term systemic change.

4. Deepening anti-racist practice

- Invest in further anti-racism learning and development.
- Secure funding for the next phase of Anti-Racism in Co-Production.
- Continue strengthening accessibility, inclusion, and intersectional practice across our work.

In Summary

The evidence gathered during 2025/26 gives us confidence that our work is creating meaningful change. Through Community Reporting and lived experience approaches, we are helping communities to be heard, supporting organisations to listen differently, and creating opportunities for research, services, and policies to be shaped by the people most affected by them.

We are not yet where we want to be. Transformative change, where lived experience routinely shapes funding, research, service development, and policy from the outset, remains a long-term ambition. However, the direction of travel is clear. By continuing to learn, adapt, and work alongside communities and partners, we are contributing to a future where lived experience is recognised not as an addition to decision-making, but as an essential part of it.

IN SHORT: WHAT WE ARE DOING WORKS. OUR TASK NOW IS TO BUILD ON THAT LEARNING, STRENGTHEN OUR PRACTICE, AND CONTINUE CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR LASTING SOCIAL CHANGE.

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Impact Snapshot



Diagram 1: Key People's Voice Media numbers from 2025/26

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Introduction

About People's Voice Media

People's Voice Media is a civil society organisation established in 1995 that uses storytelling as a tool for social change in the UK and across Europe. As a team we:

- Learn and adapt
- Work collaboratively and equitably
- Act authentically and with integrity
- Come with optimism and joy

Our Board, team, and network of freelancers are a diverse group of people committed to working in this way to achieve our vision.

In 2007, we launched the Community Reporting methodology and began to build the Community Reporter Network. Community Reporting is a digital storytelling approach that supports people's participation in research, policymaking, service development, and decision-making processes. We know we cannot achieve our ambitions alone. The Community Reporter Network now spans the UK and Europe. It has 50+ active partner organisations across sectors in policy, research, and services, and has trained over 2,000 Community Reporters.

> *THE TRAINING HAS GIVEN US THE CONFIDENCE TO TRY NEW THINGS, TO ASK BETTER QUESTIONS, AND TO FIND DIFFERENT WAYS TO ENGAGE YOUNG PEOPLE SO THEIR VOICES ARE REALLY HEARD.* – **PARTNER ON THE BRONTE PROJECT**

The core objectives of our work are to:

- Enable people's lived experience to be heard, and provide platforms for marginalised voices
- Support people, communities and organisations to use lived experience to address inequalities and injustices
- Inform and influence services and policies so that they better meet people's needs and enable people to live well

OUR WORK WILL PUT LIVED EXPERIENCE AT THE HEART OF SERVICE IMPROVEMENT, POLICY DEVELOPMENT, AND RESEARCH PRACTICES.

To achieve this, we equip communities across the UK and Europe with the skills to both be heard and be agents of change. This work matters because it:

- Enables people to develop capacities and skills they can utilise in their communities to address the challenges they face

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- Drives forward people-led change in service delivery, creating effective, relevant services

- Changes power dynamics, supporting institutions to develop 'bottom-up' processes for working with communities

We are currently strategically scaling this innovative work and connecting learning from across communities and sectors to maximise the impact of people's individual stories. Community Reporting meets emerging trends and shifts in direction in service development, policymaking, and research approaches. These sectors are adopting more 'co-productive' techniques in their work and beginning to use lived experience as evidence. The policy landscape is also changing to accommodate this shift in thinking and practice. In short, a paradigm shift is happening, and Community Reporting is a part of it.

THE TIME FOR STORIES IS NOW.

Our Strategy

To play our role in this paradigm shift, we have four strategic goals:

1. Enhance Community Reporting's position as a research tool, and lived experience stories as a form of evidence
2. Embed Community Reporting and lived experience into service development and improvement
3. Use learning from the Community Reporter Network to influence and inform local, regional, and national policy change
4. Be actively anti-racist and use this as a lens through which we address structural inequalities

THIS WILL CENTRALISE LIVED EXPERIENCE IN SOCIETY AND WILL BE OUR CONTRIBUTION TO CREATING A JUST WORLD.

To achieve our social objective of mainstreaming the use of lived experience as a tool for communities to address the challenges they face, we want to increase the number of (a) services that use Community Reporting as a development tool, (b) policies developed using Community Reporter stories, and (c) research projects that are using Community Reporting as a core methodology.

To do this, we will work beyond silos, focusing on long-term change.

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What Makes People's Voice Media Different?

> *THE FACILITATOR EFFECTIVELY MANAGED WIDE-RANGING PARTICIPANT ABILITIES AND SET AN INCLUSIVE PACE –* **BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL COMMUNITY REPORTER PROJECT PARTICIPANT**

Many organisations claim to work with lived experience. Words such as 'co-production', 'participatory' and 'storytelling' are used by services, researchers and decision-makers regardless of the processes behind them and, sometimes, when all they are really doing is consultation.

Unfortunately, all too often, organisations work with lived experience in extractive, exploitative, and harmful ways, using stories to illustrate decisions rather than inform them. Meanwhile, people are forced to perform their trauma repeatedly without experiencing any change.

PEOPLE'S VOICE MEDIA IS COMMITTED TO WORKING WITH LIVED-EXPERIENCE STORYTELLERS IN A SAFE, RESPONSIBLE, AND ETHICAL WAY.

This shows up in our practices in several ways:

1. Embedding responsible storytelling practices into all our training programmes.
2. Offering wrap-around support for storytellers and ensuring they are not performing trauma.
3. Working with partners to ensure storytellers and co-producers are remunerated for their time and effort.
4. Being an actively anti-racist organisation.

In addition to this, we are also working towards:

- Making Community Reporting more accessible to all.
- Developing action plans to embed into our training so that storytellers and Community Reporters see the lasting impacts of the work.
- Developing responsible storytelling training to educate organisations already working with lived experience.
- Working towards a system change in which lived experience is consulted at all stages of funding and service development, including informing project planning stages.

WE ARE COMMITTED TO NON-EXTRACTIVE, NON-EXPLOITATIVE, TRAUMA-INFORMED LIVED EXPERIENCE THAT TACKLES INEQUALITY WITHOUT CONTRIBUTING TO IT.

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Our Learning, Impact and Evaluation Report

Since 2020, we have implemented a comprehensive learning, impact and evaluation process that captures the voices of those engaged with our work. This includes Community Reporters, Community Reporter trainers, residents, service professionals, policymakers and other stakeholders involved in our activities. As an organisation that understands the power of stories and lived experience, our approach has always centred storytelling and human insight. Over the years we have developed our approach to learning, impact measurement and the evaluation of our work – enhancing how we drive forward our organisation, deliver our strategic goals and are cognizant of the challenges we face and where changes to our approach are necessary.
This learning, impact, and evaluation report covers the period from April 2025 to March 2026. It presents the methods and structure we've used to support our learning and synthesises the results.

Method

Our learning, impact and evaluation process is directly connected to our strategic goals. It helps us to learn about our work as an organisation and supports how we implement, review, and measure against our current strategy. It has been designed to:

1. Identify and understand the impact of our work
2. Monitor and evaluate our progress towards our strategic goals
3. Support and enhance decision-making at strategic and operational levels

Our process has been developed iteratively over several years, incorporating elements from projects, processes, and methodologies as we've learned and grown. We have sought to put stories and human insight at the core – demonstrating what we advocate and using Community Reporting as a key method in this process. We have combined Community Reporting with other approaches that help us to understand the complexities of the change we are trying to make. We thank colleagues, partners and supporters who have helped us get to this point. Diagram 2 shows the main points in our journey.

Although if all this feels a bit jargon-y, you can skip to page 16 for the 'Too Long, Didn't Read' (TLDR) version.

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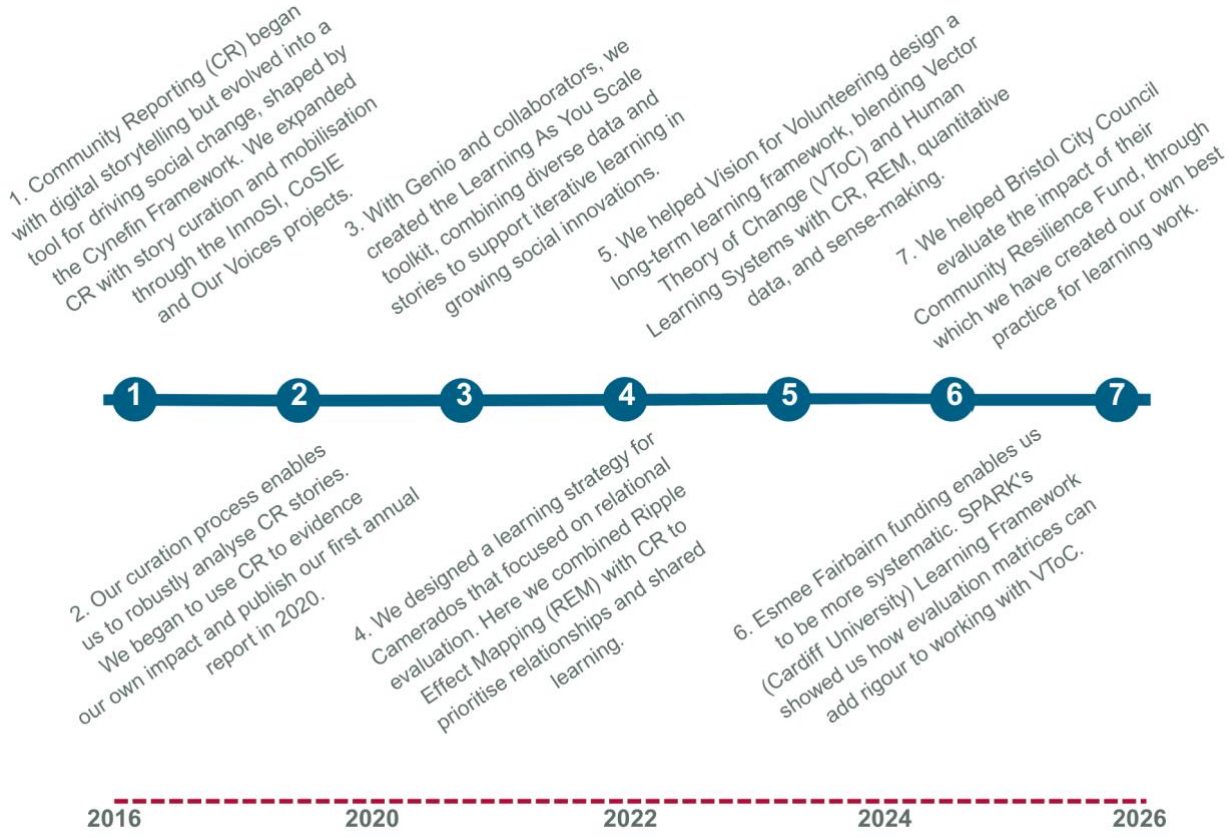

Diagram 2: Learning and evaluation development timeline

The Three Building Blocks of our Process

Iterative Learning Processes

An iterative learning process is a continuous cycle of testing, reflecting, and adapting to improve outcomes over time. To support this, we've used:

- **The Cynefin Framework (Snowden & Boone, 2007)** - This framework supports decision-making in different contexts. We've used the version for complex environments - the 'probe-sense-respond' framework - as the key structure for our learning process (see Diagram 3).
- **Vector Theory of Change (VToC) (Doyle, 2007)** - Traditional Theories of Change work well in ordered systems with clear cause and effect, but are less suited to complex, dynamic environments. Vector Theory of Change adapts this approach by focusing on an iterative four-step process, making large-scale change more manageable. Inspired by VToC, we've created direction of travel maps for each strategic goal to help us see our progress and work responsively toward future visions.

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Over the course of the learning cycle, we use a range of qualitative and quantitative data sources to chart our progress against our strategic goals. These core data streams are regularly gathered by the People's Voice Media team and are factored into project plans. One-off pieces of data are also gathered where appropriate and available. On page 19, we have colour-coded the different data streams. This is also the case on the direction of travel maps.

Relational Evaluation Practices

Relational evaluation emphasises learning through the connections, perspectives, and experiences shared between stakeholders. To support this, we've used:

- **Human Learning Systems (HLS) (Lowe et al., 2021)** - HLS is a way of managing public services that accepts the messiness of the real world. It builds strong relationships between public servants and the people they serve, allowing for deep understanding and tailored responses. At its heart is learning as a guiding strategy. It also adopts iterative learning - using cycles of action to support continual improvement. We've used this to inform how we create a deep understanding of our work in our team, Board and network.
- **Relationship-Centred Practice (Immy Robinson, 2024)** – This puts relationships first. It considers different layers such as intentions, behaviours, knowledge and skills, organisational conditions and external conditions that affect relationships. We incorporated this understanding into how we look for it in our learning and then how we implement it at different layers.

Impact Measurement

Impact measurement is the systematic assessment of how activities create meaningful change for people, communities, or systems. To support this, we've used:

- Ripple Effect Mapping (REM) (Chazdon et al, 2017) – REM is a participatory impact measurement tool that helps visualise the "ripples" or effects that spread out from a program, much like waves from a stone dropped in water. These ripples can include direct outcomes, indirect impacts, and even unintended consequences. We've used REM as a data stream to collect evidence of impact. We've also used Hansen's (2017) descriptions of impact when using REM to help us talk about the different ways we are creating change.
- Evaluation Matrix – This is a structured tool used to assess and compare different components based on a set of predefined criteria. We've developed our own matrix (see page 18) drawing on SPARK's Learning Framework (2025) to support us in mapping evidence of our impact to our direction of travel maps.

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Framing our Process

At the core of our process is the Cynefin Framework,[1] which provides the broad structure via these three stages (see Diagram 3 for a visual representation):

- **Probing**: Using a range of learning tools to gather insights on our activities, project findings and impact.
- **Sensing**: Working with our wider team and community to understand what the insights are telling us.
- **Responding**: Implementing what we learn to refine our practice and direction

This process is repeated annually and is essentially a formative evaluation process. Ongoing data-gathering throughout the learning process has been coupled with regular explorations of what learning is emerging from it amongst our team and network. It is a dynamic framework that provides a structure through which different forms of data can be analysed, including human insight. Each year will produce a summative report to showcase and share our learning.

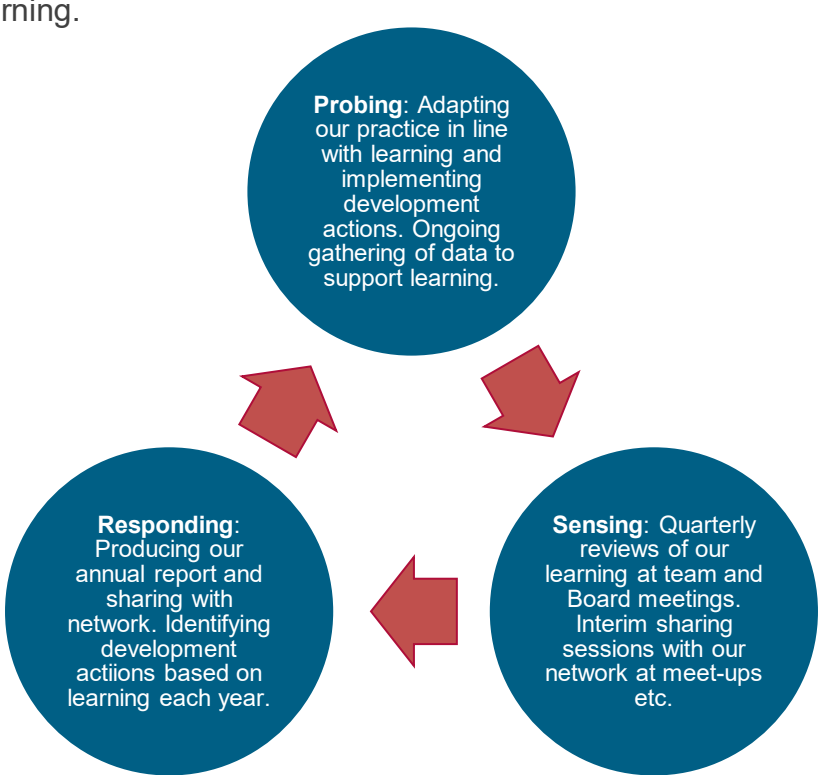

Diagram 3: People's Voice Media's learning process based on Cynefin Framework

[1] Cynefin (pronounced kuh-nev-in) is a Welsh word that signifies the various interlinked elements in our environment and experience that influence how we think, interpret and behave. The framework was designed initially to help leaders understand the challenges in their environment and make decisions in that context, using a sense-making approach.

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All of this is to say that we **actively listen and respond** to what our team, partners, co-producers, and network are telling us.

Too Long, Didn't Read

If you prefer the jargon-free overview of our method and don't need to know all the underpinning theory, etc., here it is:

1. **We practice what we preach:** We listen to feedback from our team, our partners, our network, our funders and, quite frankly, anyone else who has something useful to tell us. We ask people what they think and actively listen to their answers. We do this using a few different approaches, including Community Reporting and Ripple Effect Mapping, and we do it year-round.
2. **We don't keep it to ourselves:** As a team, we meet regularly to discuss what people are telling us. We don't just stick it in an email or in a feedback document gathering dust – we talk, we collaborate, and we generate ideas, and we put those ideas in reports like this one to hold ourselves accountable.
3. **We do the work:** We're always testing out our ideas and implementing them. We develop and evolve our offer based on what we've learned, and we make our work *better*. And then? We go back to step one, and the cycle continues.

Evaluation Matrix

The evaluation matrix in Diagram 4 shows how we categorise our levels of impact for each strategic goal, so we can monitor our direction of travel in each strategic area. As a reminder, our four strategic goals are:

1. Enhance Community Reporting's position as a research tool, and lived experience stories as a form of evidence
2. Embed Community Reporting and lived experience into service development and improvement
3. Use learning from the Community Reporter Network to influence and inform local, regional, and national policy change
4. Be actively anti-racist and use this as a lens through which we address structural inequalities

In Diagram 4, each strategic goal is assigned three levels of impact which are based on Hansen's (2017) model. These categorise the various types of impact based on their change-making capabilities.

- **Transactional Impacts** – These are *smaller, short-term changes*. Usually, they affect just one person or a small group and do not change the dominant beliefs or the structure of the community. Examples include one-off events or changes for individuals.

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- **Transitional Impacts** – These *mid-term changes* take place over a longer period and start to influence how people think, work, or how the community is organised. They usually affect groups of people or organisations and are connected to other changes.
- **Transformative Impacts** – These are *more significant, long-term changes* that completely alter how entire communities, regions, or wider systems operate. They can impact society in a big way.

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Strategic Goal 1

Transactional impact
Community Reporting (CR) is respected as a research tool within our network. Lived experience is used as evidence in some projects and there is some indication it is being used to inform research agendas.

Transitional impact
The profile of CR is rising within research communities and People's Voice Media (PVM) is sought as a partner for its implementation. There are instances of lived experience being used alongside traditional qualitative and quantitative data and is included in research proposals to influence the agenda of research.

Transformative impact
CR has a highly visible profile within research communities and is regularly as a tool for working with lived experience. Lived experience is valued as highly as traditional qualitative and quantitative data and is considered a core part of research proposals to inform the research agenda.

Strategic Goal 2

Transactional impact
Individual services implement lived experience and CR on a project-by-project basis to develop and/or improve services. There are instances of true co-production, but often it is used more as a consultation tool.

Transitional impact
There is evidence of some services using CR and lived experience to develop and implement improvements and/or changes. There are instances of it being used to assess social need and to evaluate any changes and there is a clear difference between co-production and consultation.

Transformative impact
Service development and improvement is always underpinned by lived experience, with CR embedded at all stages of the process to ensure change is co-produced with the people who access the service. It is routinely used as part of the evaluation process.

Strategic Goal 3

Transactional impact
Individual policy- and decision-makers within our network are using learnings and recommendations from CR to inform change, usually from their own projects. Policy and practice recommendations are made and disseminated from our work and projects.

Transitional impact
There is evidence that some policy- and decision-makers are using learnings from the CR to inform their practices and choices. This is usually when they have worked directly with us or one of our partner organisations. Recommendations from our work feed into policy- and decision-making as evidence sources.

Transformative impact
The CR website is seen as a key data-source to inform change. Recommendations informed by lived experience and/or PVM's work have real, tangible influence at the local, regional, and national level.

Strategic Goal 4

Transactional impact
PVM's team and board have created space in the organisation for individual and collective anti-racist learning activities. We are beginning to see this influence our practice in our own work, and we are platforming the lived experience stories of Global Majority (GM) people.

Transitional impact
PVM's team and board are widely and consistently applying anti-racism in their work. Anti-racism is being embedded in work strands or work packages of partner projects. There is increased visibility of GM people being included in our work, and we are platforming the work and practices of those communities beyond our own work.

Transformative impact
Our wider network is consistently adopting anti-racist practices and actively considering diversity and inclusion of GM people at all stages. There is a strong, embedded anti-racist learning culture in the network.

Diagram 4: Evaluation matrix

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Our Data Streams

We use a range of qualitative and quantitative data streams to learn about our impact and chart our progress against our strategic goals. Whilst there is a mixture of quantitative and qualitative streams, each stream focuses on the lived and tacit experiences of the people involved in and connected to our work.

We look at the data in these streams on a relational level – what it is saying about the relationships we hold with people, groups, organisations and networks and how they relate to our strategic goals. We map specific pieces of data (see Appendix) from these streams to direction of travel maps (based on VToC) to help us see our progress and understand the impact we are creating. We use these maps to help inform our actions. The next section of this report showcases our learning and progress for 2025 to 2026, and how they build upon learnings from previous years.

Below is a list of the different data streams we have consulted, including a legend to identify their nodes on the maps, which can be discerned by both colour and shape.

- **Activity feedback:** completed activity feedback forms, feedback emails and verbal feedback.
- **Reflective practice:** story reviews of reflective interviews with partners, project social impact reports from Project Managers, end-of-project debrief forms
- **Ripple Effect Mapping:** complete Ripple Effect Maps and accompanying presentations from long-term partner organisations and the Community Reporter Network
- **Quantitative data:** attendance data from events, project participant numbers etc.
- **Community Reporter action plans:** data from complete action plan forms – coming in 2026-27.
- **One-off data:** other evidence and data that doesn't sit within the above categories.
- **Strategic action plan activities:** actions taken by the People's Voice Media core team, board, associates, and wider team based on learnings from previous years

Not all the above-listed data streams have been used in the learning cycle, as we have not yet been able to utilise them, or are still developing them. They will, however, be brought in during upcoming cycles.

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Our Learning and Impact

Impact Statement

The value of our work

The work that People's Voice media does is vital because it addresses a fundamental power imbalance in research, policy, and service development. Traditionally, lived experience has been treated as anecdotal or used in an extractive way to illustrate decisions already made by those in positions of power.

We provide a non-exploitative, trauma-informed alternative that treats stories as credible evidence capable of informing research agendas, service development, and shifting local and national policy. Our aim is to see people with lived experience and their narratives effect change from the ground up, creating a more equitable world without barriers, where policies and decisions are informed by human need.

Where we are having impact

1. Positioning lived experience as a research tool

- **How this looks:** Community Reporting is being adopted as a qualitative research and/or evaluation methodology which challenges traditional approaches. It moves research from 'studying' people, to positioning people as the researchers of (and experts on) their own lives.
- **Key indicators:**
  - 97% of People's Voice Media event attendees[2] reported a better understanding of how lived experience serves as a research tool after attending one of our trainings, workshops, or events.
  - Our methodology was formally cited in the **Social Care Wales Storytelling Framework**,[3] which seeks to support the ethical, responsible use of storytelling in social care.
  - Our methodology was also cited in *Learnings from Co-Creation Sessions* (June, 2025), published by NHS Herefordshire & Worcestershire Health & Care. The team seeks to improve cancer services for global majority communities locally.

2. Humanising service development

- **How this looks:** Where professionals 'buy in' to lived experience and Community Reporting, there is a real shift towards co-production in service development and improvement, rather than top-down hierarchies. In Lincolnshire, our work has helped establish a local Community Reporter network among professionals working in the local communities.
- **Key indicators:**

[2] Based on 58 respondents.
[3] https://insightcollective.socialcare.wales/a-storytelling-framework-for-social-care-in-wales

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- 91% of event attendees now better understand how to use lived experience to improve services.
- 100% of feedback respondents felt People's Voice Media's trainings and events improved their ability to tackle inequalities and be more inclusive.
- One of our partners in Lincolnshire reported that the story curation process is particularly effective as participants engaging directly with the stories in this way creates a powerful impact, with people leaving inspired to share their experiences and advocate for change.

3. Influencing policy

- **How this looks:** We are having increased success in bridging the gap between marginalised communities and decision-makers. Lived experience is not being kept in the background. Thanks to some of our work around community equipment, COVID, and anti-racism, it is being submitted to parliamentary enquiries to lobby for change at the highest levels.
- **Key indicators:**
  - 93% of people taking part in our training and events reported feeling better equipped to influence policy through storytelling.
  - Off the back of our work on the Equipment Matters project, we were commissioned to organise a Conversation of Change Event for the British Healthcare Trade Association (BHTA) so that they could gather evidence for an All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) and lobby for legislative change.

> [WE CAN NOW] DEMONSTRATE TANGIBLE AND RELATABLE RESULTS OF THE OFTEN 'DIFFICULT TO CAPTURE' INTANGIBLES OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERING IMPROVED WELLBEING LOCALLY." – LINCOLNSHIRE PROJECT PARTICIPANT

Where we are facing challenges

Taking a Human Learning Systems approach allows us to embrace the 'messiness' of operating in the real world. Although we are having impact in key areas, driving social change is a human – and thereby imperfect – process. It's important, then, that we highlight areas where our work has not 'landed', challenges we have faced, and issues we need to address to have stronger, wider impact.

The challenges below have been considered in tandem with the impacts highlighted above and in the direction of travel maps. They have helped us to consider the reasons why we might not be having impact in certain areas, or why our impact isn't as wide-reaching as we

would want. They have helped us see what needs adjusting to have the best chance of creating positive social change.

1. Information overload

Feedback from work such as the Bristol City Council Community Reporting project has indicated that our facilitator can feel the strain of supporting groups with very different levels of digital literacy. This is also reflected in a reported loss of momentum at the stage in training when people are shown how to use our website, which feedback tells us is too complicated. We've also seen that delivering training over several consecutive days can lead to information overload for participants, which can dampen the joy of working with stories and reduce the number of stories gathered.

We address these issues in the upcoming recommendations by suggesting work to make Community Reporting more accessible to a wider range of people.

2. The challenge of the 'empty chair'

A piece of feedback provided by an attendee at the Lincolnshire Conversation of Change event succinctly stated something that has come up in our work time and again: *"It was a shame that more of the people who need to hear these insights were not in the room, even the ones who said they would be there."* Even when projects are strong and positive, it can be an uphill struggle to get the decision-makers to sit down with us and truly listen.

We address this further on by recommending ways we might better embed impact planning from the start of a project.

3. Digital barriers and the AI issue

The Community Reporter website is showing its age and doesn't reflect our focus on accessibility and inclusivity. We need to explore options for better developing the website that go beyond the piecemeal approaches taken in previous years. This is reflected in our recommendations.

Similarly, the work we have been doing around transforming the website into an insight engine has been deliberately slowed down. AI technology is moving so fast and creating such a range of ethical dilemmas that we need to properly weigh up the ethics of this against the technological gains, as we will never allow algorithms to replace listening.

4. The "what next?" plateau

Our anti-racism development work has been in place for six years, and while we are seeing significant positive impacts of that work, our core team have reported reaching something of a plateau in their individual learning journeys. How do we turn that learning into actions that dismantle structural inequalities?

To tackle this, we have looked to recommendations that will help us move over this plateau and continue onwards.

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5. Creating big, systemic change

While we have made progress in 2025/26, we are still struggling to break into that Transformative change space, where lived experience sets funding, research, and commissioning agendas from the start. Dismantling these rigid top-down systems is a long-term goal for People's Voice Media, and our recommendations in this report keep that in mind to create a more equitable world.

So what?

During 2025/26, we have gathered tangible evidence that what we are doing *works*. The Lincolnshire project and the Bristol Community Resilience Fund evaluation (which was still being finished off at the time of compiling data for this report) are strong examples of our methodologies resonating with partners and being adopted wholeheartedly in the spirit of creating equitable, co-produced services, policies, and funding stratagems. People's Voice Media delivers a robust methodology that is proven to work.

However, everyone who has had a hand in creating and developing that methodology is human, and humans are chaotically, ingeniously, and joyously imperfect. As such, we must acknowledge that even though our methodology can and does work, it has flaws and needs updating. If we can have the kind of impact we have seen in Lincolnshire (an impact we will be doing more to measure in 2026/27) while facing the challenges mentioned above, imagine what we can achieve by turning some of our focus inward to make Community Reporting stronger and more accessible.

Direction of Travel Maps

The direction of travel maps presented on the next few pages provide a visual way to understand how People's Voice Media can move toward its strategic aims and helps to illustrate where we are on our journey. Each map begins with an end point in mind—the long-term goal—and then plots insights drawn from different data streams. These insights appear as numbered, shape- and colour-coded nodes (see page 19), showing both their origin and their placement along specific pathways.

Pathways are defined by axis labels that outline possible routes, while the type of change—whether transactional, transitional, or transformative—shows the depth of impact. By laying out these elements, the maps highlight realistic recommendations, or "adjacent possibilities," making it easier to see what can be achieved now while keeping sight of our longer-term ambitions.

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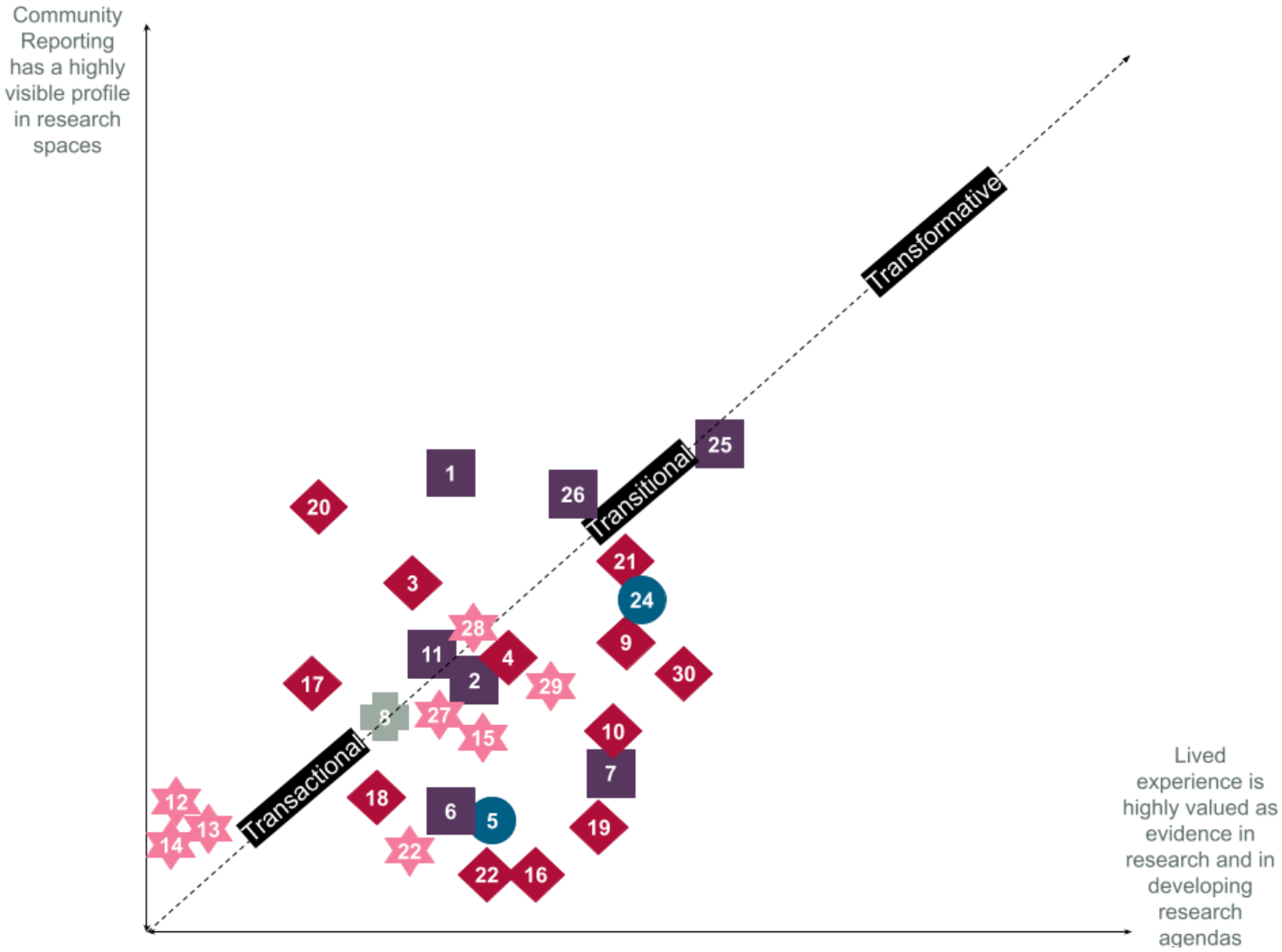

Diagram 5: Strategic Goal 1 Direction of Travel Map

Strategic Aim

To enhance Community Reporting's position as a research tool and lived experience stories as a form of evidence.

Desired Direction of Travel

To establish Community Reporting and lived experience as widely recognised, credible, and valuable forms of research and evidence, integrated into research practices and agendas, making research spaces equitable and inclusive.

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THERE'S A REAL STRENGTH IN GETTING A STORY, AND EVERYBODY LISTENING TO [IT] AND HEARING THAT PERSON, AND THEN COMING TOGETHER, AND WE ALL HAVE THE SAME KIND OF CONCLUSIONS … THAT'S VERY POWERFUL. – **MACMILLAN/NHS PROJECT PARTNER**

Current State of Play

As the map demonstrates, we are continuing to make significant strides in positioning Community Reporting as valuable research tool and lived experience as evidentiary data. Our work is being cited in more research and evaluation publications, and we are developing strong partnerships with academic institutions for both funding bids and commissions. Feedback suggests that those who are familiar with our work and with lived experience understand its value.

We are, however, still struggling to move into the Transformative impact space, particularly terms of our work being used to understand need so as, in turn, to inform the direction of funding proposals. This is a broader systemic issue but one we are well placed to tackle.

Recommendations

- Reverse engineer the issue by looking at ways to better mobilise knowledge from lived experience in our upcoming learning sessions (November 2026). In finding a way to better mobilise knowledge, we can broaden our reach among researchers and better demonstrate the value of Community Reporting and lived experience.
- Create a practice briefing on how lived experience can demonstrate need, ergo informing research direction. Target this at schools of social science and other relevant research institutions.
- Develop resources for academics and researchers, giving tasters of how lived experience can be used.
- Launch our Responsible Storytelling and Ripple Effect Mapping workshop packages in Q4 2026 to have a training offer around lived experience and participation adjacent to Community Reporting.

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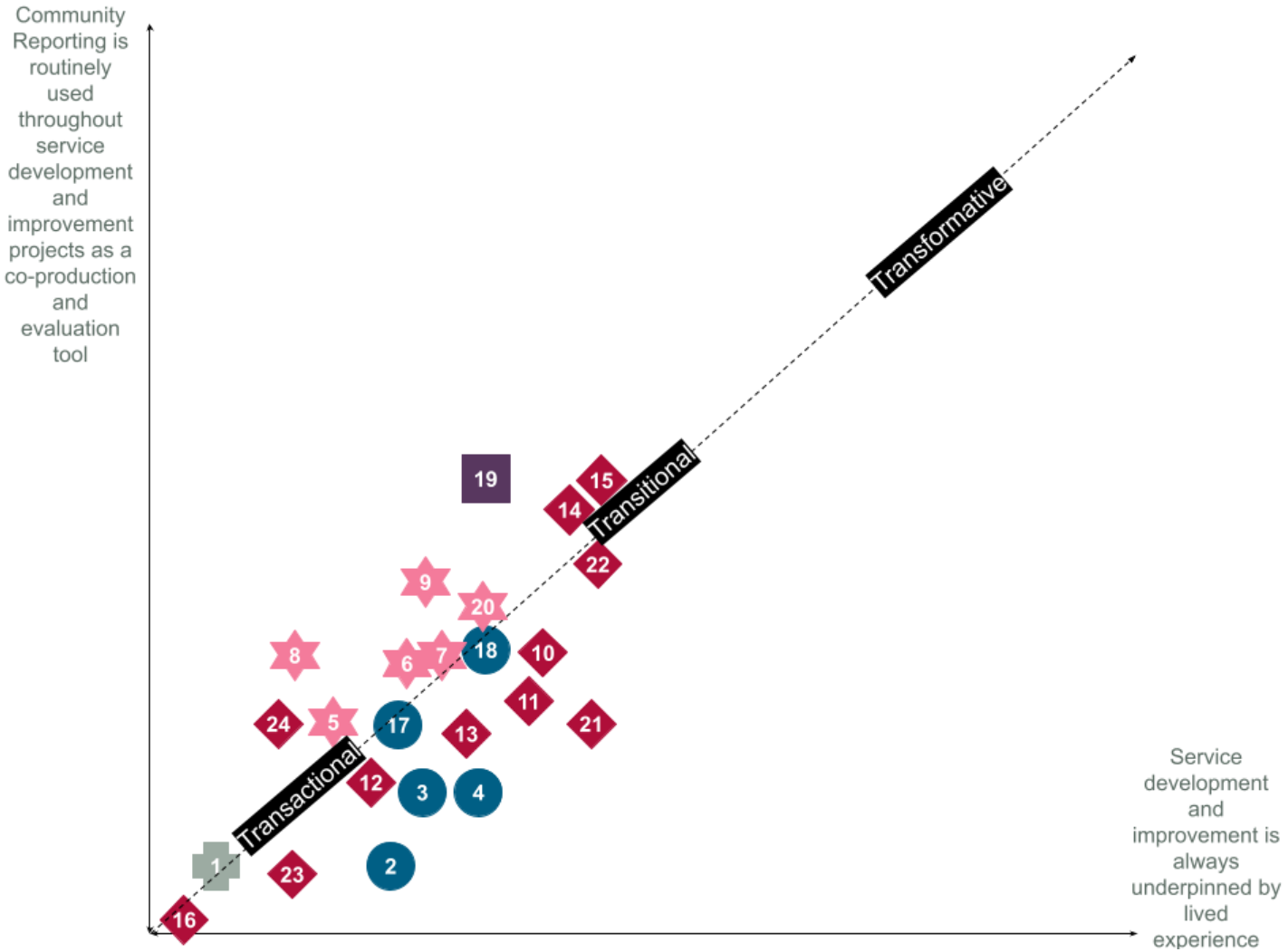

Diagram 6: Strategic Goal 2 Direction of Travel Map

Strategic Aim

Embed Community Reporting and lived experience into service development and improvement.

Desired Direction of Travel

To embed Community Reporting and lived experience into service development and improvement so that people are involved through all stages and that decisions are taken based on actual human need. Decision- and policymaking in services are underpinned by learnings from lived experience.

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Current State of Play

Our influence within our own network remains strong, and our regular partners and collaborators are frontrunners in using lived experience to underpin service development and improvement and using Community Reporting as a tool for co-production. We are still struggling to break further into Transitional (and, subsequently, Transformative) change areas. However, the Lincolnshire project – in which a local Community Reporter Network was set up – has shown that it *is* possible, so we need to take learnings from that (which we are already doing). Another issue may be how we gather evidence of the impact we have, so we need to revise that process as well.

> [WE PLAN TO USE COMMUNITY REPORTING] IN FUTURE ENGAGEMENT WORK TO SUPPORT PEOPLE TO HAVE A VOICE THAT IS LISTENED TO, HEARD AND VALUED, AND HAS INFLUENCE – LINCOLNSHIRE PROJECT PARTICIPANT

Recommendations

- Develop a local authority model – using our work in Lincoln as a case study – to demonstrate how local Community Reporter networks can amplify voice and affect change. This will be actively pitched to local authorities and other professionals who work in service development and improvement.
- Embed elements within our partner work to encourage a focus on long-term impacts and change. This might include questions for partners before the project begins, action planning embedded in training, or both.
- Revise impact-evidence gathering methods and embed them within our training and partnership offers.

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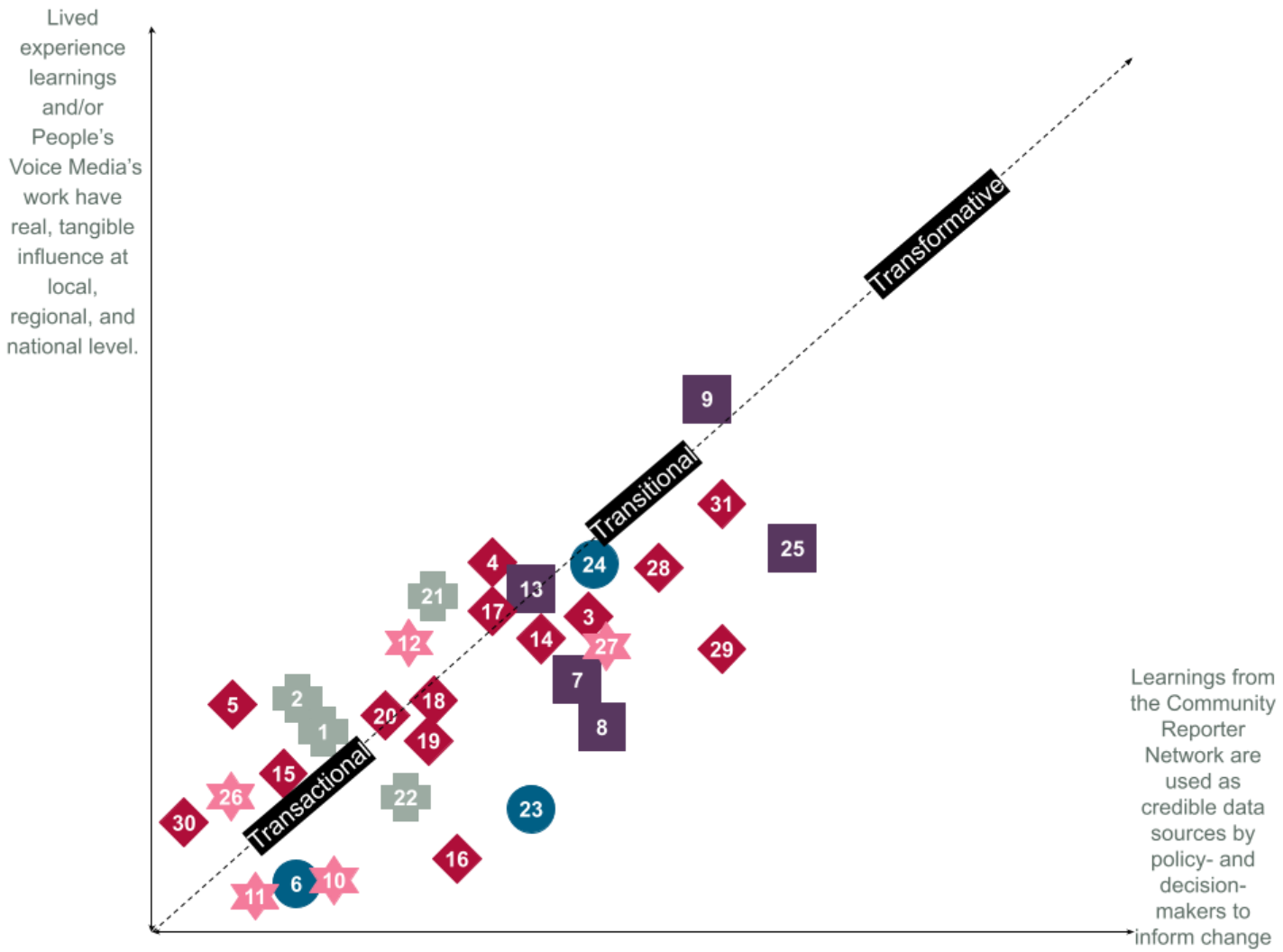

Diagram 7: Strategic Goal 3 Direction of Travel Map

Strategic Aim

Use learning from the Community Reporter Network to influence and inform local, regional, and national policy change

Desired Direction of Travel

To take marginalised voices and lived experience and ensure they are considered in local, regional, and national policymaking to make systemic changes towards a more equitable society.

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IT'S NOT THE END OF A PROJECT, BUT THE BEGINNING OF A CAMPAIGN – **EQUIPMENT MATTERS END-OF-PROJECT DEBRIEF**

Current State of Play

In the last year, we have made strides in this area, with more examples of Transitional change, including citations of our work in publications aimed at policy- and decision-makers, the successful implementation of the Lincolnshire Community Reporter Network, and being commissioned by the British Healthcare Trades Association (BHTA), following on from the Equipment Matters project, to host a Conversation of Change Event that they could add evidence for the relevant All Party Parliamentary Group.

However, website work has stalled as we weigh up considerations around the use of AI and a rapidly changing technological landscape, which is delaying our launch of an insight engine. Additionally, feedback from website users has told us that we need to make bigger changes to make this fit for purpose if it is to be used in policy- and decision-making.

Recommendations

- Produce policy and/or practice resources around lived experience in policy- and decision-making and its uses in focused sectors
- Engage with the Community Reporter Network on what would make a better website. Research options and use these to form a 3-5 year digital plan.
- Review our evidence-gathering methods to identify which mechanisms will be useful for long-term systemic impact, and how we track these.

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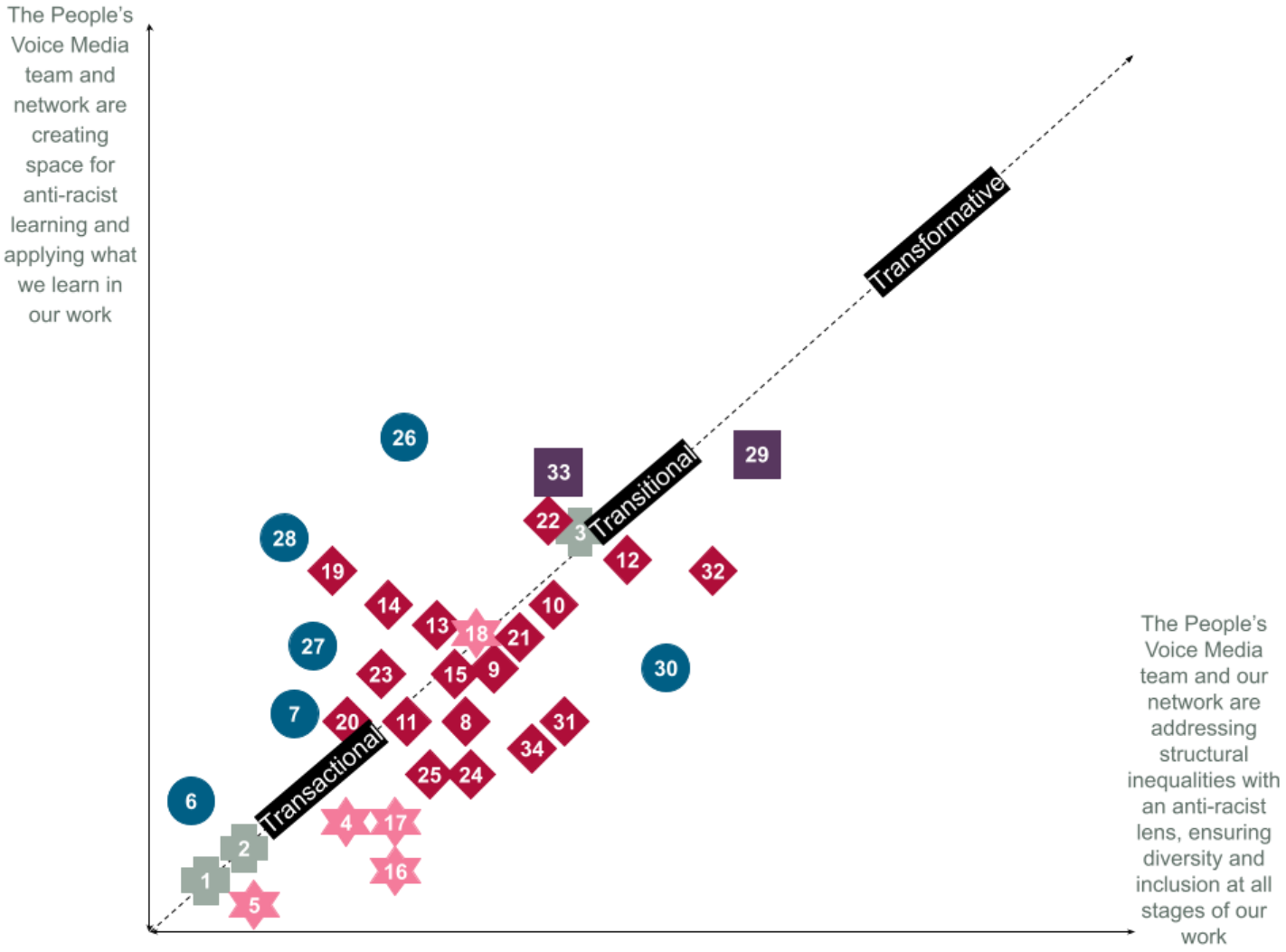

Diagram 8: Strategic Goal 4 Direction of Travel Map

Strategic Aim

Be actively anti-racist and use this as a lens through which we address structural inequalities

Desired Direction of Travel

People's Voice Media and its wider network are actively anti-racist and embed anti-racism in all their work.

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THE CONVERSATIONS WITHIN THE CO-PRODUCTION INTERVIEW HAVE GOT ME THINKING ABOUT HOW WE AS AN ORGANISATION CAN WORK BETTER WITH PEOPLE FROM THE GLOBAL MAJORITY – **ANTI-RACISM IN CO-PRODUCTION**

Current State of Play

Anti-racism continues to be at the heart of our work, and this was reinforced in 2025/26 by our annual conference, which took the form of an Afrofuturism learning day and the ongoing development of our anti-racist statement. While this work has been well received, feedback from the Peoples Voice Media core team has suggested that our individual learning journeys have stalled somewhat, and we have now reached the 'what next?' stage in our anti-racist education – particularly in turning learning into action.

Recommendations

- Take part in anti-racism training to take us to the next stage of our individual learning journeys – particularly in terms of actions we can take.
- Secure funding for the second part of our Anti-Racism in Co-Production project, in collaboration with Co-Pro Collective.
- Use the learning sessions to further the discussion on anti-racism in social justice and use this to examine how we are currently using intersectional approaches in our work, and how we might improve on this to be more inclusive

Summary of Actions for 2026/27

Based on the recommendations stemming from the direction of travel maps, we have summarised the main action points below, mapped to the relevant strategic aims.

To enhance Community Reporting's position as a research tool and lived experience stories as a form of evidence.

- Improve our understanding and practice of knowledge mobilisation through co-production with our network.
- Create resources for academics including:
    - A practice briefing on how lived experience can inform research direction.
    - Instructional documents/videos on lived experience
- Launch new workshops for professionals, focussing on Responsible Storytelling and Ripple Effect Mapping – coming later in 2026.

Embed Community Reporting and lived experience into service development and improvement.

- Develop our local authority model, using Lincolnshire as a case study, to demonstrate how local Community Reporter networks can amplify voice and affect change.
- Review how we embed impact-consideration in our partner work to better effect long-term change.
- Revise our impact-gathering methods and embed them within our trainings and partnership offers.

Use learning from the Community Reporter Network to influence and inform local, regional, and national policy change

- As part of our local authority model, incorporate policy and/or practice resources around lived experience in policy- and decision-making.
- Revise our impact-gathering methods and embed them within our trainings and partnership offers.[4]
- Engage with the Community Reporter Network on what would make a better website and use this research to form a 3–5-year digital plan.

[4] Repeated as it straddles two aims.

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Be actively anti-racist and use this as a lens through which we address structural inequalities

- Host our learning sessions (previously our conference) in November 2026 and hold a follow-up Core Team Learning Day the following month to review the outcomes and turn our learnings into actions, with a particular focus on making Community Reporting more accessible through the lens of anti-racism.
- Take part in anti-racism training as a team to move us to the next stage of our individual learning journeys.
- Secure funding for the second part of our Anti-Racism in Co-Production project.

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Appendix: Direction of Travel Maps – Plotted Insights

Strategic Goal 1: Plotted Insights

1. Our work with Curators of Change is cited in NHS research/advice on using co-production - (NHS South East Clinical Senate [2024] Putting people at the heart of service change)
2. “A part of my thesis focused on COVID, and I’ll be sure to reference your great work in this!” - DRUK project participants
3. “I, personally, talk about it [Community Reporting] in my course – Methods in Social Sciences – and the students really like it as well. … We did a small experiment and we did a small Community Reporting session during my lecture and it worked well. … I also used the materials from your website, so it’s very helpful that they could read more.” - EUARENAS project partner, University of Gdańsk
4. “In Poland we have this positivist approach in social sciences for very long. Survey is the most popular method.” The partner is trying to encourage her students towards more qualitative approaches and Community Reporting is a “step further” again. “It gives voice to the participants. … For older generations of Polish researchers this is a revolutionary idea.” - EUARENAS project partner, University of Gdańsk
5. “These stories have incredible value” - Equality Trust’s Poverty Project Conversation of Change attendee
6. “It takes these otherwise anecdotal conversations, and makes them much more meaningful, because they're not, if you will, just the experience of one individual person; they’re kind of the joint experiences of people who are suffering from chronic pain” - CAPE project partner
7. “Longford Park/Trafford Council got their Lottery delivery grant after working with you guys on the Community Consultation bit” - Longford Park project partner
8. Updated reporting practices so that we can present the insights from our stories in different ways so that they are viewed in the same light as other forms of data and knowledge.
9. CAPE partners reflected, 12 months on, how the stories gathered enabled the research team to more effectively respond to the input of the patient partners on the research project, as well as allowing them to apply for ethical approval to conduct a thematic analysis on a subsection of the interviews, which they aim to publish and share with research and clinical community as well as the wider public.
10. Equality Trust are waiting for ethics approval for a research project to provide qualitative data on the ethnicity-wealth gap. Will train 10 reporters to gather 30 stories.
11. Community Reporting mentioned as a “catalyst for change” in written evidence to parliament from Equality Trust on the impact of inequality.
12. Delivered a panel talk at Marginalised People’s Creative Responses to Justice Problems: The Arts and Public Audiences in Winchester to an audience of 30 people, including academics
13. Delivered an Equitable Futures workshop at Engage Conference, Bristol to 40 people

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14. 53 people attended our 2024 conference
15. We were invited to speak at a panel at a conference (MH-ALL, London) on the future of mental health research and how it can be made accessible. We shared about Community Reporting as a tool for this to 62 people.
16. “We have worked alongside PVM over the last seven years on a number of different projects. They are our go-to partner when we need to bring community reporting into the work and we have always been inspired by the depth of knowledge and expertise they bring to the table when it comes to working alongside people with lived and living experience. Their ability to bring stories to the fore-front and enable people to truly listen to them and work with them provides a unique dynamic that helps to shift the way staff in the health and social sector view the people they support and often leads to a more open, transparent and co-productive way of working.” – feedback from Ideas Alliance
17. Although the final report was an internal document for Vision for Volunteering, it has helped us, internally, refine how we use Community Reporting as a research tool and a data source. It has helped us see more clearly how we can present Community Reporting results so that they are taken 'seriously' as evidence.
18. The stories from Stories for Change will be available to anyone researching Structural Inequalities and will act as a form of evidence.
19. TLAP Home Care Stories used lived experience stories of home care to inform the development of a resource to support the implementation of the Single Assessment Framework (SAF).
20. Positive reception of our Future Thinking work on EUARENAS, which utilised lived experience and participatory methodologies
21. Community Reporting was used at various points in the project as a research tool and an evaluation tool - even being picked up by WPs that were not originally meant to be using it. Community Reporting was given a prominent position on the EUARENAS website, with stories being presented as parts of case studies.
22. “There's a real strength and getting a story, and everybody listening to the same story and hearing that person, and then, you know, coming together, and we all have the same kind of conclusions, if you like, yeah, that's very powerful.” - Project partner on MacMillan/NHS project
23. Delivered Lived Experience and Research workshop to seven people as part of Not Another Co-Production
24. Out of 58 people surveyed, 56 said we had improved their understanding of how lived experience could be used as a research tool. (97%)
25. Community Reporting cited as a methodology in ‘Macmillan Cancer Health Inequalities Project Year One Insight Report’ (2025) and *Learnings from Co-Creation Sessions* (June, 2025), published by NHS Herefordshire & Worcestershire Health & Care, because of our work on the Macmillan project. The team seeks to improve cancer services for global majority communities locally.
26. Community Reporting cited as a tool for ‘Storytelling for Learning & Development’ in Social Care Wales’s *Storytelling Framework for Social Care in Wales*.
27. 30 people attended the Lincolnshire Conversation of Change event.
28. 22 people attended BHTA Conversation of Change event
29. Consistent attendance and engagement at all Ripple Effect Mapping sessions for the Bristol Community Resilience Fund Project with 35 attendees across 4 workshops.

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30. Community Reporting was the focus of Lincolnshire's *It's All About People* podcast with reflections on how it is a powerful tool

Strategic Goal 2: Plotted Insights

1. Trial new recruitment and engagement methods on our projects, with a renewed emphasis on peer-to-peer approaches
2. "In my opinion, Community Reporting is a very powerful tool in engaging with local communities and thus enabling the results to have a relevant influence policies." - Macmillan/NHS project participant
3. "We may implement this [Ripple Effect Mapping] into our evaluation for some of our classes and community groups." - Bristol Community Resilience Fund beneficiary
4. A Macmillan/NHS project participant said they planned to use Community Reporting "to listen and record what people would find helpful in encouraging engagement with cancer services."
5. Delivered a Conversation of Change event for Halton TLAP project to 14 people, looking at the co-production environment in the region.
6. Delivered an Equitable Futures workshop at Engage Conference, Bristol to 40 people
7. Delivered a summative learning session to 12 people from a variety of funders and government bodies as part of Vision for Volunteering
8. Delivered at Not Another Co-Production Year 3 Learning Festival attended by 48 people
9. Working on two separate projects with Bristol City Council incorporating participatory and peer research into their work
10. The Equipment Matter project offers a chance to collaborate with service providers, commissioners, and local authorities to better understand the needs of diverse equipment users and identify key areas for improvement.
11. Since our involvement as a learning partner, Camerados reported that Ripple Effect Maps are being used by the movement on an individual and organisational level, and that the process gave space for people to reflect and celebrate their achievements since setting up the Public Living Rooms
12. We will be producing a guide on the value of lived experience and working with us so that institutions such as Local Authorities are better prepared for working with us, based on feedback from Bristol City Council and others
13. "Good to have the language to explore storytelling a little further and explain its uses/validity in a work setting. Tangible skills to take back to service & help to improve." - end-of-project feedback from Not Another Co-Production
14. "The social change that we have achieved from this project is a change in approach from the health care professionals involved. By prioritising listening to the lived experiences around cancer in these specific communities and having the time to learn the CR methodology with the time set aside to collect stories they have recognised what a useful tool it is and are keen to utilise it further." Project Manager feedback from Macmillan/NHS project

Head Office: The Fort Offices, Artillery Business Park, Park Hall, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY11 4AD.
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Website: https://peoplesvoicemedia.co.uk
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15. "Camerados will be using the content gathered to make improvements to how they support their movement; the stories will also be used to inspire and grow the community of Public Living Rooms that exists across the world." - Camerados Year 2, 6-month post-project catch-up
16. "Remunerating participants is a must in terms of valuing time, power dynamics and recognising expertise. However, this feels like a minefield. One of our participants was sanctioned, and we were terrified we'd caused it by processing a bank transfer- at their request. We feel like there is some lobbying to be done. As co-production and lived experience gathers pace and recognition, there has to be easier and safer ways to recognise people's involvement." - Equality Trust Capacity Building 12-month post-project catch-up
17. Out of 58 people surveyed, 53 said we had improved their understanding of how lived experience could be used in service development and improvement (91%)
18. "In future engagement work to support people to have a voice that is listened to, heard and valued, and has influence." - Lincolnshire Community Reporter on how they plan to use their training going forward.
19. Community Reporting cited as a methodology in 'Macmillan Cancer Health Inequalities Project Year One Insight Report' (2025) and *Learnings from Co-Creation Sessions* (June, 2025), published by NHS Herefordshire & Worcestershire Health & Care, because of our work on the Macmillan project. The team seeks to improve cancer services for global majority communities locally.
20. Strong, consistent turnout for all aspects of the Lincolnshire project, showing an appetite for lived experience.
21. Equipment Matters project: The events enabled equipment users to talk directly with suppliers and healthcare professionals about design, colour choices, and practical needs.
22. [They] described their approach to story analysis using vertical analysis, post-it note exercises, and affinity mapping with a diverse panel of participants, including people with lived experience. She emphasised that the personal engagement with stories through this method creates a powerful impact, with participants leaving inspired to share their experiences and advocate for change. She rejected the suggestion of using AI for this process, arguing that personal engagement with stories leads to meaningful responses and report readership that would not occur with an AI-generated report. - follow-up conversation with Lincolnshire
23. "I think before we went into it, my expectations for it were quite low just because I wasn't sure if the young people would engage with something like that. But then I think the way that you delivered it was... really creative and hands-on for them and that's what made the difference for them to be able to engage with it in a really fun way." - feedback on the Bronte project
24. "The training has given us the confidence to try new things, to ask better questions, and to find different ways to engage young people so their voices are really heard."" - feedback on the Bronte project

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Strategic Goal 3: Plotted Insights

1. Secured multi-year core funding for the Community Reporter Network to support policy and impact work
2. Secured legacy funding to deepen/widen the impact of key strands of work
3. “Trafford Youth Council have used the [policy recommendations] to look at how they run their campaigns in schools” - CONTINUE project partner
4. “We have secured some funding to do some Community Reporting and other research work with young people gathering their views on the future of the social contract, which is exciting” - Equality Trust capacity building training participant
5. “I keep hearing stories that they’ve been in community meetings and volunteer meetings and things like that in the city and have started talking about themselves and introducing themselves as, you know, ‘I’m Trish, and I’m a Community Reporter in Tile Hill’” - University of Warwick project partner
6. “In my opinion, Community Reporting is a very powerful tool in engaging with local communities and thus enabling the results to relevant influence policies.” - MacMillan/NHS project participants
7. Community Reporting mentioned as a “catalyst for change” in written evidence to parliament from Equality Trust on the impact of inequality, written to inform policy
8. Listed as a contributor in the final report for *Bylines Cymru*’s Redesigning Citizen Journalism project, with Community Reporting mentioned as a methodology that is a two-way sharing of stories, which can be “important in rebalancing power dynamics”.
9. EESC TEN/772 Own-Initiative Opinion - “Co-creation of services of general interest as a contribution to a more participative democracy in the EU” - was almost unanimously adopted by the General Assembly of the European Economic and Social Committee, heavily influenced by CoSIE
10. Delivered a Conversation of Change event for the Halton TLAP project to 14 people, looking at the co-production environment in the region.
11. Delivered a Conversation of Change event for the Black Country project to 11 people, looking at building community-led intelligence to inform strategic decision-making. People explored the findings from the stories and identified practical ways in which the learning can be put into practice and shared within the system
12. Delivered GM Systems Leadership workshops - an introductory online Community Reporter training programme for professionals working in system change in Greater Manchester. Each workshop was attended by 21-27 people
13. Disability Rights UK project report submitted as evidence in the COVID inquiry
14. Equipment Matters project set up to work towards informing policy and commissioning processes to create more responsive and equitable systems for all and shift the narrative around equipment provision.
15. Developed a future thinking/foresight model using lived experience and participatory practices to create a vision of the ‘city of the future’ in which participatory democracy is the norm
16. “There's a real strength and getting a story, and everybody listening to the same story and hearing that person, and then, you know, coming together, and we all have

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the same kind of conclusions, if you like, yeah, that's very powerful." - MacMillan/NHS project partner

17. Camerados are using the findings from our learning partner work to influence their own policies and practices
18. As an output of Equality Trust's Reconstructing the Social Contract project, the young people participating co-signed a letter to Lisa Nandy about the National Youth Strategy and shared the film to support their views. The findings will also be used in responses to government calls to evidence.
19. TLAP worked with a Community Reporter (a lived experience expert) to help him share his story and put it on the website. He's since been sharing this story at a range of influencing events. TLAP made him some QR codes for putting on slides and sharing with people so they could watch the story, and it has been useful.
20. "This is still work in progress, but the video that was developed is publicly available on the CAPE website and our YouTube channel. By sharing the video publicly, we anticipate changing public understanding, perception and knowledge on the impact of chronic pain on daily life. To assess this impact, we ask people who have watched the video to complete a short video on their perspectives around chronic pain and how they might have changed by watching the video. Similarly, during upcoming conference presentations, we will share the video with the wider research and clinical community to identify changes in their perception. Lastly, we are exploring opportunities to include the video in training materials being developed by NHS Education for Scotland aimed at clinicians supporting adults with chronic pain." - CAPE project partner in 12-month post-project catch-up
21. Esmee-funded policy work has started, with more planned for Year 2
22. Development of curation tools for Community Reporter website is underway.
23. Out of 58 people surveyed, 54 said we had improved their understanding of how lived experience could be used to influence policies and the people who make them. (93%)
24. "I was already very aware of how Lived Experience narratives can be impactful, but the Community Reporter Network and, moreover, the potential for a dedicated Lincolnshire Network could make influencing local policy makers and day-to-day practice in the community more interactive and powerful. Furthermore, also demonstrate tangible and relatable results of the often 'difficult to capture' intangibles of effective community engagement and delivering improved wellbeing locally." Lincolnshire Community Reporter on what they took from their training
25. Community Reporting cited as a methodology in 'Macmillan Cancer Health Inequalities Project Year One Insight Report' (2025) and *Learnings from Co-Creation Sessions* (June, 2025), published by NHS Herefordshire & Worcestershire Health & Care, because of our work on the Macmillan project. The team seeks to improve cancer services for global majority communities locally.
26. Strong, consistent turnout for all aspects of the Lincolnshire project, showing an appetite for lived experience.
27. 22 people attended Dignity, Independence, and Equipment - Conversation of Change Online Event as part of Equipment Matters
28. Equipment Matters project: The project captured impactful real stories (such as highlighting systemic issues in local authority provision) and ultimately produced a strong final film.

29. [They] described their approach to story analysis using vertical analysis, Post-It note exercises, and affinity mapping with a diverse panel of participants, including people with lived experience. She emphasised that the personal engagement with stories through this method creates a powerful impact, with participants leaving inspired to share their experiences and advocate for change. She rejected the suggestion of using AI for this process, arguing that personal engagement with stories leads to meaningful responses and report readership that would not occur with an AI-generated report. - follow-up conversation with Lincolnshire
30. Equipment Matters end-of-project debrief: “There haven't been any social impacts yet, but it has started the ball rolling, and it's not the end of a project but the beginning of a campaign.”
31. Equipment Matters end of project debrief: “Yes. From this project we had a commission from the British Healthcare Trade Association who asked us to do a Conversation of Change event to collect voices and stories so they can add this evidence for when the APPG they have set up lobbies parliament on Sept 13th 2025.”

Strategic Goal 4: Plotted Insights

1. Included a regular slot to update on our anti-racism work in TLDs and TWDs
2. Developed a growing bank of stories that platform the experiences of global majority communities
3. Delivered a bespoke Community Reporter project on anti-racism in co-production in 2024
4. 53 attendees at our 2024 hackathon on enhancing inclusiveness and anti-racism in Community Reporting
5. 54 attendees at our 2023 conference on equitable futures
6. “It was an excellent day of conversations within a brave space” - 2023 conference attendee
7. “I am embracing and passing on this language and culture.” - Future of the CRN Workshop attendee
8. “I knew that we would be able to capture voices of people who might not get heard otherwise. And that was a big part of it because I knew how seriously People’s Voice Media took that” - DRUK project partner
9. “I know we wouldn't have been able to achieve that [level of diversity] without involving People’s Voice Media.” - CAPE project partner
10. “[Participants] recognised that [they weren’t] fully representative of the community, so [there are] moves to spread the model more widely through the train-the-trainer work” - University of Warwick project partner
11. “Please extend my gratitude to all involved in this project and the work involved to get so many different voices to highlight the ongoing challenges people continue to experience” - DRUK project participant
12. “This review of the challenges and racism faced by those with lived experience is essential reading. With Co-Production increasingly adopted by Local Authorities, Higher Education, and the Health and Social Care sectors, this report presents a

timely and important critique of current practices. The examples of racism in Co-Production discussed here are not isolated incidents but, sadly, everyday occurrences that I, too, have witnessed." - feedback on Anti-Racism in Co-Production report

13. "Engaging with lived experiences, particularly when addressing racism and systemic barriers, demands sensitivity, active listening, and a commitment to meaningful change. This study reflects the expertise and dedication Isaac Samuels and Samantha-Jane Ofoegbu brought to creating a space where people feel heard, valued, and able to contribute fully." - feedback on Anti-Racism in Co-Production report
14. "Your work has genuinely shifted my perspective, and I'm incredibly grateful for the impact it has had on my understanding of anti-racism and co-production." - feedback on Anti-Racism in Co-Production report
15. "Your work is an inspiring example of how storytelling and media can drive important conversations and real action. Co-production is such a valuable opportunity to ensure that authentic voices are heard and that the right changes are made. I hope we can continue pushing these discussions forward so that anti-racism remains at the forefront of our collective efforts." - feedback on Anti-Racism in Co-Production report
16. Gathered 18 stories on the Stories for Change project, addressing structural inequalities - including racism.
17. Delivered a panel talk at Marginalised People's Creative Responses to Justice Problems: The Arts and Public Audiences in Winchester to an audience of 30 people including academics
18. Delivered anti-racism sense-making workshop to eight people as part of Anti-Racism in Co-Production project, ensuring the stories are analysed by people from Global Majority communities
19. "The conversations within the co-production interviews have got me thinking about how we as an organisation (but also wider health, care, housing, education systems) can work better with people (the 4.2%) from global majority (in Lincolnshire's case minority ethnic backgrounds). I've just expressed interest to be involved in the Community Reporter training which I believe you at People's Voices Media are delivering over the coming months." - feedback from wellbeing charity on Anti-Racism in Co-Production report
20. Purposeful sampling was used to ensure Global Majority voice in the Equipment Matters project
21. "What I'm taking away is, I suppose. A continued kind of passion and ambition to do, to do things, to make change. Like, I mean, I'm always like that. I always want to see change happening and I'm always like, lacking the number of hours in the day to actually do it. So, I guess for me, it's literally carving out time to make sure it's a focus, as a way to ensure that, like, I can continually push for us to do better. But. You know, like recognising the importance of challenging the wider system organisation as well." - project partner on Anti-Racism in Co-Production project
22. "The project in its approach was actively anti-racist. The approach was to give a space for people to share their experiences of the immigration service and the culture of the hostile environment." - Project Manager feedback on HOME?

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23. “As an organisation, we were actively anti-racist in carrying out this work, and we called out issues around diversity and inclusion as they arose. The project highlighted a lack of diversity in the volunteering sector, and we have recommended that this is something the Vision team should look at in their future work” - Project Manager feedback on Vision for Volunteering
24. “With Stories for Change, our anti-racist values were shared by the Equality Trust and were embedded in everything on the project. They ensured the stories were gathered from a wide diversity of people - Project Manager feedback
25. “During EUARENAS, we pressed for diversity across the project and, at several points, questioned how diversity was being ensured.” - Project Manager feedback
26. Out of 58 people surveyed, 58 said we had improved their understanding of how they and/or their organisations could tackle inequalities and be more inclusive. (100%)
27. “More activities like this should happen” - feedback on one of our Global Majority Peer Support Spaces
28. “This event added to my knowledge of anti-racism and shown me different ways to apply it in my own life both personally and professionally.” - Feedback from an attendee of our 2025 Afrofuturism event
29. Community Reporting cited as a methodology in ‘Macmillan Cancer Health Inequalities Project Year One Insight Report’ (2025) and *Learnings from Co-Creation Sessions* (June, 2025), published by NHS Herefordshire & Worcestershire Health & Care, because of our work on the Macmillan project. The team seeks to improve cancer services for global majority communities locally.
30. The facilitator effectively managed wide-ranging participant abilities and set an inclusive pace - feedback from Bristol City Council Community Reporter Training
31. Equipment Matters project: Shared lived experiences helped normalise equipment use, showing how assistive devices support personal freedom and independence rather than limiting it.
32. Equipment Matters project: Co-leading sessions created a natural, supportive dynamic, while having sessions led by a racially minoritised person increased equity and representation for global majority communities.
33. “The conversations within the co-production interviews have got me thinking about how we as an organisation (but also wider health, care, housing, education systems) can work better with people (the 4.2%) from global majority (in Lincolnshire's case minority ethnic backgrounds).” Response to Anti-Racism in Co-Production project from a report-reader
34. “"Being able to adapt and change things as we went along made a big difference, especially when working with different groups and young people with varying needs." - feedback on the Bronte project