



# LOVE GRANGETOWN 2023



# Acknowledgements

## Love Grangetown Team

Rosie Cripps - Love Grangetown Lead,  
Independent Consultant & Facilitator  
Prof. Mhairi McVicar - Project Sponsor,  
Community Gateway Academic Lead,  
Cardiff University  
Dr Corey Smith - Love Grangetown  
Principle Investigator and Community  
Gateway Project Manager, Cardiff  
University  
Ali Abdi - Community Gateway  
Partnerships Manager, Cardiff University

## Student Team

WSA XII Value Unit 23-24

Tutors: Dan Benham and Prof. Mhairi  
McVicar

Students: Benjamin Cook, Henry  
Denham-Harding, Theodora  
Filippopoulou, Evangelia Glentze,  
Tanya Khanna, Ben Maslin, Shoruk  
Nekeb, Hana Rowlands, Avi Ruckhunty,  
Jonny Sadler, Hannah Smith, Charlotte  
Woodfield, Maisie Atkinson

PhD Sociology students:  
Catrin Edwards-Greaves, Eve Ruet

Design Consultant and Facilitator:  
Hester Buck - Graduate Tutor, Welsh  
School of Architecture

## Project Partners

Grange Pavilion CIO  
Tom Pughsley - Child Friendly Cardiff  
Grangetown Primary School  
St Paul's Primary School  
Ninian Park Primary School

## Community Researcher Team

Rachel Freedman, Grangetown  
Community Action  
Terry Kane, Grangetown Local History  
Society  
Helen Stradling, Grangetown Historical  
Society  
Debbie Groves, Grangetown FAN Group  
Father Ed Owen, Anglican Church  
Steve O'Reilly, Cardiff Council Research  
Team  
Abdi Yusuf, Grange Pavilion CIO  
Ali Abdi, Community Gateway / Citizens  
Cymru  
Louise Jensen, 4Winds  
Nirushan Sudarsan, Grange Pavilion  
Youth Forum  
Sanab Hersi, Serenity Housing  
Hodan Hersi, Serenity Housing  
Kadra Hersi, Serenity Housing  
Ayan Hersi, Serenity Housing  
Jayne Palmer, Grange Pavilion  
Gardening Group  
Mandy Attwell, Friends of Grange  
Gardens  
Sara Omar, Somali Elders Group  
Halima Ahmed, Somali Elders Group  
Kaltun Ahmed, Upcycling group  
Zanib Mohamed, Upcycling group  
Anisa Mussa, Youth Forum  
Neil Turnbull, Resident and Lecturer at  
Cardiff University  
108 school pupils from Grange Primary,  
Ninian Park Primary and St Patrick's  
Primary

6 December 2023

Author, Rosie Cripps - [rosiehcripps@gmail.com](mailto:rosiehcripps@gmail.com)

Project Sponsor, Mhairi McVicar - [mcvicarm@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:mcvicarm@cardiff.ac.uk)

Unless otherwise noted, images and graphics by Community Gateway and Value Unit 2023-2024,  
MArch II, Welsh School of Architecture, Cardiff University  
[communitygateway@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:communitygateway@cardiff.ac.uk)

# Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
Aims	6
Why Community-University Partnerships and Why Grangetown?	7
The 5 stages of Love Grangetown	8
<b>2. The Love Grangetown Event</b>	<b>9</b>
Workshop Feedback	10
Turning Wishes into Action	11
<b>3. The Results</b>	<b>12</b>
The Vision	12
Making A Difference	16
Changing Priorities	18
Mini Dreams	19
The Final Projects	20
Goals	21
<b>4. Conclusion</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>5. Recommendations</b>	<b>26</b>



# Executive Summary

Community Gateway supports Cardiff University and local communities to work together towards shared goals. Love Grangetown is an annual co-design and engagement event run by Community Gateway. It aims to co-produce a positive Grangetown vision and action plan which local communities and Cardiff University can work towards together. The event helps build on equitable practices in the University, whilst exchanging knowledge and resources with the local community.

In 2015 at the first Love Grangetown event held by Community Gateway, Cardiff University was an 'outsider' in Grangetown with few connections to the area and no pre-defined plans other than to listen. This blank slate has become one of Community Gateway's greatest assets. The University and local residents went on to develop a project based on a collective vision for Grangetown, stemming from 100's of stories, aspirations and ideas from people from all walks of life. Aspirations that would create a 'dream Grangetown' not only for Community Gateway to pursue, but a mandate for change for anyone willing to collaborate on partnership projects, taking action together to build a positive future. This all took place in a marquee outside Grange Pavilion which was at that time a vacant building.

8 years on, the partnerships that have formed between Cardiff University and Grangetown communities have led to real and visible change in Grangetown: Grange Pavilion, Grange Youth Forum, Grangetown Community Garden, Grangetown World Market, changes we can see that were in the 2015 'Love Grangetown dream'.

Now in 2023, many of the projects that started as dreams in 2015 have come to fruition or are organisations in their own right. Community Gateway's slate is now clearing once again and the team is seeking community wisdom, action and partnerships to drive the next 5 years of collaboration. Love Grangetown 2023 took place in the beautifully renovated community-led Grange Pavilion, embodying the change that the University and community have already achieved together as partners. Once again, Love Grangetown has brought together residents, community groups, students, academics and service providers from across Grangetown to dream of a positive future for the area. Together, they have designed, created and agreed on what first steps can be taken now to make that future happen, using Cardiff University expertise and resources.

A participant at Love Grangetown 2023 described Community Gateway as bringing to Grangetown: "An immense cohesiveness amongst residents and provision of excellent channels to successful projects" Love Grangetown 2023 Participant

This document sets out why we led Love Grangetown, how we did it, the final plan and what we learned along the way. If you would like to partner with us on collaborative projects in Grangetown, please get in touch (see page 2 for contact details)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Mhairi McVicar".

**Mhairi McVicar, Community Gateway Academic Lead**



# 1. Introduction



## Community Gateway

Community Gateway is a Cardiff University initiative that builds long-term partnerships between Cardiff University and local communities for mutual benefit. The project has been piloted in Grangetown since its formal launch in 2014.

Over the past 10 years, Community Gateway has provided more than £100,000 of seed funding to test out more than 85 community-university projects at different scales in Grangetown. The community-university partnerships created have brought more than £2m investment to the area.

Visible and exciting changes have taken place as a result, including the redevelopment of Grange Pavilion and the community activities it hosts, Grange Pavilion Community Garden, Grange Youth Forum, and Grangetown World Market, all of which are now self-sustaining.

## Love Grangetown

The first Love Grangetown event took place in 2015 to build a collective vision for Grangetown and to explore how the diverse Grangetown communities might wish to collaborate with Cardiff University.

The project has continued annually in various forms, always with an aim of: understanding what residents Love about Grangetown, residents' priorities for the area and building connections between Grangetown communities and with Cardiff University.



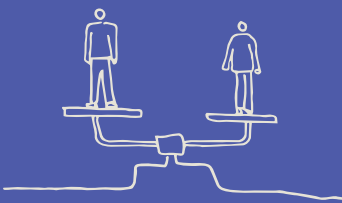
# Love Grangetown Aims

## Community Aims

- Review **community priorities** across Grangetown and how they have changed since 2015
- **Broaden connections** between Grangetown communities
- Identify a **collective, positive vision** for the future of Grangetown
- **Co-produce a shared action plan** between Grangetown communities and the University for the next 1-5 years to build a positive future for the area together
- **Access Cardiff University resources** to achieve Grangetown community aspirations

## Cardiff University Aims

- **Purposefully engage** with communities and partners in Grangetown
- **Recruit new community and University leads** to collaborate on mutually beneficial projects
- Record and evaluate Community Gateway's development since 2015 including **how priorities and relationships** with key Grangetown communities **have changed**
- Provide **comprehensive evidence to funders** and influential stakeholders about how Cardiff University lives its Civic mission by acting as an equal partner with Grangetown communities **to deliver a mutually beneficial, community-designed future**



# Why Community-University Partnerships And Why Grangetown?



***“The long-term ambition is to expand Community Gateway to other areas of Cardiff so that more communities can collaborate on and lead university-community collaborations.”***

Professor Mhairi McVicar

Community Gateway helps Cardiff University demonstrate the positive change that happens when universities and communities collaborate.

Cardiff University understands that communities know best what makes a difference in their lives and neighbourhoods.

The University believes that long-term partnerships with local communities allow them to develop truly meaningful teaching and research opportunities that benefit local people and engage students and staff.

The University recognises that students shouldn't just be consumers of their education, but active members of the community in the cities where they study. Student feedback for Community Gateway shows that being educated in real-life contexts enhances students' learning experiences.

Grangetown was chosen as an initial pilot area to trial the Community Gateway platform. The project has always had 'soft borders' and is always open to collaborating with neighbouring areas. The ambition is to expand Community Gateway to other areas of Cardiff so that more communities can collaborate on and lead university-community partnerships.

grange  
town23



# The 5 stages of Love Grangetown

1

Reflecting on the challenges Grangetown communities have faced over the past 3 years, including the cost of living crisis and COVID-19 pandemic, Community Gateway decided to use Love Grangetown 2023 to ask: *"How can local communities take ownership of their futures in Grangetown?"*

DEFINE

June & July 2023

2

The Love Grangetown and Child Friendly Cardiff team trained 22 Grangetown residents/community group leaders and 35 school pupils to become **Love Grangetown Community Researchers**. The researchers helped write and test-out inspiring questions to discover the best of the past, present and future in Grangetown.

DISCOVER

September 2023

3

The Community Researchers **interviewed 188 people from across Grangetown**. The interviews were analysed, stories were collated, 12 priorities were identified and the community's 'dream Grangetown' was translated from stories into a positive visual image for the future.

DREAM

September & October 2023

4

All those who took part in interviews, the wider community, local charities and Grangetown service providers were invited to take part in the Love Grangetown 2023 workshop. Together, **over 100 people designed and agreed funding for 9 projects** that would test out ways of working towards the community's 'dream Grangetown'.

DESIGN

October 2023

5

Community Gateway will build connections to ensure all 9 projects have both a Grangetown and a University lead. Projects will be prioritised by ease, impact and levels of engagement. **Project leads will be supported and resourced to test out and develop their ideas**. Community Gateway will support successful ideas until they end or are self-sustained.

DELIVER

October 2023 - October 2028



## 2. The Love Grangetown Event



The final Love Grangetown Workshop brought together everyone involved in the project so far and offered an open invitation to the wider community. The event provided the opportunity to hear the results of interviews, reveal and add to a collective vision of the community's 'Dream Grangetown' and to start making practical plans together.

**"Cardiff University brings optimism and lots of sharing of ideas between people who normally don't get a voice."**

Love Grangetown Participant 2023



The workshop was split into two parts, joined together by a free community lunch provided by the Shree Swaminarayan Temple who shared the delights of preparing and eating Sattvic food.

The first half focused on reporting back our Community Researcher's findings and dreaming of the future together, and the second half focused on making plans to bring that future to life.

**"I took away from Love Grangetown 2023 huge value in sharing the knowledge and experience of very diverse individuals and identifying many shared goals"**

Community Researcher 2023





## What value does Community Gateway bring to Grangetown?

Lots! Helps to focus our thoughts, improves engagement and understanding

Inclusion and ownership

Grangetown steers, Community Gateway provides the engine, both provide the fuel

Motivation and the ability to turn wishes into action

Community minded/ motivated work

Skills for people feeling part of projects

Keeps us connected, on our toes and well supported

An immersive cohesiveness amongst residents and provision of excellent channels to successful projects

A platform to engage and get their voices heard

It has reconnected the community through the Pavilion

It brings everyone together

To reinforce the already really present sense of community, it brings a good organisational impetus

Optimism and lots of sharing ideas with people who normally don't get a voice

Listening and helping to make people's ideas happen makes them feel valued and more confident

# Turning Wishes Into Action



The workshop identified 9 project ideas that residents want to deliver in Grangetown over the next 1-5 years, in collaboration with Cardiff University.

Each of the workshop teams requested £400 to develop their project ideas.

Community Gateway will now work with those people from the community, who volunteered to lead projects, to develop each project idea.

The team will first make connections between Community Project Leads and University representatives to make sure each Love Grangetown project has both a community and University lead. Once connections are made, the Community Gateway team will help take the ideas forward by assisting with events; sign-posting to, and supporting, funding proposals; providing access to expertise in the University; and by building connections with partners across Grangetown and the wider city.

Projects will be prioritised by ease, impact and levels of engagement, with quicker and easier projects being trialled out first and more strategic ideas being planned over several years as part of an initiative to co-produce a meaningful Local Area Development Plan and a Place Plan for Grangetown.

Since 2015, what sometimes starts as small projects can often have a ripple effect, growing larger or leading to new initiatives over time. As well as planning specific partnership projects, Community Gateway also allow space for emergent ideas and partnerships to unfold.



# 3. The Results



## The vision defined by interviews

'Dream Grangetown' is a welcoming and happy place. The community are committed to nurturing clean, green spaces. The parks, streets and window boxes are filled with flowers, vegetables and edible plants. The outdoor spaces have plenty of benches where people sit and connect with one another, green spaces are well-used and safe for children to play. Play spaces have been designed for inclusivity with multi-sensory features and gentle sounds. More bins and community composting schemes have reduced waste and provided compost for local growing.

New sports facilities have been developed like football pitches and basketball courts. A natural swimming pool has been built in one of the parks, surrounded by wildflowers which has increased biodiversity. Walking routes, decorated with street art, connect the parks and green spaces, all of these facilities have improved residents' health and wellbeing.

Outdoor spaces are well-lit and the old Park Keepers' huts have been turned into small pop-up enterprises, providing spaces for young people to build skills and try out business ideas whilst offering a watching eye over the park to make sure people feel safe. Young people are well-supported with access to mentoring, internships and apprenticeships from local businesses, tradespeople or further education institutions. This prevents any anti-social behaviour and reduces crime.

The streets are accessible for all, particularly those with mobility issues, the streets feel clean and tidy and derelict buildings have been renovated into innovative spaces and affordable housing so young people can afford to stay in, or return to, the area.

Local people have taken action together to address equality issues such as food poverty and homelessness by developing community housing, food redistribution and growing schemes.





## The vision defined by interviews

Cycling paths wind through Grangetown and are well connected so less people have to use cars, some cars now fly which helps reduce traffic in the area, the river is well utilised with boat taxis and water sports.

An electric tram reduces emissions, providing better transport and dead-end streets have been created with communal seating and growing areas, forming more pedestrianised areas. The reduced traffic has improved air quality.

The lanes behind people's houses have been renovated to provide spaces for entertainment and growing. Regular trips take place from Grangetown to new areas and to the community farm which has been developed by Grangetown residents for people to learn about food production and growing.

Dream Grangetown celebrates diversity and intergenerational activities, bringing people from all walks of life together to enjoy one another's company and to share ideas.

Communities of different faiths, ages, languages and cultures regularly come together to learn about each other's traditions, beliefs or ways of life. People help each other and act without judgement. Even very young children help run and get involved in events and there is purposeful engagement with older people who are no longer disconnected from the wider community.

Grange Pavilion continues to act as a thriving hub for the area, providing more evening activities and intergenerational events and initiatives. The doors stay open until late and anyone can use the communal spaces.

There is excellent provision for older people and parents with young children who need somewhere to go during the day and for young people during the holidays.

The high street is thriving, providing a range of goods and supporting local independent businesses.

Little pockets of greenery or trees or of seating areas where people can sit in a public place other than in the park, we'd love to stop and talk with each other and other communities in the area. I think that if we can have little kind of defined impacts, like bench chairs that are located throughout the area, I think it would help the community so much.

A decent cycle path across the whole of Grangetown.

Children as young as five years, six years seven involved in events as well. Perhaps organising their own one and inviting their peers from school. I think that'd be good to bring people in from different areas, not just Grangetown.

Renovate old buildings. That's what I would love to see. So the housing confidence and job prospects for the young is there, and for the young to be able to come back to Grangetown.

People being catered for, in a more fair way than food banks.

I'd like to see the boat. Boat routes opened up so that way the locals can make use of it as well as tourists.

Happy people and a level pavement pledge to drop curbs.

More local businesses popping up supported by residents. Public transport improved. There would be more support / activities for residents. Especially babies, children and young people.

Bringing the older generations together. I know they have divergent and different needs and different requirements. But if we could find some sort of common ground, I think it would be beautiful to see because a lot of these elderly people within the community are isolated within their own particular communities.

Little growing areas around or ends of roads that are just blanked off. They could be used for little projects, bring in school children and try and get some free food growing for the community.

More of these projects, engaging with the youth, and giving them spaces to develop their enterprises, different activities for young people to get involved with. Like the youth-led cafe, it's something different and unique to the area.

**"If all my dreams and wishes for Grangetown came true I would see..."**

What I would like to see in the future is maybe some sort of alternative transport, for example... trams... they'd either be free, or they'd be considerably cheaper than the buses.

I think mixed groups of cultures and ages. I think that's something that we could encourage more of, more connection between different cultures and connection between different ages within our community, for sure.

Something that would benefit all ages. So I think something like a walking path around the whole area. And perhaps even linking the parks. Just something that I'd like to see so that there are things for people to do that don't cost any money.

A lot more community shops, maybe some community housing, maybe people will be running their own housing Co-ops. I'd like to see maybe more places for children to play, more green spaces, more gardens, and places for us to come together as communities, communal spaces, and maybe some groups that form to make changes in the community.

I honestly would love to learn more about each other's faiths, cultures, languages, traditions, we can learn so much from each other. We have so many different nationalities and backgrounds in our community. So yeah, it'd be lovely to see each other and mingle, and just share ideas.

I think definitely clean, healthy neighbourhoods with lots of green infrastructure, good quality housing that accommodates different cultures.

I'd like to see 'Doughnut Economics' applied to Grangetown, creating a fairer community within planetary limits.

I would love to see our elders using our facilities, encouraging them to come out of the houses and being part of our community, that will be lovely. We have many elders, I think in our community who don't really go out and meet each other and no one knows about each other

I would like there to be more high street shops, more of a mix of things and places for people to go to on the high street.

I'd also like to see Grangetown kind of come into its own a little bit more when it comes to the celebration of diversity from multiple different kinds, like, not just from an ethnicity point of view. You know, from like a, I guess, like an LGBTQ standpoint, when there's like, loads of people in the area who are from that group. There are loads of Welsh speakers here. I'd like to see Grangetown celebrate and honour its diversity more by hosting more events that celebrate those communities.

Grangetown is just a lot more safer and by the age of seven, you're allowed to go outside by yourself.

**“If all my dreams and wishes for Grangetown came true I would see...”.**



# Making a Difference



“ I helped organise Grangetown festival for the last two years, which I absolutely love. It keeps me going, its very stressful from January to June. But I've had memories of that growing up as a child. I've spent a lot of times working with the Welsh nursery and getting them involved in the parade.

But it's not just the festival, the parade, the day, the everything. I really hope that it makes a difference to some people. People coming out, that may not come out for months on end.”



“ My neighbour is fairly old, and he's not living with anyone at the moment, because his wife recently passed away.

So I usually speak to him on a regular basis, checking up on him, get his shopping, you know the whole lot, it's not something that is a burden on me, it's something I want to do.”



“ On our street, we'll always be willing to help each other. If we come outside, we'll stand and chat to each other and say hello. I know most of the neighbours on my street, they've all lived there for a long time.

We've got a fantastic Baker on our street, who makes cakes for us all at Christmas, brings them around on either Christmas Eve or Christmas day.”



“ When I was seven and there was a homeless man, he didn't feel very well. And so I gave him some food, like a hot dog and a coffee.”



“ I facilitate in the setup of a community cafe space, which is offering employment to local young people, to give them experience in employment, but also in running a small enterprise as well. That's been incredible, and to connect with lots of local people, our customers and being able to give our team the opportunity to develop. It offers creativity and the fundraisers that they've organised has nothing to do with me, that's all their ideas. I'm just there to facilitate offer the support we can.”



“ One of the things that I've been involved with this the youth endowment fund project, through citizens UK. We're hoping through that project to make a major difference to the community in reducing knife crime and providing opportunities for young people. It's a great opportunity to see change to unlock resources for the next generation.”



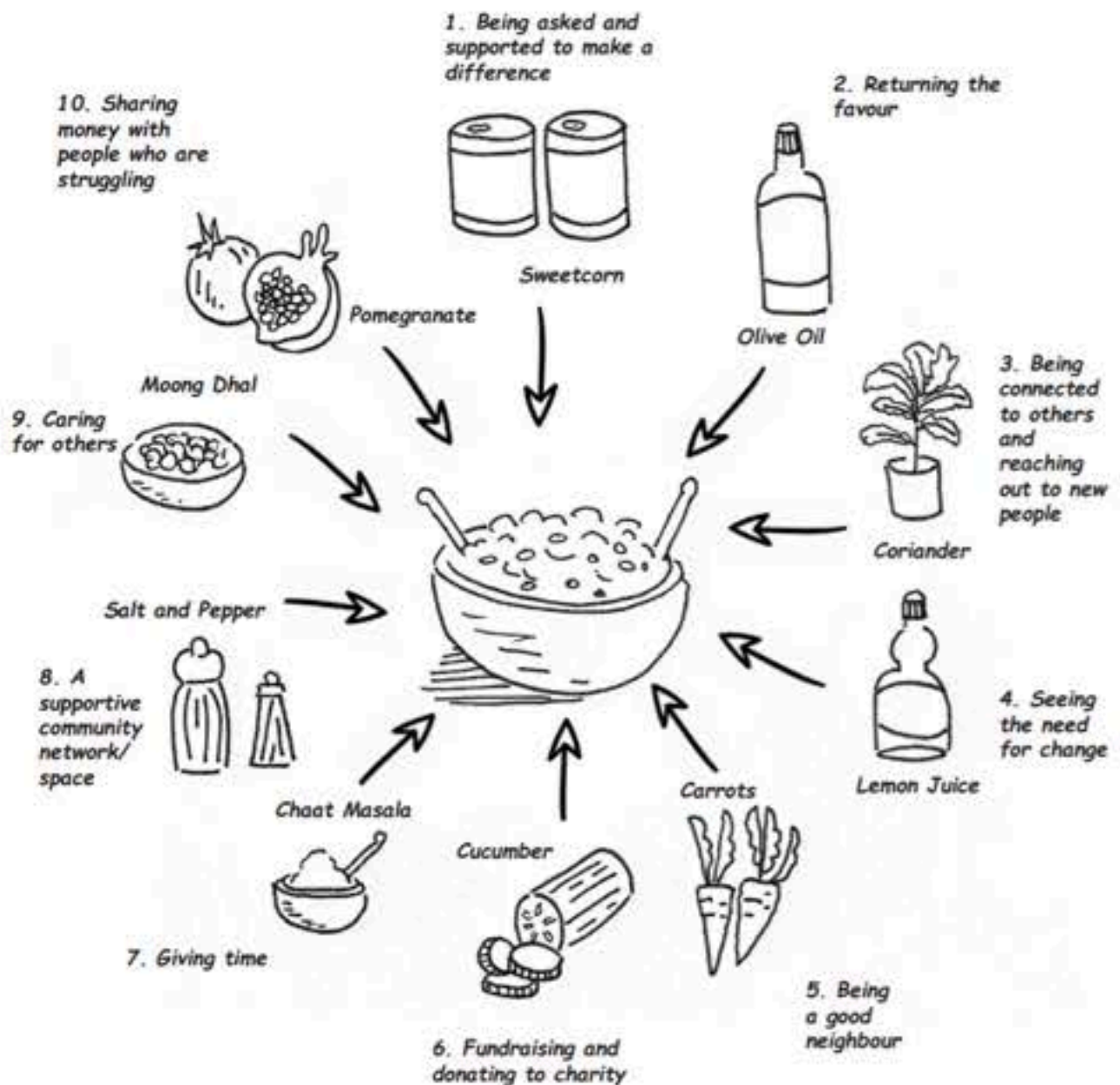
The Love Grangetown Community Researchers collected story after story of ways people in Grangetown have made a difference from small acts of kindness, to leading local community projects, inspiring Paralympic athletes and building a whole Temple purely with volunteers.

The stories highlight the generosity, commitment and compassion that already exist in Grangetown as well as projects and initiatives that can be scaled up, replicated or widely shared to help create the 'dream Grangetown'.

Everyone interviewed could think of ways they had helped someone in the community or ways they had been helped themselves and everyone spoken to said they were willing to get involved in local projects to work towards a positive future for Grangetown.



# What does it take to make a difference?



The research also uncovered 10 'ingredients' that enable people to make a difference. 'Being asked' featured as one of the top 10 ingredients as did 'a supportive community/network or space'. Some participants shared that they didn't always have the confidence or recognise that their skills could be helpful to others.

This doesn't just benefit the wider community; participants told us that making a difference is 'the best feeling in the world', people's acts of kindness helped them build their own skills, self-confidence and wellbeing, with some people finding the only way to overcome their own personal grief or mental health issues was by helping others.

Taking time to explore how people might be able to make a difference, asking for their help and supporting them to do so could empower more people to work towards a positive future for Grange Town. Equally, community 'infrastructure' can help amplify the community's impact.

# 2023 Priorities



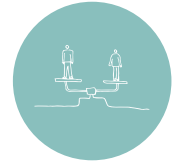
**Green & Clean**



**Provision for Young People**



**Housing & Character**



**Equal Opportunities**



**Transport for Everyone**



**Shop & Work Locally**



**Health & Wellbeing**



**Community Events & Activities**



**Community Action**



**Connecting Across Generations**



**Job & Skills**



**Safe Grangetown**

# 2015 Priorities



# Mini Dreams



## Equal Opportunities & Community Action

Everyone's dreams are heard and valued. New opportunities for the whole community. e.g warm hubs and safe streets which are inclusive for the whole of Grangetown.

## Community Events & Activities

Leisure spaces to accommodate community gatherings (faith, youth, active waterfront).

## Shop & Work Locally

Growing, promoting and celebrating independents. Protect local diversification of pop-up shops.

## Transport for Everyone & Safe Grangetown

People of all ages move around freely and safely, at all times. Universal access to green spaces locally, led by Community Safety Champions.

## Green & Clean

Accessible and clean green spaces for all ages, to be sympathetic to wildlife, with the opportunity for public edible spaces.

## Health & Wellbeing

A holistic approach promoting well-being through community based activities: physical, nutritional and mental health to achieve resilience.

## Jobs & Skills & Provision for Youth

Life skills and mentoring for young people. After school support and child care working with businesses to develop role models.

## Connecting Across Generations

A weekly intergenerational meeting between children and older people to do activities and form connections. An opportunity for different communities to come together.

## Housing & Character

Celebrating the history of Grangetown and ensuring that the brick facades that shape historic Grangetown are reflected in any new housing project schemes. Community led green spaces.

# Final Ideas

**Regular Community Trips:** for people from across communities to come together and share ideas for community-led action.

**Women's Exercise Classes:** promoting healthy living, wellbeing and skill-building opportunities.

**Community-led Housing:** connecting the University to an existing community group aiming to develop a housing co-op providing affordable housing in the area.

**Reclaim the Gas Works:** turn the site into green housing and a multi-purpose hub with green space, tool sharing, upcycling, skills workshops and allotments. The area will be surrounded by cycle paths & will trial 'safety champions'.

**Edible Public Local Gardens & Spaces:** food for everyone grown in public spaces, flowers/food/herbs, a community group to maintain it, multiple, different sized green spaces.

**After School Mentoring:** PTA meeting in Grange Pavilion, a regular programme of activities, promoted by universities, colleges, businesses, high schools.

**Intergenerational Cooking Classes:** 1-3 people demonstrating a cultural dish with volunteer support, food safety and first aid certification offered, connections with schools in the area.

**Skills Swap and Showcase Local Businesses:** Local business showcase event in vacant shops or retail sites with opportunities to connect local people with local businesses and exchange skills.

**Clearing the Lanes Behind People's Houses:** to use as spaces for growing, connecting, street art, playing and events.



# Goals

November 2023

6 - 12 months

- Meet with all 'Community Leads' who volunteered to lead projects at Love Grangetown 2023
- Identify University partners
- Research what additional resources are available at the University
- Connect with wider stakeholders in the public and private sectors who may have an interest in supporting projects
- Develop relevant teaching, research or staff engagement briefs to support project ideas

- All easier ideas tested out by the end of year:
- Community trips
  - Play Lanes
  - After school mentoring
  - Edible gardens
  - Women's fitness group
  - Intergenerational cooking classes
  - Skills swap and business showcase event

Year 1

- Develop detailed plans & teaching/research briefs for the following long-term projects with community-university partners:
  1. Community-led Housing,
  2. Reclaiming the Gas Works
  3. Community Farm.
- Link with WSA funded research developing a Local Area Development plan for South Cardiff.

Year 2

- Support any consultations or launch events required for long-term project ideas
- Seek relevant funding if required and align with student teaching and academic research
- Join multi-agency meetings relevant to each long-term project
- Evaluate the success of the easier projects, based on: how many people attended, equality, diversity and inclusion, University benefits and community benefits, what was learned & how to improve
- Apply the learning from less successful projects and try the ideas again.
- Support well-received projects to develop

Year 3

- Help source sustainable income for the 'easier' projects that want to continue
- Continue to develop teaching and research briefs to add value if needed
- Explore skill-building opportunities in the University, or with local training providers, to ensure projects can be sustained by community partners
- Support the implementation of the long-term projects as required
- Evaluate progress of the longer-term community-University partnerships so far, apply learning and plan the next phase of the partnership
- Explore what additional resources might be required and seek funding

Year 4

- Develop clear governance structures, source or provide training if required
- Identify what training or capacity-building opportunities are available at the University for community partners
- Prepare to hand over any university-led activities or develop a long-term partnership agreement
- The 'easier' projects will continue to run with only 'light touch' University support in preparation for becoming fully self-sustaining
- Continue to develop teaching and research briefs so that students and research can add value where needed

Year 5

- The 'easier' projects are now self-sustaining or have drawn to a close. Further evaluation will help measure the impact and effectiveness of the community-university partnerships and the projects they created together
- Report back on the development of each of the 9 projects
- Review community priorities for Grangetown
- Develop plans for the next 5 years of collaboration between Cardiff University and Grangetown

November 2028

# 4. Conclusion



Love Grangetown 2023 has been a joyful and productive collaboration between Cardiff University and Grangetown communities. All project aims have been furthered and important learning for future iterations of Love Grangetown have been shared in this report.

Having repeated the approaches used in Love Grangetown 2015, and with comparative data from Love Grangetown events from 2018-2022, we have demonstrated that taking time to plan meaningful and purposeful engagement ensures more equal and inclusive partnerships. The data shows that the most diverse Love Grangetown projects took place in 2015 and 2023, after months of outreach activities.

Our committed Community Researchers who worked with us to deliver Love Grangetown 2023 shared that they felt 'heard' when taking part in Love Grangetown. Their own willingness to listen, with genuine curiosity and kindness, extended that feeling to a whole network of residents Community Gateway had never met before.

Training Community Gateway's existing networks to help reach new communities was hugely successful in both 2015 and 2023 and the process has allowed Community Gateway to strengthen existing relationships, build new ones and re-connect with communities, particularly with the Shree Swaminarayan Temple and older generations. Crucially it's also enabled the community to strengthen and extend their own networks, with Love Grangetown 2023 participants recognising that Community Gateway "brings people together to affect change" (Love Grangetown 2023 participant).

Asking positive questions about the past, present and future prior to the Love Grangetown workshop motivated large numbers of the community to attend. Participants arrived at the final 5-hour event with the energy, positivity and enthusiasm to reimagine the future and to make practical plans they could commit to.



Equally, crafting nearly 200 community members' 'dreams' for Grangetown into an inspiring image to work towards, and look back on in future years, provided an inspiring mandate for positive change. This mandate allowed Cardiff University and Grangetown communities at Love Grangetown to design and prepare ideas for action which they will now aim to deliver together over the next 3-5 years. The 2015 'dream Grangetown' image shows what partnerships between Cardiff University and Grangetown communities can achieve.

Feedback from all parties (Community Researchers, University staff and students, community members, local partners) has shown the positivity and value that people took away from being part of Love Grangetown 2023. The majority of that feedback referred to the values and approach underlying Love Grangetown, which has laid the foundations of our long-term partnerships with communities since 2015. The Love Grangetown team acted with an unwavering commitment to brave, positive action towards tangible change, curiously and inclusively learning together, whilst valuing equality and diversity. Kindness and friendliness also became unexpected values that summarised Love Grangetown workshops and training: "Community Gateway brings Inclusion, kindness, inspiration, empowerment" (Love Grangetown participant 2023).

These values were conveyed at every opportunity throughout Love Grangetown, setting the ground rules for all events and activities and this was noticed and acted on by participants "there was warmth and laughter at every single meeting a great basis on which to build a future for the community" Love Grangetown Community Researcher 2023.

In an effort to manage expectations, these values and ways of working have been lost between public bodies and local communities "73% of respondents in the CCQOL report (ccqol.org) shared that that they had never been asked to take part in a planning consultation, 11% said there was no point as their opinion is never taken into account and 11% said they didn't understand the information presented to them." Love Grangetown is a reminder that local communities are the experts in their own lives and that building meaningful relationships with communities is of real benefit.



grange  
town23



These values aren't just 'nice to have's': they have led to pragmatic and tangible outcomes: 9 new community-designed practical projects with Community Leads, nearly £4000 seed funding collectively allocated to test out project ideas and 12 new priority themes that Grangetown communities want to collaboratively address (and how they have changed since 2015).

In addition, poignant life lessons have been learned by the students involved in Love Grangetown, who took away from the project the importance of 'listening, appreciating and understanding' communities and how valuable that can be in their practice: "I hadn't appreciated just how important this work is" (Architecture student Love Grangetown 2023). The many students who have taken part in Love Grangetown will hopefully disseminate this learning in their own fields.

The benefits to Cardiff University aren't just about improving student and staff experience or developing meaningful research and teaching opportunities. Projects like Love Grangetown demonstrate the social and civic value of universities: 64% of attendees reported that their views of Cardiff University had changed for the better after Love Grangetown 2023, with one participant observing, "I didn't realise their commitment to the community". The remaining 36% said their views of Cardiff University were already positive. By working in appreciative and co-productive ways we are learning that, even when communities evolve, public institutions such as universities can offer stability, support, resource and gravitas to help communities identify shared aspirations and start taking steps towards them.

Love Grangetown 2023 research has shown us what it takes to make a difference and that doing so, no matter how big or small, is 'the best feeling in the world' (Love Grangetown 2023 Interviewee). Making a positive difference improves our mental wellbeing: whether that be in a voluntary capacity in our local neighbourhoods, through impactful academic research or as a student and active citizen in the city where they live and work.



grange  
town23



We know that to make a difference we need to support communities by providing infrastructure and support, we've learned that bringing together individuals from the community and University to develop ideas based on their passions and interests helps enable people to affect positive change.

Finally, we heard time and time again, why Grangetown? Residents acknowledged Cardiff University's investment in the area but they want to see it shared with other communities. If time can be made for more Cardiff University staff, students and academics to develop mutually beneficial partnerships with more local communities, everyone benefits. Cardiff University has added value to Grangetown by bringing "optimism and lots of sharing ideas with people who normally don't get a voice" (Love Grangetown participant 2023) Equally, through Community Gateway's work in Grangetown, and other community-based projects like CAER Heritage, Cardiff University is demonstrating it has the longevity, curiosity and resource to deliver wide-scale social value for communities, whilst providing engaging, meaningful and uplifting experiences and research for students and staff at Cardiff University.

We started Love Grangetown with a question, 'How can communities in Grangetown take ownership of their futures?' We have learned that it takes a commitment to equality diversity and inclusion, purposeful engagement, relentless positivity (whilst recognising and empathising with local challenges and issues), a network of committed people who care, asking people to get involved and giving them the confidence to do so, warmth and laughter at every stage, commitment to curiously learning together (as opposed to 'delivering to or for' communities), practical plans, personal commitments and momentum inspired by meaningful relationships, built through positive stories of the past and a collective vision of the future.

As systems thinker Donella Meadows shared: "we can't predict the future, but we can envision it and bring it lovingly into being". Now it is time to take action, as equal partners, and to watch what unfolds.



 grange  
town23

# 5. Recommendations

## a) Love Grangetown Project timings

1. Allow a total of:
  - 6-12 months for outreach with new communities and schools
  - 3-6 months for outreach with existing networks
  - 3 weeks for interviews to take place
  - 2 weeks for the analysis stage
  - 2 weeks for students to develop workshop materials
2. Align key dates with University and primary school term dates.
3. Align key dates with relevant research and teaching opportunities at the University.
4. Increase time frames for training, analysis and design stages if large numbers of school pupils are interested in taking part. A separate project with schools could be run over a full school term, prior to or in parallel with Love Grangetown.
5. From a resource and participant burn-out perspective, the level of engagement at Love Grangetown 2023 isn't recommended to run annually on the same scale. Holding a large-scale Love Grangetown event every 3-5 years is recommended as a means of refocusing, maintaining momentum and raising awareness as universities and communities continuously evolve.

## b) Community Gateway Engagement

1. It's recommended that next steps for engagement address engagement gaps with:
  - 'Mixed' and 'Other Ethnic' communities
  - Men
  - Christian communities
  - Those registered as disabled under the Equality Act
  - Those with non-UK identities
2. Further research is advised to explore which non-UK nationalities are well represented in Grangetown and how best to build relationships for future iterations of Love Grangetown.
3. Share with Community Researchers exactly which communities Community Gateway would like to prioritise engagement with.
4. Regularly monitor which relationships to *maintain* as well as broaden.
5. Monitor which communities are involved in all Community Gateway activities to help address any gaps in engagement as and when they arise.
6. Plan engagement activities into all Community Gateway projects to help ensure the project remains inclusive and equal and that these values are maintained over the years.
7. Develop plans at the outset of the project to include the views of people who don't speak English. If further time and resources could be allowed in the outreach and engagement stage, there may be opportunities to recruit bilingual Community Researchers who can report back to communities after the Love Grangetown workshop.
8. Widen engagement to North and South Grangetown, whilst maintaining engagement via Grange Pavilion.
9. Support time for more academics, staff and students to co-produce projects with new communities, responding to evidenced interest and support for ongoing collaboration.

# Recommendations

## c) Research and reporting back

1. Conduct further analysis of the interview data for a more comprehensive picture of the valuable ideas residents shared.
2. Conduct an analysis of the 'flip side' of 'Dream Grangetown' to explore which issues and needs it aims to address. This would be beneficial for those funders focused on a deficit approach to funding.
3. Involve students in community research, conducting interviews alongside Community Researchers in order to understand the people and stories behind the data.
4. Review and reduce the number of online survey questions to encourage participation.
5. Explore ways to make the 'dream Grangetown' image a more permanent fixture, in line with residents' ideas of creating 'street art' to support mental health and wellbeing in the area.
6. Trial ways of involving community members in developing the 'dream Grangetown' image.
7. Run the schools training in smaller groups on separate days.
8. Provide Community Researcher training on separate days and evening sessions after 6pm to allow people to return from work and to pray if required.
9. Community Researchers need only conduct three interviews and on their own schedules. If time is short, asking interviewers to pre-arrange their interviews could also help.

## d) The Workshop and future events

1. Suggest that people don't work on the idea that they arrive with at the Love Grangetown workshop, so that participants have an open agenda. Or, create separate areas to develop existing ideas and to co-create new ideas with others.
2. All AV equipment should be tested the day before the event and audio or videos provided at least 2 days prior to the event.
3. Make the workshop shorter or with more varied childcare activities and if the workshop is an event in itself do not plan any additional activities either side of it.
4. Refresh staff training in GDPR and Customer Relationship Management Systems to stay connected with, and to build connections between, communities.
5. Allocate time at the workshop for service providers to share details of relevant initiatives or funds.

## f) Making a difference as equal partners

1. Participants reported that 'making a difference' is itself a way of improving health and wellbeing (one of residents' top 3 priorities for Grangetown). Embracing this could create pathways for recruiting more community partners in future. Take time to explore how individuals might want to make a difference, asking for their help and supporting them to do so could empower more people to work towards a positive future for Grangetown. Links with Life Long Learning may help with this and therefore amplify the University and community's impact.
2. Pool resources with other public bodies to align consultation activities, reduce costs, increase engagement levels and reduce demands on local communities.

**"Civic engagement presents a challenge to universities to be of and not just in the community: not simply to engage in 'knowledge-transfer' but to establish a dialogue across the boundary between the university and its community which is open-ended, fluid and experimental."**

Professor Sir David Watson

## **Bibliography**

David L. Cooperrider, Diana Whitney, Jaqueline M. Stavros, Appreciative Inquiry Handbook For Leaders of Change, 2nd Edition, published in 2008 by Crown Custom Publishing Inc, Ohio

Diana Whitney & Amanda Torosten-Bloom, The Power of Appreciative Inquiry, A Practical Guide to Positive Change, published in 2003 by Berrett-Koehler Publishers Inc, California pg 6

Donella H. Meadows, edited by Diana Wright, Thinking in Systems, A Primer, published in 2008 by Sustainability Institute

Professor Sir David Watson, Managing University and Civic Engagement, published in 2007 by Maidenhead, Open University Press pg3