

Mid-term impact review for *Empowering Design Practices*

A five-year research project funded
by the Arts and Humanities Research Council



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Executive Summary

About the project

Empowering Design Practices is a £1.5m collaborative research project that aims to explore how community-led design can help empower those who look after historic places of worship to create more open, vibrant and sustainable places that respect and enhance their heritage. The project is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) from 2014-2019 and brings together academic researchers and professionals as equal partners.



The core team leading on the co-design and delivery of the project activity is the strategic partnership of The Design Group at the Open University and The Glass-House Community Led Design. Other key partners are the Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic England, the Historic Religious Buildings Association, LiveWorks, Wright & Wright Architects, and the consultant Becky Payne.

To date (August 2018), the project has provided direct support, training and specialist workshops to around 320 people in over 50 communities across England, and interacted with more than 900 people through design-related public engagement activities.

Why this report?

The Open University commissioned an interim impact audit on the project at its half-way point in order to: understand and share what has already been achieved; collect data to support an impact case study for the 2021 UK Research Excellence Framework; and make evidence-based decisions about the future direction of the project in particular around its impact and its strategies for collecting impact data.

How was impact defined?

Evaluating collaborative projects is challenging because the word 'impact' means different things to different people, depending on which aspects of the project they find most valuable, meaningful and worthwhile. An outcome that is of crucial importance to one project partner might be barely noticed by another. To make sense of partners' perspectives and reach a shared vision of what the project might achieve, a *multi-level evaluation* approach was used. The following four arenas of possible impact have been identified:

1. **Direct human and socio-economic impact** of EDP community-led design activities on individuals, groups and communities looking after historic places of worship
2. **Wider socio-economic and policy impact** of EDP research insights and produced materials in policy and practice of organisations and local communities
3. **Academic impact** of the produced new theories, methods and ideas on the academic community
4. **Educational impact** of the produced resources and pedagogical models on teaching and learning within and beyond the involved institutions.

The current version of this report focuses principally on **direct impact of EDP activity** but it also discusses wider social and economic impacts and strategies for achieving the expected impacts. In thinking about direct impact the consultant working with the core EDP team identified a set of key indicators that were organised in the following themes.

The overarching impact theme was identified as:

- **Empowerment:** development of people's capacity to engage in the design of their place of worship to meet their needs, and/or development of people's capacity to effect positive change in their community through design;

The overarching impact theme was then broken down to more specific themes:

- **Connectivity:** development of the capacity to connect with others, share insights and build networks;
- **Morale:** development of confidence and a wide variety of positive emotions that can drive change;
- **Learning:** acquiring or applying (design) skills, methods, knowledge and understanding;
- **Perceptions:** development of people's ability to reflect on existing perceptions of their building, faith, community, heritage or places of worship and understand future potential;
- **Engagement:** the development of the ability to mobilise and work with other people from the wider community.

Each theme had more specific indicators that are presented in the main text of this report. These themes and associated indicators were approached and investigated as possible sources of positive changes in individual and community practices and outcomes. For instance, this included changes in the capacity of people to organise their own events and connect with others, develop new ideas for their place, improve collaboration with other professionals, secure new funding etc.

How was the impact audit carried out?

Phase 1 of this work, from May to July 2017, focused on analysing data that the research team had already collected from participants in the EDP project activities. These included feedback forms completed by participants at the end of an activity, debriefing sessions organised by the research team after an activity, in which the participants spoke about the activity and any impacts that it had generated; and other evidence collected such as email conversations. Phases 2 and 3 from August 2017 to July 2018 expanded the dataset with new interviews, field trips and focus groups with people who have benefitted from different EDP activities, to capture sufficient variation in the type and level of engagement with the project, as well as to include different types of beneficiaries where relevant (volunteers and professionals). Interviews with project partners were also carried out to help explore socio-economic impact expectations and trajectories.

What has EDP already achieved? A brief summary of audit findings

General impact data: the scope and reach of EDP activity

By August 2018, the EDP project has:

- Delivered 45 workshops or events that ranged from half-day workshops to two-day training programs, supporting 54 communities across England
- Directly supported around 320 people through training and specialist support workshops
- Directly engaged more than 900 people in design-related public activities

- Reached people and communities through social media and resources provided on the project website (statistics not considered for this report)

Direct impact

In order to gather evidence about the direct impact across the key impact indicators, the study used the following data (for details see Table 3):

- Feedback forms, debrief sessions and e-mail communications, recording the views of 153 people from 45 community groups who benefitted from 6 different types of EDP activities
- Phone interviews and site visits at 8 places of worship recording the views of 18 participants and community leaders who benefitted from 4 different types of EDP activities

The above data, provided evidence for the following indicators:

- EDP activities helped the collaboration between different people or helped groups to develop more collaborative strategies (**'Connectivity'**);
- EDP activities helped people feel better about themselves and their projects (**'Morale'**);
- EDP activities helped people to develop new ideas and change, at least to some extent, the way that they perceive their building or the project itself (**'Perceptions'**);
- EDP activities helped groups to increase engagement or develop strategies for increasing the number of people within the community who had some involvement with the historic religious building, e.g. through charitable or educational activities (**'Engagement'**);
- EDP activities helped people and groups to acquire and apply new skills, methods, knowledge and understanding (**'Learning'**);
- EDP activities helped people and groups to engage more directly in design activities (**'Empowerment to/through design'**);

The above indicators were identified by people as sources (i.e. factors) that influenced change in their practices and outcomes, such as changes in the way they engage the wider community, or the way they communicate and collaborate both within their respective congregations and with external organisations (e.g. grant-giving trusts), leading to success in gaining new resources for their project or new design solutions. Notable examples include:

- A church in Bideford which following an EDP workshop that helped them develop their community engagement strategy, were able to organise their own public event bringing together around 150 people and ultimately secure £13K funding to refurbish the entrance.
- A church in Sheffield which following a number of EDP workshops and training were able to develop their own project development strategy. Indeed, they commissioned a member of another group that they had met through EDP workshops to help them develop their strategic development plan. Following their collaboration with EDP, they went on to secure £98K in funding for initial repairs to their building, and are now in the process of developing an ambitious refurbishment plan.
- A church in Stoke-on-Trent which reordered the church, funded by a Heritage Lottery Fund grant (£205K), to convert part of the interior into a heated space that could serve as a community heritage centre. The interviewees made it clear that the likelihood of this happening without EDP intervention would have been extremely low, as members of the community (including the priest) had previously been disheartened, and even the Bishop had described it as 'that impossible church'.

- A church in Stratford-upon-Avon, has begun to implement a project idea coming directly from one of the EDP workshops. By making small-scale changes – removing pews to create a social space at the back of the church with chairs and tables, and renovating the small kitchenette – the church has already enabled coffee mornings and a Christmas gathering for older people to be held within the church itself, as well as creating a space for charity Christmas card sales.

Where next? The wider socio-political impact

Currently the focus of EDP project activity is shifting from developing and delivering direct interventions for groups looking after historic places of worship (2015-2018) to creating resources, including an online course, policy recommendations and academic publications (2018-2020). The following developments have been noted as noteworthy:

- The EDP project has provided evidence to the HLF ‘Places of Worship Practice Group’ Extraordinary Meeting (22nd of April 2016)
- EDP features in the Resources and Advice section of the Taylor Review commissioned by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to examine the funding and sustainability of listed Church of England buildings and ensure that they are conserved for future generations. EDP resources are also recommended to be used in the Pilot funded to explore the recommendations of the Review in places of worship in Greater Manchester and Suffolk.
- EDP will provide guidance materials to the Heritage Lottery Fund to support their new Places of Worship: Inspiring Ideas Fund
- EDP recommendations will appear in The Baroness Warsi Foundation report on Modern Places of Worship.

The majority of impact work has focused on individuals and groups looking after historic places of worship. While this has been the primary target group for most of EDP’s activities, further impact evaluation includes other beneficiaries such as students participating in live projects, professionals attending EDP activities or using EDP methods or resources, learners taking the EDP online course and researchers themselves.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	5
1.1 About the EDP Project	5
1.2 About the impact audit	8
2. Evaluating the Direct Impact on Participants in EDP activities	11
2.1 Audit methodology	11
2.2 Overview of findings	13
2.3 Discussion of findings by theme	17
3. Initial Exploration of Second Arena: social and economic impact	35
3.1 Audit methodology	36
3.2 Preliminary findings	36
4. Conclusions and Recommendations	37
References	38
Appendix: Full description of the framework development methodology	39

1. Introduction

This report has been produced as the output of a consultancy funded by The Open University from 1 May 2018 to 31 July 2018. Ashley Jay Brockwell (Founder and CEO of Green Spiral Consulting) was commissioned to work with co-researchers to design an impact framework and explore the impact of the ongoing multi-stakeholder collaborative research project *Empowering Design Practices*.

1.1 About the EDP project

Empowering Design Practices (EDP) is a £1.5m research project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) under the Connected Communities and Design Highlight Notice. The project started in October 2014 and will end in October 2019. EDP aims to explore how community-led design can help empower those who look after historic places of worship to create more open, vibrant and sustainable places that respect and enhance their heritage. It is led by the Open University (OU) in partnership with Historic England, Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic Religious Buildings Alliance, The Glass-House Community Led Design and Live Works, with additional support from consultant Becky Payne and architect Stephen Smith (Wright & Wright).

The core team leading on the co-design and delivery of the project activity is the strategic partnership of The Design Group at the Open University and The Glass-House Community Led Design, who have collaborated on multiple AHRC-funded projects dedicated to design, people and place over the past seven years.

To date, the EDP project has engaged with over 50 communities looking after historic places of worship across England, providing direct support, training and specialist workshops to more than 300 people - helping them develop their awareness, skills and confidence to lead design projects in their places. The project activities have engaged more than 900 people in design related public engagement events.

The EDP project has worked together with these communities in a variety of different ways. This includes providing bespoke materials, workshops and support to projects either in a targeted way or as part of a longer-term interaction with individual places (longitudinal support), as well as themed workshops involving multiple communities who come from a specific geographic area, faith group, or share a common issue/interest. The project also offers other types of support such as training programmes, engagement with student work ('Live Projects') or study tours.

All these activities aim to help people engage with design (e.g. through workshops helping to identify needs and assets, develop a vision, negotiate conflicts and brainstorm ideas), and to engage with their wider communities (e.g. open community days) to support an inclusive, community-led design process.

Here are some highlights of activities that outline the reach of EDP projects:

- **Longitudinal support:** 12 bespoke workshops with **4 communities** (London, Sheffield, Chester and Stourbridge) that the project has supported longitudinally, i.e. providing longer-term support in a responsive way to community groups looking after a historic place of worship. These activities



engaged **84 people**

- **Targeted support:** 5 bespoke workshops or events to support specific needs of **5 communities** in England, e.g. helping a local group explore the value and process for developing a community engagement strategy, or to understand how to write a 'statement of need' for a Heritage Lottery Funding bid. This type of activity engaged over **120 people**
- **Themed support:** 7 themed workshops that involved **29 different places of worship** across England and covering different faith groups and denominations across Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim communities. This type of activity engaged **84 people**
- **Outreach:** 2 outreach workshops at externally organised events by the National Churches Trust and The Prince's Regeneration Trust, reaching over **150 community members or leaders**. The project also delivered a number of dissemination activities and presentations in a variety of outlets for diverse audiences, such as AHRC's annual conference in Bristol, the Churches Conservation Trust conference, the Historic Religious Buildings Alliance's Big Update, Heritage Research Network conference and others.
- **Design training:** 4 (two-day) design training courses, delivered in London, Sheffield and Manchester with **13 different communities** looking after historic places of worship. This activity engaged **46 people** in training
- **Live projects:** The project has supported interactions with MArch and MSc students who provided advice about future design plans and undertook activities such as community audits and public engagement events. This activity has benefitted **5 different places of worship**.
- **Workshops with completed projects ('past projects'):** 8 workshops with **8 different places of worship** reaching approximately **60 people**
- **Engagement with professionals:** The project



conducted a focus group with architects and heritage and development support officers looking at challenges, opportunities and sharing of best practice (12 people)

- **Engagement with the general public:** Separate funding was obtained from AHRC for public engagement activities which included a community open day in Bow, East London, with over **140 participants** and a public exhibition at the Somerset House Utopia Fair with an estimated of **10,000 of visitors**. The project, designed and delivered by EDP partners the Open University and The Glass-House, produced a film to showcase its activities. More information about the Prototyping Utopias project can be found at <http://prototyping-utopias.uk>.

The project also delivered an interactive workshop and art installation at Tate Exchange in London entitled 'Places for connection'. The workshop was part of the 'Who are We?' project run by Counterpoint Arts and the Open University, in association with Stance Podcast and the University of York. **50 people** from the public organically created an art installation by sharing their stories, drawings and artefacts. Also in collaboration with the Baroness Warsi Foundation the project has delivered a public debate on 'Shared Spaces' at the University of Liverpool and launched a survey to collect the public's views on the future of places of worship in the UK and their role in society.

- **Sharing learning with policymakers and funders:** Learning and insights from the project activities have already been shared with the Heritage Lottery Fund's Places of Worship Practice Group, the Heritage Lottery Fund's Places of Worship Roundtable, the Places of Worship Forum led by Historic England and the Baroness Warsi Foundation.

At the moment the project is focused on producing a range of resources for a variety of audiences (communities, professionals, policymakers) including an open online course on community-led design. Emphasis is also placed on academic papers.

The geographical reach of the EDP project has focused on England. The four projects selected for longitudinal studies (namely St Peter's Church, Chester; St John's United Reformed Church, Stourbridge; ISRAAC Somali Community and Cultural Association, Vestry Hall, Sheffield; and Bow Church, London) are indicated with orange dots. Of these, St John's United Reformed Church in Stourbridge has now closed, but the other three longitudinal projects are ongoing.



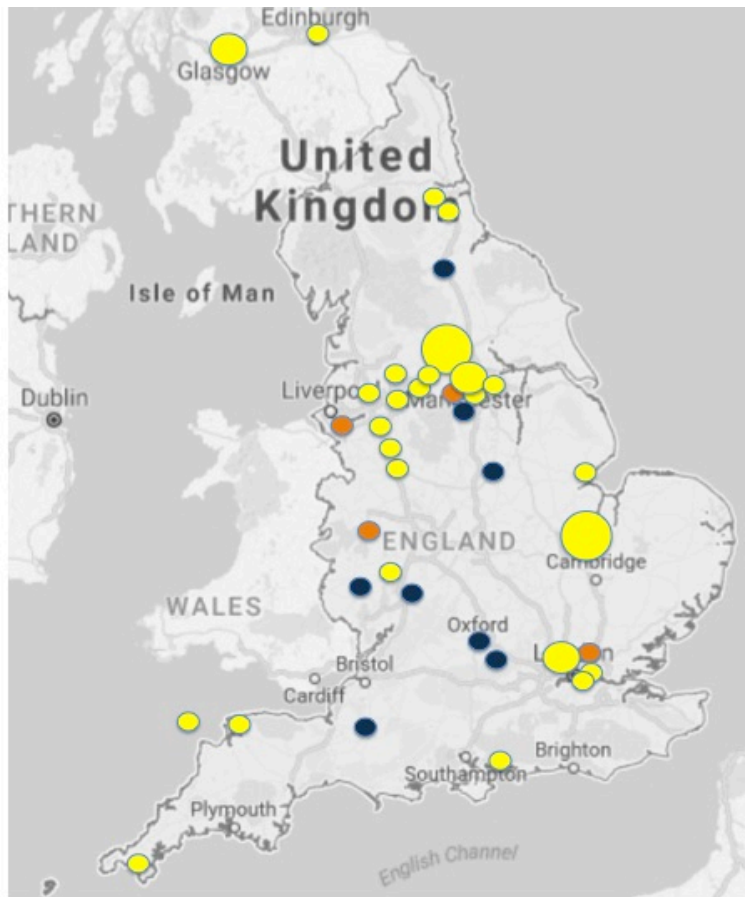


Figure 1: Map showing the geographical distribution of the places of worship with which the EDP project has interacted. Dark blue dots indicate past projects visited, orange dots indicate longitudinal projects, and yellow dots indicate places where people participated in targeted or group activities (the large dots indicate geographical or themed clusters).

1.2 About the impact audit

The purpose of this impact consultancy was threefold. Its first objective was to **clarify which types of impact were expected** (or hoped for) from the EDP project, from the perspective of different stakeholders. The second was to **identify project impacts that have already become evident** at this relatively early stage, in relation to different stakeholders' expectations and hopes. Finally, it aimed to **evaluate the existing strategies for impact capture** within the project – making sure that processes of data collection and analysis are sufficient to document all the valued impacts.

This impact consultancy was underpinned by the principles of multi-level evaluation (MLE). This is based on values-focused evaluation (Burford et al., 2013; Podger et al., 2016; Hoover et al., 2015), which relies on the fact that ideas like 'impact' and 'legacy' are very personal. Thus, a project outcome is only understood as an impact or legacy if someone *notices* it and *values* it. Different stakeholders always have different values, which in turn lead to different expectations and priorities, even within a collaborative project with mutually agreed and shared objectives. This means that any form of evaluation or impact audit will look different, depending on whether it is grounded in the

values of project donors, the people working on the project, those benefitting directly from it, external stakeholders such as local authorities, or all of the above.

Multi-level evaluation is a way of assessing impact in complex projects by examining them from different perspectives, or ‘values lenses’ – respectively looking for outcomes that are valued by *funders*, by *delivery partners* (the core team responsible for delivering the project) and by *beneficiaries* (clients or target audiences). The term ‘values lens’ is used to show that each of these perspectives offers a different way of seeing the project, and each introduces its biases that make some project outcomes more visible and others less visible –like viewing the world through spectacles with different coloured lenses.

Because the EDP project had such a diverse range of beneficiaries, the audit work was focused on the impacts that are valued most by delivery partners and funders. The process of understanding which outcomes were seen as most important by the different project partners, and of agreeing on a strategic collaborative process that would enable these outcomes to be realised, began long before the project itself. In developing a theoretical framework for the impact audit, a variety of documents was taken into consideration, including the original project bid documents and the following sources:

- Profile sheets completed by partners, showing their individual research or practice interests and their individual principles for *collaboration* (how we work together as partners), *action* (what values guide project activities) and *success* (what makes a ‘good’ research project).
- A values statement for the whole project, created at the third partners’ meeting
- A statement of ‘immediate outcomes’, ‘longer-term outcomes’ and ‘high-level impacts’, derived at the seventh partners’ meeting
- Focused participatory work with the core team (OU Design Team and The Glass-House)

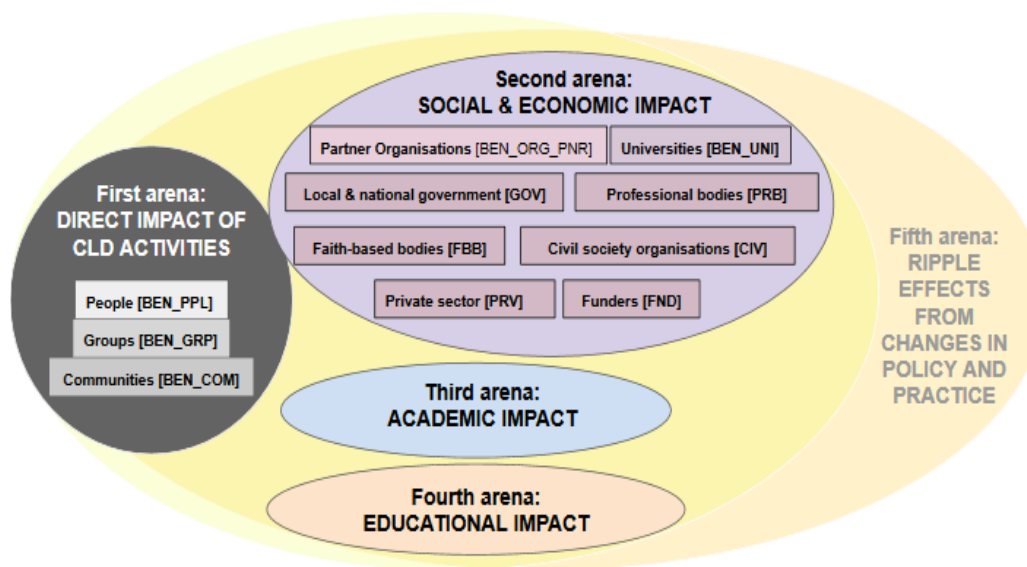


Figure 2: Different project beneficiaries and types of impact, from the perspective of the EDP team (CLD = community-led design)

When thinking about the direct impact of community-led design activities, the EDP project expected to deliver benefits for *individual people, groups* and *communities*. Seven main categories of benefit (impact themes) were further identified, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Direct beneficiaries of Community-Led Design activities and main impact themes

	People	Groups	Communities
Empowerment to Design / Empowerment through Design	X	X	X
Connectivity	X	X	
Learning	X	X	
Morale	X	X	
Perceptions	X	X	
Resilience		X	
Engagement			X

The full list of themes and indicators for ‘Direct Impact’ is as follows. Those shown in bold were viewed by the core team as the highest priority for collecting impact data.

Table 2. List of key themes and impact indicators for Direct Impact.

Theme	Indicators of Success
Empowerment To Design / Empowerment Through Design (five indicators of success)	<p>People / Groups / Communities develop their project</p> <p>People / Groups lead the project</p> <p>People / Groups engage others in design</p> <p>People / Groups / Communities seek new resources for the project</p> <p>People develop their team</p>
Connectivity (eight indicators of success)	<p>People learn by connecting with others</p> <p>People share resources with others</p> <p>The group shares resources with others / other groups</p> <p>People share skills, methods, knowledge & understanding</p> <p>Networks are built</p> <p>Partnerships are built</p> <p>The group changes its internal communications</p> <p>The group changes its external communications</p> <p>Group cohesion improves</p>
Learning (five indicators of success)	<p>People / Groups acquire skills, methods, knowledge & understanding</p> <p>People / Groups apply skills, methods, knowledge & understanding</p> <p>People / Groups develop skills, methods, knowledge & understanding</p>

	People take time and space for reflection People identify challenges inherent in their initial designs or plans
Morale (17 indicators of success)	People have a sense of achievement People's / Groups' aspirations are raised People / Groups feel more confident People are actively engaged People feel excited or enthusiastic People have fun People express their fears People feel inspired People feel useful People / Groups feel their horizons have been widened Group vision is strengthened People feel affirmed People feel less isolated or less alone People feel a sense of catharsis People feel uplifted People / Groups have a greater sense of clarity, or a clearer focus People / Groups have a greater sense of purpose
Perceptions (seven indicators of success)	People / Groups change their perceptions of their place of worship, places of worship in general, community, faith, heritage, the project, or their group
Engagement (four indicators of success; community level only)	Number of people actively engaged in the event Number of people engaging with EDP activities or resources Number of people engaging with the place of worship in the project <i>Number of people engaging with place of worship in decision-making role</i>

2. Evaluating the Direct Impact on Participants in EDP Activities

This section of the report describes the way in which the audit of direct impact on participants was carried out, gives a broad overview of the general findings, and then discusses each impact theme in detail. A detailed spreadsheet showing specific participant comments, and how they relate to the different impact themes and indicators, is available from EDP on request.

2.1. Audit Methodology

In the first phase of the impact audit, qualitative analysis of the impact data previously collected by members of the EDP project team was conducted. The methods that had been used to collect the data had been almost entirely focused on capturing the *direct and immediate* impacts of EDP's community-led design support activities on the participants. These mechanisms were:

- Individual feedback forms for workshops, live projects and design training – closed and open questions
- De-brief group sessions at design training, with analysis of transcripts
- Debriefing interviews with students involved in live projects, with analysis of transcripts
- Mid-project review for Bow Church (small focus group session) with analysis of transcript

In Phases 2 and 3, in-depth semi-structured interviews, focus groups and telephone conversations were conducted with members of local communities looking after historic places of worship who had participated in EDP activities. Different places were selected in order to explore impacts across different types of EDP activities and mechanisms of support to projects, at different stages in their journey. While some places had received specific targeted support (e.g. St Mary’s Church, Bideford), others had attended themed workshops, yet others delved into Design Training, or received a combination of support (e.g. Design Training and participation in Live Projects).

Overall, the following data have been used:

- Feedback forms, debrief sessions and e-mail communications from 45 community groups, recording the views of 153 people that spread across 6 different types of EDP activities
- Phone interviews and site visits from 8 places of worship recording the views of 18 participants and community leaders that spread across 4 different types of EDP activities

Table 3 details the specific data sources that were used in conducting the audit, broken down by the type of intervention provided by EDP.

Table 3. List of data sources used in the impact audit, broken down by intervention type

Intervention	Data sources
Design Training	Sheffield event: feedback forms, transcripts of presentations by participants (representing three places of worship) and e-mails from participants; field visit and interviews at URC Stratford-upon-Avon (n=2), St Mary’s Bideford (focus group of 5) and Graylingwell Chapel (focus group of 2) Manchester event: feedback forms and e-mails from participants
Longitudinal Projects	Two workshops at St Peter’s Church, Chester: feedback forms (n=6, n=7) Live project with St Peter’s Church, Chester: feedback form Two workshops at St John’s URC, Stourbridge: Phase 1 feedback forms (n=8, n=5), face-to-face interviews (n=2) Live project with Bow Church: feedback form from church, transcript of debriefing sessions with the church team (n=2) and with the student Live project and Design Training with ISRAAC: feedback forms (n=2) and video of debriefing session with participants (n=2)
Targeted Support	Workshop at St Mary’s Church, Bideford: feedback forms (n=11) Workshop at St Swithun’s Church, Worcester: feedback forms (n=6) Workshop at All Saints Church, Hanley: feedback form (n=1), field visit (n=2) Live project with St Peter’s Church, Congleton: feedback form (n=1)
Themed Support	Workshop in Bradford with the Warsi Foundation: feedback forms (n=8) London Lumen Workshop: feedback forms (n=10), field visit to All Saints Hanley

	(n=2), interviews (n=2) Workshop with churches in Diocese of Ely: feedback forms (n=19), interviews (n=2) Workshop with synagogues in London: feedback forms (n=8)
Past Projects	Workshop at St Luke's Church, Oxford: feedback forms (n=5) Workshop at Sheffield Buddhist Centre: feedback forms (n=5) Workshop at St Martin's Church, Bilborough: feedback forms (n=10) Workshop at St Peter's Church, Peterchurch: feedback forms (n=4) Workshop at URC, Stratford-upon-Avon: feedback forms (n=2), field visit (n=2) Workshop at St John's, Stadhampton: feedback forms (n=10), 1 phone interview Workshop at St Benedict's Church, Glastonbury: feedback forms (n=7)
Support for Professionals	Transcript of focus group for Heritage Officers and architects

2.2 Overview of Findings

As evident from the tables below, the impact capture strategy up to and including Phase 1 of this review had resulted in a bias in favour of **individuals and groups from local communities who are involved in looking after historic places of worship**. This was unsurprising, as the project was arguably designed to have its greatest impact in these areas. It did, however, provide a rather limited picture that did not adequately reflect the richness and diversity of project impacts, even at the mid-term point. This led on to the commissioning of the new work outlined in Phases 2 and 3.

It should be noted that because of the nature of the impact capture strategy, primarily based on (a) feedback forms completed at the end of events and (b) debriefing interviews conducted shortly after design training and live projects, Phase 1 of this work had a strong bias towards **capturing the immediate impacts of community-led design activities** on individuals and groups, namely Connectivity, Learning, Morale, and Perceptions.

The tables below provide a broad overview of the impact evidence for each main theme, designated as either *very strong*, *strong*, *moderate*, *limited* or *very limited* or as *no data*, as applicable. It should be noted that these evidence levels ('very strong', etc.) are subjective judgements by the evaluator, and are based both on the quantity and the quality of evidence for each impact theme across all the different data sources.

The tables illustrate that most of the impact evidence was focused on individuals, rather than groups. For the individuals, the categories with the strongest evidence were Connectivity and Learning, while for groups, the categories with the strongest evidence were Learning and Morale. There was very limited evidence of impact at the community level, not necessarily because there was no impact at this level, but because the methods of impact data collection that have been used to date had only captured the *immediate* impact of community-led design activities (e.g. through feedback forms and debriefing sessions) as discussed below.

Table 4: Overview of impact evidence (Phases 1-3 combined)

(a) Individuals

	Evidence of impact to date (as at 31 July 2017)	Data collection strategies based on closed questions (CQ) or open questions (OQ)
Individuals from the local community involved in looking after historic places of worship	<p>Empowerment To/Through Design: Very strong evidence (Phase 2: Hanley, Stratford / Phase 3: Bideford, Graylingwell)</p> <p>Connectivity: Very strong evidence (all phases)</p> <p>Learning: Very strong evidence (all phases)</p> <p>Morale: Very strong evidence (Phase 2: Hanley, Stratford, Stourbridge, and to a lesser extent, Stadhampton / Phase 3: Bideford, Graylingwell)</p> <p>Perceptions: Very strong evidence (Phase 2: Hanley, Stratford, temporarily Stourbridge / Phase 3: Bideford, Graylingwell)</p>	<p>Workshop feedback forms (CQ, OQ)</p> <p>Design Training feedback forms (CQ, OQ)</p> <p>Live Projects feedback forms (CQ, OQ)</p> <p>Live Projects debriefing interviews (OQ)</p> <p>Mid-project review for Bow Church (OQ)</p> <p>Field visit interviews and focus groups (OQ)</p>
Other individuals from the local community who are not directly involved with the renovations (e.g. members of the congregation or community groups)	<p>Empowerment To/Through Design: No data</p> <p>Connectivity: No data</p> <p>Learning: Strong evidence (Hanley, Stratford)</p> <p>Morale: Moderate evidence (Stratford)</p> <p>Perceptions: Strong evidence (Hanley)</p>	<p>Field visit interviews and focus groups (OQ)</p>
Professionals present as attendees of EDP event(s)	<p>Empowerment To/Through Design: No data</p> <p>Connectivity: Strong evidence</p> <p>Learning: Moderate evidence</p> <p>Morale: Limited evidence</p> <p>Perceptions: No data</p>	<p>Heritage Officers and Architects focus group (OQ)</p> <p>Interview with an architect who participated in Ely themed workshop (OQ)</p> <p>Interview with Churches Conservation Trust director who participated in Worcester themed workshop (OQ)</p>
Students involved as Masters students in live projects	<p>Empowerment To/Through Design: Very limited evidence</p> <p>Connectivity: Very limited evidence</p> <p>Learning: Moderate evidence</p> <p>Morale: Limited evidence</p>	<p>Debriefing interview with Live Projects students (OQ)</p>

	Perceptions: No data	
Members of the project team who are involved as academics, PhD students or professionals	Empowerment To/Through Design: Strong evidence Connectivity: Strong evidence Learning: Very strong evidence Morale: Very strong evidence (Stratford) Perceptions: Uncertain	Partner interviews (OQ)

(b) Geographical communities where historic places of worship are located

Communities	Evidence of impact to date (as at 31 July 2018)	Data collection strategies based on closed questions (CQ) or open questions (OQ)
Bideford	Engagement with Place of Worship (PoW): Very strong evidence Engagement with design project: Strong evidence	Field visit focus group (OQ)
Bow	Engagement with PoW: Very limited evidence Engagement with design project: Not seen	Mid-term focus group and debriefing interview with Live Project student (OQ)
Graylingwell	Engagement with PoW: Very strong evidence Engagement with design project: Strong evidence	Field visit focus group (OQ)
Hanley	Engagement with PoW: Very strong evidence Engagement with design project: Limited evidence	Field visit interview (OQ)
Stadhampton	Engagement with PoW: Not seen Engagement with design project: Not seen	Telephone interview (OQ)
Stourbridge	Engagement with PoW: Not seen Engagement with design project: Not seen	Field visit interview (OQ)
Stratford-upon-Avon	Engagement with PoW: Very strong evidence Engagement with design project: Limited evidence to date, but potential for future	Field visit interview (OQ)

(c) Groups

	Evidence of impact to date as at 31 July 2018)	Data collection strategies based on closed questions (CQ) or open questions (OQ)
Groups from the local community involved in looking after historic places of worship	Empowerment To/Through Design: Very strong evidence (Hanley, Stratford, Bideford, Graylingwell) Connectivity: Very strong evidence (as above) Learning: Very strong evidence (as above) Morale: Very strong evidence (as above)	Workshop feedback forms (CQ, OQ) Design Training feedback forms (CQ, OQ)

	Perceptions: Very strong evidence (as above)	
Other groups from the local community	No data	No strategy to date
The congregation as a whole	Empowerment To/Through Design: Limited evidence (Bideford, Graylingwell) Connectivity: No data Learning: No data Morale: Very strong evidence (Stratford, Hanley) Perceptions: Strong evidence (Hanley)	Field visit interviews
Professionals at the group level	Empowerment To/Through Design: No data Connectivity: Strong evidence Learning: No data Morale: No data Perceptions: No data	Heritage Officers and Architects focus group (OQ)

A different way of analysing the impact evidence is to examine the total number of spontaneous participant comments received, via feedback forms, for each of the five main themes. (This semi-quantitative analysis has not been applied to the Design Training sessions, where only small numbers of feedback forms were received and most of the data was collected through debriefing sessions.) ‘Spontaneous participant comments’ are those comments that were received on feedback forms in response to *open-ended questions*, rather than closed questions, which are discussed below in the sections relating to the respective themes. Each comment was coded with as many themes as applicable, which meant that several comments were coded more than once.

Figure 3 below illustrates the number of spontaneous participant comments relating to each theme, broken down by the type of support that EDP was providing. The majority of the participant comments received via feedback forms related to the main theme of *Connectivity* or *Learning*, or both. Within the Connectivity theme, Themed Support activities accounted for the largest proportion – 37 out of the 77 comments (48%). It is noteworthy that the Ely and Synagogues workshops collectively accrued 24 of these comments, representing 31% of the total number of Connectivity-related comments. In the Learning and Morale themes, the participant comments were much more evenly spread across the different types of activities; but in Perceptions, longitudinal projects accounted for more than three-quarters of the participant comments (18 of the 23 comments, or 78%).

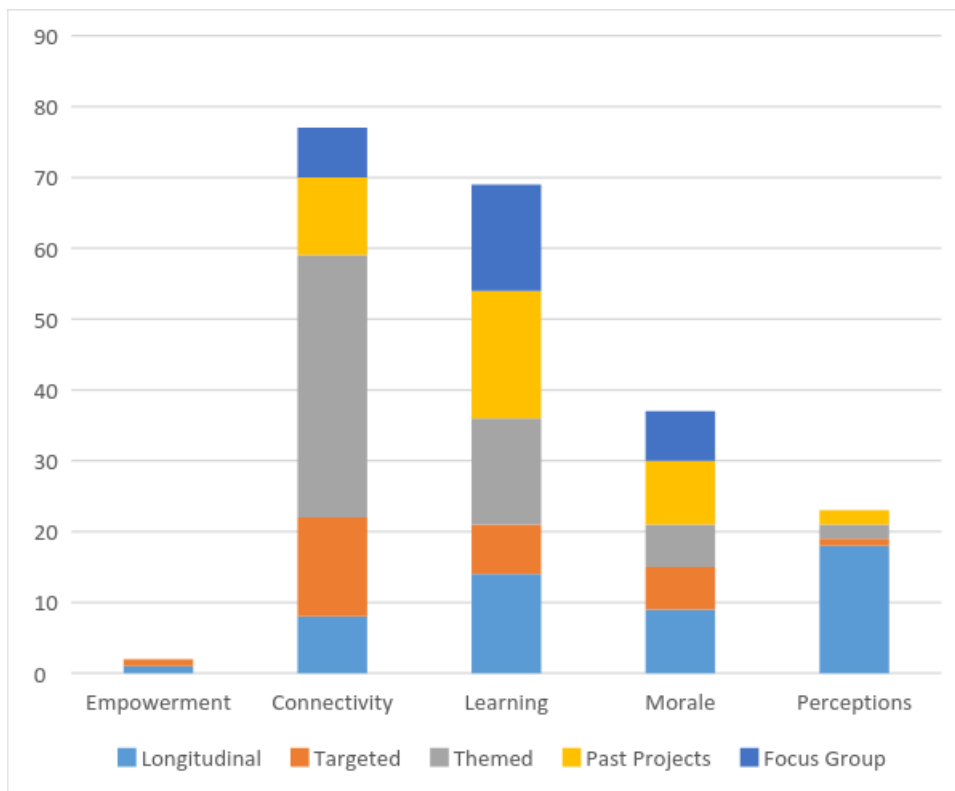


Figure 3. Spontaneous participant comments received via feedback forms, by theme and intervention type
 For the future, it will be important for the core project team to determine which other beneficiary categories they would like to focus on, as well as which specific impact categories and subcategories they are most interested in documenting, in view of time and resource limitations. It may be that some impacts are more important to the team than others, in the light of the criteria against which stakeholders are evaluated or expected to evaluate themselves (e.g. Research Excellence Framework and Researchfish output tracking in the case of universities, or mission-centred Annual Reviews in the case of organisations).

2.3 Discussion of Findings by Theme

In this section, the findings of the audit are discussed in relation to the five main impact themes that have been identified at this midpoint – Empowerment To/Through Design, Connectivity, Learning, Morale, and Perceptions. The themes of Resilience (group level only) and Engagement (community level only), are omitted as there is very limited data available at this midpoint.

2.3.1 Empowerment To / Through Design

Impacts in the category of ‘Empowerment To/Through Design’ are, by their very nature, expected to unfold over the longer term. They could not easily be captured through the Phase 1 mechanisms such as feedback forms for one-off workshops. Some promising leads were, however, obtained at this early stage, in the form of comments about what workshop participants *intended* to do (or felt that they would now be able to do) when they returned to their historic place of worship. These,

which we designated as ‘potential impact’ rather than realised impact, were mostly in relation to the indicator *People develop the project*. Such comments, which can be followed up in future interviews and/or site visits, included the following:

We 5 chatted all the way back [home from the design training] about form, function and resolving our problems for the future - we sounded like a group of architects!!
(From an email received after a Design Training event)

I think now we are a bit informed when we speak to our architects, we can work with them, as opposed to one way traffic, I think we can have input into the process.
(Design Training debrief)

[so you have got a focus of the bits you need to investigate further now] Yes, yes, yes, and actually it is quite heartening to think that actually we really could change the character and nature of the back of the church with very little expenditure. (Design Training debrief)

We shall use the report as it will be the basis of our planning, and in grant applications. (Live Project debrief within the context of a longitudinal project, referring to a report produced by the students)

After a workshop in Chester, five out of six people agreed in response to a closed question that they had a better understanding of the actions they could take to improve their case for funding.

At the individual level, another closed question, ‘I have gained skills and confidence to help lead a design process and engage my community in it’, points to potential impact in *Engaging others in design*. This question was answered very positively in relation to the Design Training events in Sheffield and Manchester, with all participants responding either ‘strongly agree’ (8/20) or ‘agree’ (12/20), but less positively in relation to a workshop held in Bideford, where 4/12 replied ‘strongly agree’, 5/12 ‘agree’, 2/12 ‘disagree’, and one said that it was not applicable. Two participants in the Design Training also referred, in the open questions, to learning specific activities or techniques that they could use to engage others. However, it remains to be seen whether any of these participants actually *did* engage others in a design process, having felt they gained skills and confidence to do so.

Some evidence for realised impact in Empowerment To/Through Design was also found in the subcategory of *Engaging others in design*. This was mainly in response to the statement ‘The student project helped to engage with the wider communities around the building’, where two out of three churches that had hosted live projects replied ‘Agree’ (and a fourth added a full-text reply of ‘Potentially in the future’). A recording of a live project debrief similarly described how the participating students had organised a design-related event that attracted over 100 members of the local community around Bow Church. However, it was by no means clear from the forms whether the students had actually *empowered the local group* to engage others in design – which was the intent of the indicator – or merely done all the engagement work themselves.

At the group level, little evidence was available in Phase 1 to support the argument that *People develop their team*, other than the first quote shown above (also coded under *People develop the project*) and a brief mention of ‘our newly formed design team’ from an Edinburgh Community Church participant in the Manchester design training. However, this indicator needs clarification, as it was added during one of the more recent partners’ meetings and the meaning is slightly ambiguous. As currently formulated, it has the specific implication of *building* a team. However, if the intention was to develop or strengthen existing teams (as seems likely), this would also resonate with other indicators elsewhere in the framework – notably *Strengthening group vision*, *Sense of clarity* and *Sense of purpose* under Morale, and *Group cohesion* under Connectivity.

As anticipated, a much greater body of evidence relating to the ‘Empowerment to and through design’ was gathered through the field visit interviews in Phase 2 – relating to all four indicators (*People develop their project*, *People lead the project*, *People engage others in design*, *People seek and obtain new resources for the project*, and *People develop their teams*). All three site visits to projects currently underway provided impact evidence in relation to the first three of these indicators. This applied both at the group level and at the individual level, although in all three of the projects that were visited it appeared that the ‘group’ looking after the historic place of worship had only two members. Successful fundraising for the project was observed in two cases (Stratford URC and All Saints Hanley) and development of the team in one (Hanley).

The interviews provided a number of insights into possible mechanisms through which ‘empowerment to and through design’ might occur. First, the EDP workshops, with their asset-focused approach, start from a set of **assumptions of capability and possibility** that contrast strongly with the prevailing climate of depression and disempowerment.

‘It’s the mental attitude to it which I think was influenced by Sheffield [Design training]- that was the big thing. Previously we thought “that would be nice but it’s not really possible”. We think much more things are possible.’ (participant, Stratford-upon-Avon URC)

‘For that moment, it was like, “here’s the rocket fuel for your journey, here’s the reason to be inspired.” We were breathing in that intentional air, and then one thing leads to another...there is new thinking, it’s an evolutionary push, which All Saints can represent. There were old-style Christians who wanted to impose the church on the world, but what the church is now is a community, it’s a meeting place.’ (participant, All Saints Hanley)

This application was ultimately successful and resulted in an HLF grant to transform part of the church into a heritage centre. It is, of course, difficult to state conclusively that the grant could not still have been obtained without the EDP intervention, but the way in which the story was narrated strongly suggests that this was the case. Possibility is still a strong theme at All Saints Hanley since the completion of the renovations, with the phrase ‘The Impossible Church’ (originally coined by a

senior faith leader when the congregation had dropped to two) now being used ironically on the Facebook page to report on community activities that are attracting large numbers of people – over 200 in one week in May, and 74 attendees at the Easter Sunday service!

A very similar example, that of St Mary's Church in Bideford, was revealed in Phase 3. The conversation at Bideford closely echoed the discourse at All Saints Hanley after the Design Training: seeing the possibilities, prioritising vision, listening to the building itself or to the voice of God, and rejecting the limiting belief that 'everything is impossible because there is no money'. **In both cases, this shift in thinking was attributed directly to EDP 'opening people's eyes to possibilities'**. Thus, the fear of not having enough funding is being countered by the creation of a shared vision that inspires renewed faith and hope:

"I think in tune with what you guys were doing, the money came in, we had the money at the level we needed it and you opened the eyes to possibilities, so instead of being constrained by budget and practicalities it's about what's right, what's proper, what does the building need to be, and then we make it happen." (Bideford participant 2)

'Seeing new possibilities', as a key mechanism for Empowerment To/Through Design, seemed to be evident across all the field visits. Even at St John's URC Stourbridge, which was eventually closed down, the EDP activities still succeeded in generating a sense of possibility – albeit a transient one – as illustrated in this interview excerpt:

Interviewer (IV): So when you had that [EDP] workshop, did it change the way you thought about the church at all, e.g. the way you saw the building or the community?

Participant: Yes, it did.

IV: In what sort of way?

Participant: We thought that there were possibilities [...] The general feeling was 'OK, look, let's investigate this further, perhaps there is a way forward.'

IV: So at the end of it you were feeling fairly upbeat...

Participant: After the first [EDP workshop], yes. But then the second one and the third one came and already there was talk about the radio moving out, and they sort of moved out in November, I think. It all seemed to happen so quickly.

However, sometimes the challenges of renovating a historic building are so pressing that a positive mental attitude alone is not sufficient to achieve the desired empowerment in the time available. A second aspect of the mechanism of empowerment to and through design, which may not always be present, is a **clear statement that the action is expected to come from within the community**. It may take stakeholders some time to overcome their sense of learned helplessness and their

expectation of receiving direct help from EDP. This is well illustrated by this further excerpt from the interview:

Participant: 'The basic thing when people were talking about it, those who came were thinking 'how are they going to really help us?' That's the sort of question because that's what we were looking for, was help. And I feel it was sort of doing it in the way they were doing it to get us to take the step to help.

Interviewer (IV): Yes, it was to get you to help yourselves, rather than sort of expecting them to sort it all out for you.

Participant: Yes, I think initially that was probably what we were thinking.

IV: You were sort of looking for somebody that would come along and say...

Participant: "Right, if you do this, this, and this, it'll all be fine."

IV: They were more about trying to draw something out from you...

JS: Yes, so, very simply, it was up to us.'

A third element in the mechanism by which 'empowerment to and through design' occurs may be in the sense of **helping groups to clarify their thinking, structure their ideas and build a shared vision**. The contrast between the EDP practice of community-led design and the top-down approach of traditional mission work is well illustrated by these three separate quotes from interviewees at All Saints Hanley:

'The church has a mission action plan - each parish is encouraged to get people to know Jesus. But it's an imposition of will. It's a plan that is designed FOR us from the top down. The beauty of this [EDP process] is that so far it's been authentic. At first it was 'the church doesn't want to go' [i.e. close down] but we were hopelessly vague. It was crucial to have those people, they were very professional, they knew what they were doing. They got the information out of us. They got the information by asking us questions, they basically made it visible to us because it was so vague. We started envisioning [the renovation project] at that [EDP] meeting. Instead of something being laid down for us, we're working towards something, we're doing something that we don't know how it will work out. A mission action plan is worked out. It's imposed, not composed.'

[Talking specifically about the EDP workshop]: 'We then began to verbalise [our vision], we'd never done that before, it was always in the ether. Everything led to this. In the first instance we went to look round the church. [...] We came back in the splitting to groups. We had to write a postcard, and on it we had to write a message about the value of the church. [The EDP team members] were very good at what they were doing to provoke people into thinking. It was a bunch of people who knew what they were doing, confronting a bunch of people who haven't got a clue! If we'd met in a room without those people we would still be going around in circles now.'

Using whatever expertise they'd got, they extracted all the information out of us. It's the opposite to a mission action plan – you ended up with a plan, instead of starting out with one.'

'It is amazing to see this happening at last. All this was imagination! It wasn't even really imagined until we had that [EDP] meeting – it was just a vague hope. These people structured it, they asked us how we were seeing it.'

A theme that emerged in earlier phases of work was that EDP activities often helped people to see the challenges or limitations that were inherent in their initial designs or plans. This was taken a step further by the Phase 3 interviews, which showed people not only rethinking their plans but also changing the direction or focus of their work. This could be in terms of the building renovation itself, as in Chichester where the group had decided not to pursue their initial plan for a separate 'spiritual area' or stage with glass surrounding it, or in terms of mission, as in Bideford where the group had become more flexible and open and more committed to finding a solution that worked for diverse stakeholders (rather than just pursuing a very simple kitchen design):

'What I've done whilst the architect is drawing up plans for phase 3, I've asked him to consider the need for the kitchen but by putting the kitchen wherever, we then start to lose our children's space, so to look at all aspects of the church and how we bring back everything that we need in a manner that works for everybody. So it's a huge remit and it'll be 12-18 months away but I do think now is the time that we need to be looking at ideas, and we need to define more ideas, and we're not going to settle until we have that which works for the people that need it.' (Bideford participant 2)

"We have thought a lot more about the building and how it – it wants to be, and about the spirituality and about the worship, that comes into it a lot more than when we first said, 'OK, we want to build the kitchen here and we've got about ten grand for that, so we want a wooden box, will that do?'" (Bideford participant 3)

The modelling activity and discussions with professionals both contributed to this rethinking effect:

'It's very strange, isn't it, how you visualise something in your mind and it looks wonderful, and somebody does a model and you think 'oh crikey, that doesn't work' and there are all sorts of things you hadn't thought about.' (Bideford participant 1)

'[The architect working with us in the Design Training] definitely didn't like the [idea of creating a] stage and spiritual area, and we've actually binned all that...He didn't 'not like' it, he was sort of a bit concerned about how it was worked up. He challenged us on it, sowed a seed, really, a big seed with us, and we never felt like it was worked up because we couldn't describe it. We could describe, and that was really interesting because we had to describe our plans so many times, and each time we described it I realised we couldn't describe that bit because we didn't get it. So that was really great.' (Graylingwell participant 1)

Finally, a fourth element may be that involvement with EDP – as a collaborative project bringing together many years of professional experience with rigorous academic research – has the effect of **helping groups to legitimise thoughts and dreams that had not previously been verbalised**, not only among themselves but also when speaking to a wider audience:

‘Well, I think our involvement with EDP gives us more legitimacy when we discuss these issues with the membership. It’s not just our high-flown ideas, you’ve been on a course so you know some things about it, it gives you that legitimacy when you’re talking about it at the church meeting and trying to persuade people about change.’
(Participant, Stratford-upon-Avon)

More research may be necessary to unpack the essential elements of these ‘empowerment to and through design’ effects: whether, for example, they are dependent on particular actions being taken by the EDP team or a particular type of engagement on the part of the local team, and how the balance between cynicism/inertia and possibility/action plays out in practice.

Priority indicators

The field visits in Phases 2 and 3 have provided strong evidence for the achievement of priority indicators for Empowerment To/Through Design, for example:

- **E01: People develop their project.** All Saints Hanley, URC Stratford-upon-Avon, Bideford and Graylingwell all showed clear evidence, not only that people had developed their projects, but that these developments were directly attributable to EDP support:
 - o At All Saints, the field visit took place at a time when the church was undergoing building work, funded by a Heritage Lottery Fund grant, to convert part of the interior into a heated space that could serve as a community heritage centre. The narratives captured during the interviews made it clear that the likelihood of this happening without EDP intervention would have been extremely low, as members of the community (including the priest) had previously been disheartened, and even the Bishop had described it as ‘that impossible church’. The London Lumen workshop had not only created a sense of possibility, but inspired the priest with the confidence, self-belief and passion to proceed with an application.
 - o in Stratford-upon-Avon, the minister of the United Reformed Church had already begun to develop the project (E01) by making small-scale changes – removing pews to create a social space at the back of the church with chairs and tables, and renovating the small kitchenette. This idea had come directly from the Design Training workshop, and its implementation had already enabled coffee mornings and a Christmas gathering for older people to be held within the church itself, as well as creating a space for charity Christmas card sales. However, the major changes that the minister and his wife envisioned – converting the disused gallery area to a welcoming social space, including a night shelter for homeless people – had not yet been initiated.
- **E02: People involve others in design.** The evidence for this indicator was much less clear at this early stage. At All Saints Hanley, most of the impetus for the funding bid and subsequent work

had come from two individuals, with the wider congregation acting more as a source of ‘moral support’ than active contribution to the process. Furthermore, it was impossible to assess the extent to which any future design work might involve the wider community, or the construction of the heritage centre might contribute to other impacts relating to involving others in design within the Hanley area or more broadly in Stoke-on-Trent. At URC Stratford, the minister and his wife had stated that they were *planning* to ‘involve others in design’ (E02) by consulting the local Voluntary Services Agency, and thinking about creating a survey for local charities to learn more about how different groups might consider using the space. However, these outcomes had not yet been achieved at the time of the visit.

2.3.2 Connectivity

In Phase 1, there was strong evidence of impact in the Connectivity category for individuals looking after historic places of worship - mainly in the form of a large number of separate responses to open-ended questions on workshop feedback forms - and moderate evidence for groups. At both individual and group levels, this was primarily centred on the indicator *People share skills, methods, knowledge and understanding*, although some people also stated that *Group cohesion* had improved. Within the context of sharing, many people reported that they found it very useful to hear other people’s experiences of challenges and solutions, which often drew their attention to new possibilities:

Can bring fresh ideas based on experiences elsewhere (Workshop participant, Chester)

It was superb! Hearing about others and also engaging with possibilities was very helpful (Workshop participant, London)

Useful to meet places of worship and be able to discuss in depth their challenges and opportunities. Structured format to discussions was helpful to guide conversations towards solutions (Workshop participant, London)

Other Connectivity outcomes, such as network-building and partnership-building, have not yet been evidenced among these beneficiary groups. There was limited evidence of network-building, however, in the workshop for Heritage Officers and Architects (categorised as ‘Professionals at group level’), although this would need to be confirmed through follow-up if seen to be sufficiently important:

Hearing about sector from perspective of other professionals. Agreeing on challenges and looking at possible solution. Networking / Engaging with parallel projects in the spirits of collaboration. (Participant in Heritage Officers and Architects workshop)

There was very little reference to sharing resources, although this is unsurprising at this relatively early stage in the project, when EDP has not yet produced many materials of its own. No impact on groups' internal or external communications could be captured using feedback forms or related approaches.

In Phase 2, the field visit interviews yielded some additional evidence for Connectivity-related impact, although perhaps not as much as might have been expected. The main issue was that in the churches that were visited, the 'groups' looking after historic places of worship were either very small or the concept of a group was not relevant. In one case, a group supported by EDP (Cemetery Road Baptist Church) commissioned a member of another group that they had met through Design Training (Graylingwell Chapel) to help them develop their strategic development plan. Following their collaboration with EDP, they went on to secure £98K in funding for initial repairs to their building, and are now in the process of developing an ambitious refurbishment plan.

Priority indicator

The priority indicator, *People learn by connecting with others*, was evidenced in both Hanley and Stratford. This was achieved through a targeted workshop to create a purpose statement (for Hanley) and Design Training (for Stratford), in which interviewees stated that they had learnt a lot from each other's experiences and from the field visits that formed part of the programme.

2.3.3 Learning

'Learning' emerged as the most strongly-evidenced category of impact in Phase 1, overall, for both individuals and groups looking after historic places of worship – which is unsurprising, as most workshops are designed with the primary goal of facilitating learning. This category included three very closely related indicators, which were differentiated as follows:

- **People *acquire* skills, methods, knowledge and understanding:** Used only when it is clear that people have learned something that is (a) clearly defined and specific, AND (b) new to them
- **People *develop* skills, methods, knowledge and understanding:** Used where the criteria for 'Acquire' could not be met, but it is clear that some learning has taken place – e.g. deepening understanding of a topic, gaining proficiency in a skill, or building on something already known
- **People *apply* skills, methods, knowledge and understanding:** Used only when it is clear that people are putting into practice something that they have acquired or developed through the EDP project activities. This indicator cannot be measured through workshop feedback forms.

As might be expected, there was considerably more evidence for the broad 'Develop' indicator than the much narrower 'Acquire' indicator. Examples of each are as follows:

Acquire:

New methodology of community consultation (Feedback form from Congleton live project)

Memory mapping we enjoyed and can take back to our church. Model making highlighted problems we hadn't thought of. (Participant in Sheffield design training, feedback form. Several other participants also mentioned memory mapping and model-making as new methods that they had learned and could use in the future)

Activities to engage collaboratively with others (Participant in Manchester design training)

Techniques I could use with other teams to gain shared understanding (Participant in Worcester workshop)

Develop:

Helpful session to understand in more detail what is important for a 'statement of need' (Participant in Chester workshop. Similar comments were also made by two other participants in the same workshop)

We've had various goes at trying to develop a project based on a particular building, and when we started in 2013 the first idea was about trying to put in a new ringing floor that the bell-ringers wanted, and that's completely the wrong way to go about it. Because what you have to do is to establish need and context, don't you? And that failed completely because it wasn't thought through, but what we are able to do now is to show that there's something thought through and we're not just yet another suburban church with a hole in the roof. (Bow Church mid-term debrief)

[I learned] how vision must impact design and function. Can't just do something to update building – far deeper than that. (Participant in Manchester design training)

Understanding of the 3F's [form, feeling and function] and the processes of building work (Participant in Sheffield design training)

In addition to the spontaneous comments relating to the development of skills, methods, knowledge and understanding, some of the workshop feedback forms also included closed questions that targeted this particular indicator, often enquiring about specific learning objectives.

The findings are as below, and are overwhelmingly positive, with no negative responses at all and only one neutral across a total group of 20 participants for the first two Design Training (DT) events. . As might be expected, these figures support the qualitative data suggesting that there is a strong impact on learning and understanding, with a very high proportion of responses in the ‘Strongly agree’ category – especially in Manchester, where a majority of responses were in this category across all questions. However, these figures should be interpreted with caution due to the high risk of social desirability response bias (people’s tendency to say what they think others want to hear, or what they view as socially desirable), especially as the training was subsidised.

Table 5: Summary of survey findings (closed questions) relating to the development of skills, methods, knowledge and understanding

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree
I have a better understanding of basic design principles and the design process	Manchester: 9/11 Sheffield: 5/9 Total: 14/20	Manchester: 2/11 Sheffield: 4/9 Total: 6/20	0
I have a greater awareness of how design can enhance the quality and functionality of our building	Manchester: 10/11 Sheffield: 6/9 Total: 16/20	Manchester: 1/11 Sheffield: 3/9 Total: 4/20	0
I have gained skills and confidence to help lead a design process and engage my community in it	Manchester: 6/11 Sheffield: 2/9 Total: 8/20	Manchester: 5/11 Sheffield: 7/9 Total: 12/20	0
I feel better able to communicate our ideas and vision for our building	Manchester: 8/11 Sheffield: 4/9 Total: 12/20	Manchester: 3/11 Sheffield: 4/9 Total: 7/20	Manchester: 0/11 Sheffield: 1/9 Total: 1/20

For Phase 2, only the ‘Apply’ indicator was designated as high priority, and reworded slightly to ‘People apply skills, methods, knowledge and resources’ (referring to those acquired through EDP project activities). There were two clear examples from the field visit data that showed application of skills, methods, knowledge, and/or resources:

- (a) **All Saints Hanley** – Knowledge that had been gained through the London Lumen themed workshop was applied in the successful funding bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund;
- (b) **United Reformed Church, Stratford-upon-Avon** – The approach of taking out pews at the back of the church to make an informal social space, with a small kitchenette, chairs and tables, was learned at the Design Training in Sheffield and applied at URC Stratford-upon-Avon to good effect (see ‘Engagement’ below).

Other learning indicators

In addition to the *Acquire, Develop* and *Apply* indicators, the framework also includes two other learning indicators, for which limited evidence of impact is available. The first, *Time and space for reflection*, was expressed through phrases such as ‘*focusing our minds on the project*’ or ‘*the opportunity to look at the building more closely*’. It came out more strongly in the professional group (Heritage Officers and Architects), one of whom specifically mentioned ‘*taking time out to think about what we do*’. It was also, unsurprisingly, listed as an outcome in the feedback forms for several of the workshops to review ‘past projects’ (i.e. projects where the design work had already taken place and was being discussed retrospectively).

The final learning indicator, *People identify challenges inherent in their earlier designs or plans*, emerged as a new indicator that was identified from the Sheffield Design Training feedback forms rather than being pre-defined by the project team. This was mentioned by three participants, representing two different places of worship:

‘We have got a few issues that have been raised by making the model that we hadn’t actually thought of, because yesterday it seemed quite simple, didn’t it? Yes we did, we knew what we wanted, and now we are not at all sure.’

‘It has highlighted what we don’t know about our structure: things we thought we knew, we don’t know.’

‘It has pointed out a big dilemma really. [There is] potential for commercial cafes, whatever, in order to provide us with an income...How do you puncture that wall and yet not destroy the integrity of the wall?’

The ability of the Design Training to highlight potential problems with groups’ initial design ideas is an unexpected outcome that would merit deeper exploration. It provides an interesting illustration of the complexity of the impact landscape, in that such realisations might conceivably have an initial negative impact on morale but also contribute to major changes in design within the places of worship, which in turn could potentially result in the avoidance of costly or embarrassing mistakes.

This also has an overlap with some of the Morale indicators, such as *Group Vision* and the emergent *Sense of Clarity* (see below).

This type of outcome was not explicitly recorded in the interviews in Phase 2, but as discussed in section 2.3.1 above (in the discussion on ‘Empowerment To and Through Design’), it featured strongly in Phase 3, especially at Bideford and Graylingwell.

2.3.4 Morale

On the basis of the initial analysis of project documents and the workshop exercises from partners’ meetings, Morale emerged as the broadest category, with eleven separate indicators created from Phase 1. These may overlap, and are sometimes difficult to distinguish in practice.

In both Phase 1 and Phase 2, by far the strongest evidence for an impact on morale was found in the subcategory *Strengthening group vision*, among groups of people looking after historic places of worship. This was evident across diverse project activities. For Phase 1, the quality of evidence (not necessarily the extent of impact) was better for the live projects and design training, where debriefs were conducted, than for the workshops, which relied on feedback forms. Some examples are as follows:

[It helped us to] emphasise the values which we feel we can’t compromise on – light, colour, belonging and space for peace/reflection. (Participant in Manchester design training)

We have learnt a lot today, practically, actually looking at this model and having to view the building from above and see where everything is just gives you a very different perspective. It will be nice to have the roof so we can look at where we can fix but it will certainly give us a good understanding of what needs doing and how much space we have got and how we can best utilise this space that we have. (Participant in Sheffield design training)

[The students] facilitated helpful conversation and imagination. They used innovation and lateral thinking but managed to keep us on task – which was complicated for them as we are not sure where we are going yet. They definitely helped us dream beyond where we had gone before. (Church group representative on Chester live project)

[The biggest impact is] that all the people concerned with St John’s are singing from the same hymn sheet! (Participant in Stourbridge workshop)

During the data analysis, it sometimes emerged that comments made by participants implied an impact on morale that was not encompassed in the eleven predetermined indicators, to the extent that more indicators had to be added to the list. The new in-vivo indicators were *Feeling affirmed*, *Feeling less isolated*, *Feeling uplifted*, *Having a greater sense of clarity or a clearer focus*, and *Having a greater sense of purpose*.

It does encourage people that someone else was interested in us, even if it's just because of our challenges! And also, when you [the EDP team] have had lots of people wanting to work with you, and you looked around, our challenges are interesting enough, our challenges are challenging enough, and we think 'Oh, we're not just making this up...' - it's a great site but it IS challenging. (Debrief with Bow Church)

Most of the other Morale indicators (e.g. 'People feel excited or enthusiastic', 'People feel inspired', etc.) had fewer than three mentions in both the 'People' and 'Groups' beneficiary categories in Phase 1, although the aggregate effect was sufficient for the Morale category to be rated as 'moderate evidence' for one subcategory of 'People' (individuals looking after historic places of worship).

Phase 2

In the Phase 2 field visit interviews, Morale stood out as the category with the strongest evidence of direct impact. It was closely linked, however, with other themes, especially 'Empowerment To/Through Design', 'Learning' (particularly in relation to applications of learning), 'Perceptions', and 'Connectivity'. It could be argued that the boundaries between these categories are fluid and that it may be possible for a single quote to bridge two or more of the above themes.

In two of the field visits, the transformative effect of EDP activities on morale (in both cases corresponding to the indicator 'People's aspirations are raised') also led to other immediate outcomes. In Hanley, both the London Lumen themed workshop and the targeted workshop at the church were instrumental in shifting the mindset of the church leaders from one of negativity and defeatism to feeling confident and competent to undertake an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund – as discussed above under 'Empowerment to Design'.

For the URC Stratford-upon-Avon participants, the Design Training conducted in Sheffield also had a morale-boosting effect (raising aspirations) over and above the specific 'applications of learning' discussed above. This effect, which has a large overlap with the Empowerment To/ Through Design theme, was generated through two specific elements of Design Training, namely the site visits to

other projects and the process of trying to make a three-dimensional model of the church from memory.

Closed questions

Closed questions were used for one of the subcategories of Morale, namely confidence, in the Design Training events conducted in Manchester and Sheffield as well as in some of the workshops. The findings are as summarised in Table 6 below. The questions were altered according to the purpose. While sample sizes are small, these figures support the assertion that the Design Training has a powerful impact on morale, with a high proportion of responses in the ‘Strongly agree’ category and all but one of the others in the ‘Agree’ category. These figures cannot be taken as quantitative data, as such, but to an extent they support the assertion that the project is contributing to building confidence. There is a lack of qualitative data relating to this indicator at present.

Table 6: Summary of Design Training feedback (closed questions) relating to gaining confidence

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree
I feel more confident about working with design professionals	Manchester: 9/11 Sheffield: 5/9 Total: 14/20	Manchester: 2/11 Sheffield: 4/9 Total: 6/20	0	0
I feel more confident about working with the wider community	Bideford: 4/12	Bideford: 7/12	Not offered as an option	Bideford: 1/12
I have gained skills and confidence to help lead a design process and engage my community in it	Manchester: 6/11 Sheffield: 2/9 Total: 8/20	Manchester: 5/11 Sheffield: 7/9 Total: 12/20	0	0

Priority indicator

The priority indicator for ‘Morale’ was *People or groups feel more confident*. This was directly evidenced at All Saints Hanley by this verbatim quote:

It was just me taking it forward, but the results of the workshop gave me inspiration, confidence, courage to go for it. It was good to hear people saying the same thing that I have been thinking. I thought I was thinking on my own but then it was as if

God was saying to me, "there's a choir behind you." It was a sense of solidarity. People were behind me had around me and it was very encouraging. (Participant, All Saints Hanley)

Confidence was not directly mentioned at URC Stratford, but may be inferred from the data.

2.3.5 Perceptions

Phase 1 generated moderate evidence that EDP has contributed to changes in perceptions among one specific category of beneficiaries – individuals looking after historic places of worship – but limited evidence or none at all in other beneficiary categories.

The original framework-building exercise identified five sub-categories for this theme, namely *perceptions of the building*, *perceptions of [their] heritage*, *perceptions of [their] faith*, *perceptions of [their] community*, and *perceptions of the project* (in the sense of their project to redesign, renovate or maintain the historic place of worship, rather than in the sense of the EDP project). However, the initial data analysis during the pilot testing phase resulted in the addition of two new sub-categories: *perceptions of places of worship in general*, and *perceptions of the group*, in the sense of a local group looking after a historic place of worship.

Of all these sub-categories, only *Perceptions of the building* can be evidenced by more than two or three participant comments. There was a sense among individuals looking after historic places of worship, and to a lesser extent among groups, that EDP activities had raised their awareness of the value, significance or beauty of their historic building and helped them to see it in a more positive light. Relevant quotes include the following:

'There's a lot of development and a lot more, not sophistication, but a deeper level of thinking, so instead of people saying "oh dear, it's useless, we're stuck in the middle of the road," there's a lot more productive thinking. It's going the right way, there's nothing being imposed on us.' (Bow Church mid-project review)

'...on the whole, these two days has made me feel much more kindly towards our church space. I think going on those visits and things, because we have been involved with redevelopment ideas and trying to get our railings fixed, sometimes I can get a bit overwhelmed with the thought of the problems and the constrictions of the site, but actually thinking about it I think actually there is a lot about it that is really, really lovely, that actually we wouldn't want to change.' (Sheffield Design Training participant, Bow Church)

Closed questions relating to perceptions of the buildings were also used in some of the workshops, as in Table 7 below.

It is difficult to draw conclusions from such tiny sample sizes, especially when the questions asked in the workshops were slightly different in most cases, but in general it appears that there was more ambivalence about the impact on perceptions and it was less prominent than other categories, such as Learning and Morale. This is perhaps unsurprising, as Learning and Morale are very ‘immediate’ impacts for an event attended in person, whereas a change in perceptions is more difficult to achieve and has far-reaching consequences.

Table 7: Summary of workshop feedback relating to perceptions of buildings (closed questions)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree
The workshop helped me progress my thinking about the future of this place	0	Worcester: 5/6	Worcester: 1/6 (‘Maybe’)	0
I have a better understanding of the value of the building for me	Stourbridge: 0 Chester: 2/7 Total: 2/15	Stourbridge: 3/8 Chester: 4/7 Total: 7/15	Stourbridge: 5/8 Chester: 1/7 Total: 6/15	0
I have a better understanding of the value of the building for the group	Stourbridge: 0 Chester: 2/7 Total: 2/15	Stourbridge: 6/8 Chester: 5/7 Total: 11/15	Stourbridge: 2/8 Chester: 0 Total: 2/15	0
I have a better understanding of the building and its potential	Bideford: 3/12	Bideford: 6/12	Bideford: 3/12	0

The Phase 2 work generated strong evidence that people’s perceptions of their historic buildings had changed as a result of the EDP activities. Even in St John’s URC Stourbridge, where a decision was eventually made to close the church, the EDP workshops shifted perceptions and created a temporary sense of optimism, as previously discussed above:

‘In big-picture terms we were looking at possibilities of transformation, we recognised what we couldn’t do was continue as we were, but there was the future.’

So I think what the workshop did was just sort of open some windows really, looking at what we'd got, what were the possibilities, what is the blue sky thinking, what are the out-of-the-box ideas? Treasuring what we'd got and the relationships we'd already established, but seeing that as, in a sense, the long-term possibility for the ... church as a worshipping congregation. But also to make the most of the listed building that we've got, because there have been times in the church's story when that was seen as a bit of a burden that we carried, rather than an opportunity.'

A similar shift in perceptions occurred for a participant from All Saints Hanley, who attended the London Lumen meeting:

'All Saints was always a narrative of neglect. There were the broken windows, the guttering, the place was falling apart, it was cold, it was unattractive...and it was on a main road. At least most other churches have a hinterland. No one is going to stop and think that the church is there, most of the people who are driving past are going to or from the town. So beforehand, I had adopted the clothes of my previous bishops – "this is an impossible place!" But at the [Lumen] meeting I started hearing, "what you're asking for is not that much." It was going to cost about a quarter of a million pounds. That adds another pressure, but they spoke in a way which was confident because they'd seen it possible. The "im-" was like a mid-grey and the "possible" was black. So I fell more in love with the building and its possibilities, and that encouraged me.'

The quote listed above for Morale in relation to URC Stratford-upon-Avon could also be applicable to this section. The data from the site visits strongly suggest that changing people's perceptions of historic religious buildings is likely to be one of the key outcomes of EDP.

3. Initial Exploration of Second Arena: Wider Societal and Economic Impact

Using the first phase of the audit above as a starting point, the core team discussed possible themes and indicators for the second arena, ‘Wider Societal and Economic Impact’. The emerging themes were ***Awareness of Community Engagement in Design*** (five indicators), ***Awareness of the Potential of Historic Places of Worship*** (two indicators), and ***Networks and Partnerships*** (one indicator). These eight indicators were divided into two sets of four, respectively high-priority and medium-priority, as indicated below.

Table 8: High-priority indicators for the second arena (societal and economic impact)

Priority	Theme	Indicator
High	Awareness of Community Engagement in Design	People or organisations <i>recognise the value</i> of community engagement in design
	Awareness of Community Engagement in Design	People or organisations (acquire), use and share practices and resources that have been developed or championed by EDP to promote community engagement in design
	Awareness of Potential of Places of Worship	People or organisations share learning and evidence with others about the roles and potential of historic places of worship
	Networks and Partnerships	People or organisations share learning
Medium	Awareness of Community Engagement in Design	People or organisations have an <i>increased awareness of the meaning</i> of community engagement in design
	Awareness of Community Engagement in Design	People or organisations <i>as needed</i> for community engagement in design
	Awareness of Community Engagement in Design	People or organisations <i>apply knowledge about the resources needed</i> for community engagement in design, e.g. using the knowledge for organizational change
	Awareness of Potential of Places of Worship	People or organisations apply learning and evidence about the roles and potential of places of worship

3.1 Audit Methodology

In Phase 2, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with project partners, with a view to identifying any initial second-arena impacts that have already at this mid-point and understanding where there might be potential for enhancing impact in the future.

The interviews were broadly based around the indicators above, but also included wider questions about the partners' experiences of participating in the EDP project, and where they saw possibilities for impact within their respective organisations.

3.2 Preliminary Findings

As expected, in most cases it was difficult to identify actual impacts on policy or practice within the partner organisations themselves at this stage of the EDP project. It is only to be expected that most of these impacts will be evident towards the end of the project, and especially in the first three to five years after the completion of the project, when courses and resources created by EDP are in wider use.

The partner interviews have, however, drawn attention to some important challenges that need to be considered carefully in order to optimise project impact. As initially hoped when the EDP project was set up, the interviewees indicated that they are committed to raising awareness (of the importance of community engagement in design, and/or of the role and potential of historic religious buildings) not only within their own organisations, but also among the wider communities with which they engage. Partners might, for example, be active agents of awareness-raising in one or both of these areas among their clients, their networks, and the stakeholders with whom they interact. However, achieving a lasting impact within this space will not happen by default.

What would be valuable at this stage is a stakeholder mapping exercise, in which each of the partners (as an individual) carefully considers all the stakeholders with whom they interact in the performance of their professional role and reflects on what the three themes – **Awareness of Community Engagement in Design, Awareness of the Potential of Places of Worship**, and creation of new **Networks and Partnerships** – would look like for each of the relevant stakeholder groups.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

This mid-term impact case study has illustrated the enormous potential of the Empowering Design Practices project to enrich the lives of individuals, groups and communities, at one level, and to enhance the societal, economic, academic and educational landscape of the UK in broader and deeper ways, at another.

It is clear that much has already been achieved, especially in terms of the immediate and direct impact of EDP community-led design activities on the connectivity, learning, morale, and perceptions of individuals and groups looking after historic places of worship. In addition, the site visits have provided evidence that the objective of ‘Empowerment To Design / Empowerment Through Design’ is also being achieved, although at this point not all projects have received site visits. We have identified some initial mechanisms through which empowerment occurs, but to link these to the types of support provided by EDP will require a more systematic process of qualitative evaluation.

Within the second arena, we have established that much of the societal and economic impact of EDP will come from its resources, and specifically from the creation of resources that project partners can use in their outreach work with clients and other stakeholders. The next few months will be a crucial time to work through issues, such as the need to balance *generalizability*, in the sense of creating resources that are broadly relevant and interesting to a wide range of stakeholders (especially in light of the vast diversity of faith groups and places of worship supported by EDP), with *applicability*, in the sense of creating resources that can solve a clearly defined practical problem for a specific stakeholder. There may be value in taking advice from marketing professionals with experience in supporting social entrepreneurs, to ensure that both the target audience(s) and the purpose(s) of the resources are very clearly identified.

Much work remains in order to ensure that lasting impacts and ‘ripple effects’ (i.e. further impacts that result from any new policies, practices, networks, etc. which may arise as a result of EDP activities) are both achieved and captured, through an impact-focused strategic planning process. A separate internal report for and by the project team includes not only recommendations for achieving this in a general sense over the remaining lifetime of the project, with a view to creating a strong case study for the 2021 Research Excellence Framework, but also specific suggestions for activities that can be carried out in the short term to enhance impact capture in relation to the different domains of direct impact.

Looking more broadly at collaborative research projects that involve universities, practitioners and communities, this consultancy also offers a model that can be emulated by other large projects. From a theoretical perspective, the Multi-Level Evaluation approach offers a way of constructing impact case studies that honour the values of both funders and delivery partners, and potentially also the beneficiaries. In a more practical sense, other projects could learn from the collaborative

process of creating a bespoke impact framework, and then using this framework both to audit and to augment impacts throughout the remaining lifetime of the project.

To gain the maximum possible benefit from this process, it could be developed at the initial bid-writing stage as a more sophisticated evolution of the 'Pathways to Impact' exercise (with the caveat that it is never possible to predict all possible impacts before a project has started) and reviewed at regular intervals throughout the project life cycle. This will ensure that feedback mechanisms are tailored, from the start, to collecting crucial data on impacts without burdening event participants with excessive paperwork. It should be remembered that a project impact framework is a dynamic, living document that requires regular review and will inevitably need updating as the project evolves.

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The text and tables contained in this report as well as the images in Figures 2-3 in the main report and the images in the Appendix were created by Ashley Jay Brockwell, Founder, Green Spiral Consulting (www.greenspiralconsulting.com) in collaboration with the EDP project team.

The map in Figure 1 and all the photographs were created by the EDP project team.

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Appendix - Full description of the framework development methodology

1. Participatory approach

In the light of the EDP project's explicit focus on co-design by all members of the core group of partners, it was essential to apply a participatory approach to the impact assessment. Values-focused evaluation is, of course, inherently participatory: it is the antithesis of a top-down evaluation approach, in which the criteria are solely designed by an outside agency. As noted by Harder et al. (2013), participation can be conceptualised as three 'tangible' dimensions, namely breadth, depth and scope, and the intangible dimension of quality:

- **Breadth** of participation: WHO is involved – *which stakeholders or groups* are participating
- **Depth** of participation: HOW MUCH they're involved – the *amount of control* over decisions
- **Scope** of participation: WHEN specific stakeholders are involved – throughout the whole activity, or only at specific times
- **Quality** of participation: HOW specific stakeholders are getting involved – the *sincerity and thoughtfulness* of engagement, whether it's taken seriously or seen as a 'token effort'

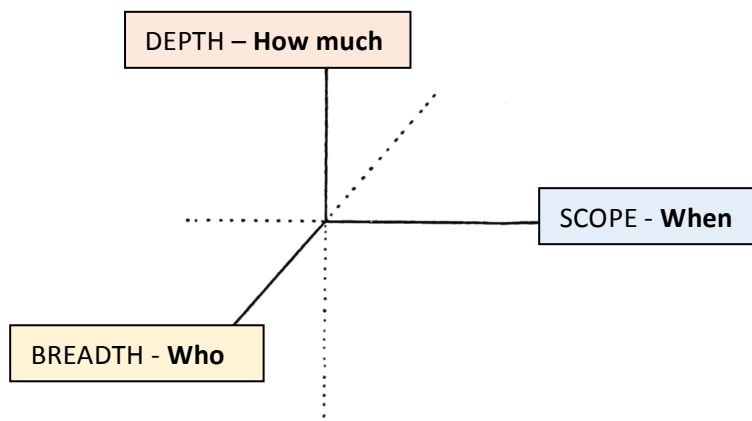


Figure 1: Three 'tangible' dimensions of participation: depth, breadth and scope

In creating the impact framework, there was a focus on optimising participation in all dimensions wherever possible, but with the recognition that maximum breadth was not always desirable or practical. All members of the core partner group were invited to the eleventh EDP partners' meeting, in which the intersection between values and legacies (originally developed in the third

partners' meeting in 2015) was reviewed, ground-truthed and updated, and the twelfth meeting, in which the impact framework was presented and expanded (see Section 2). However, full attendance was not achieved in either case.

Between the two meetings, the impact framework was developed and refined by the core delivery team, consisting of partners from the Open University and The Glass-House only. This was done in order to maximise the efficient use of other partners' time and to use the core delivery team's practical, everyday knowledge of the project. The depth of participation was at its maximum level during the creation of the impact framework, to the extent that all decisions about the framework were made collaboratively. However, the data analysis during the audit phase was done by the consultant alone.

2. 'Impact audit' versus 'process evaluation'

This consultancy was framed as a mid-term impact audit rather than process evaluation. Impact audit is concerned with examining which of the expected outcomes are already evident, and which are not; while process evaluation seeks to understand *how* the project is being implemented and managed.

If a particular outcome is not yet evident, this may be either because it is **not happening**, or because it is happening but **not being effectively captured** by existing data collection mechanisms. This is common when the impact framework has been defined retrospectively rather than from the outset, or has evolved significantly over the course of the project.

Rather than offering immediate recommendations for changing the project implementation strategy, a midterm impact audit will typically recommend changing the data collection strategy first, in order to determine whether the 'missing' categories of expected impact can be made visible through another method of data collection (e.g. focus groups or interviews). Should this prove not to be the case, the expectation is that there is still time to change the implementation strategy before the project ends, to ensure that the desired impacts are achieved.

Unlike process evaluation (c.f. Hogard, 2008), impact audit does *not* involve:

- assessing whether a project is being delivered as intended (confirmatory approach);
- exploring specific mechanisms through which particular outcomes are being achieved, or failing to be achieved (exploratory approach);
- attempting to infer cause-and-effect relationships for specific processes and outcomes within the project (causal approach).

All of these dimensions of process evaluation could potentially be explored in future contracts, if required, but were not within the scope of this consultancy.

3. Building the Impact Framework

As outlined above, the reference framework for the impact audit was constructed using a multilevel values-focused approach with two values lenses. The first stage of the work, corresponding to what we have termed the ‘first arena of impact’, focused on the implementers’ values lens; while subsequent stages examined the funder’s values lens (RCUK) outlined in the RCUK document *Pathways to Impact* (2017) as detailed below.

3.1. Implementers’ Values Lens

In this report, we use the term *implementers’ values lens* to refer to the agreed values-in-action of project implementers, i.e. the stakeholder group responsible for designing and delivering the project. This group included members from The Open University and six partner organisations: The Glass-House Community Led Design, the Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic England, the Historic Religious Buildings Alliance, LiveWorks and Wright & Wright Architects. The work of developing the implementer values lens was done with the core delivery team – the strategic partnership of The Design Group at the Open University and The Glass-House Community Led Design – with the wider stakeholder group taking an advisory role.

3.1.1 Pre-audit groundwork

EDP provided an ideal setting for a mid-term impact audit in that a lot of the groundwork of identifying implementer values had already been done at the outset of the project. As a result, there was no need for a dedicated workshop to identify values-based indicators from scratch.

This was a direct consequence of the participation of the Principal Investigator, Dr Theodore Zamenopoulos, and the three other members of the core delivery team, Sophia de Sousa, Louise Dredge and Dr Katerina Alexiou, in an earlier AHRC-funded project entitled *Starting from Values: Evaluating Intangible Legacies* (SfV), in which Professor Marie Harder was the principal investigator. The application of methods developed in the SfV project to EDP provided a strong foundation in clarifying the values of the core group, as a team, and relating them to expected benefits or potential legacies.

First partners’ meeting

In the first partners’ meeting in 2015, participants were asked to complete a ‘profile’ sheet, which captured their individual research or practice interests and their individual principles for *collaboration* (how we work together as partners), *action* (what values guide project activities) and *success* (what makes a ‘good’ research project). These sheets were analysed to identify shared, individual and conflicting (or contested) values, with the recognition that the project could allow space for some individual values as well as those that were widely shared.

Third partners' meeting

After an initial analysis of the data from the first partners' meeting, the full project team defined a set of values statements that would form the foundation for the whole EDP project and a number of legacies that they hoped to achieve from the project:

Values:

- **Open:** Facilitating an open exchange of information, ideas and priorities
- **Respectful:** Drawing on, and respecting, what everyone brings to the project
- **Strategic:** Acknowledging diverse wider agendas, while clearly identifying the shared interests
- **Inclusive:** Taking a collective approach to problem solving, while recognising that not everyone needs to be involved in everything (people have different time commitments)
- **Impactful:** Constantly asking 'What will this achieve that will make things different and better in the future?'
- **Reflective:** Ensuring that activities are captured, evaluated and shared
- **Accessible:** Making outcomes and resources accessible to our key audiences

Legacies:

Better places: We contribute to the creation of more inclusive and sustainable places of worship

Empowered people: People who look after places of worship are empowered to lead projects

Capacity: Professionals (e.g. architects and support officers), as well as communities, use the training and practical resources that are produced

Improved policy-making: The evidence and knowledge produced influences policy-making

Innovation: The project develops innovative research and practice approaches

By mapping values on the horizontal axis against desired legacies on the vertical axis, the project team identified actions and mechanisms that they anticipated would *help them to achieve those legacies, and/or evidence a certain legacy*. It was recognised that thinking about the relationship between values and legacies was useful because it enabled them to think differently and capture impacts that are often overlooked.

Seventh partners' meeting

The project team returned to the theme of impact at the seventh partners' meeting, through a further participatory exercise in which they identified 'immediate outcomes', 'longer-term outcomes' and 'high-level impacts' that they hoped to see as a result of the project. These were generally more specific than the values and legacies statements from the third partners' meeting.

3.1.2. Identifying potential beneficiaries

Following the pre-audit groundwork, the first step in the process of developing an impact audit framework was to clarify the potential beneficiaries, i.e. to analyse *who* was expected to benefit from the project. This information was initially obtained from the 'Case for Support' and 'Pathways to Impact' documents that were submitted as part of the original EDP funding application to the AHRC, and then reviewed with the Principal Investigator to examine the ways in which the project had evolved since it was initially proposed.

During this discussion, an important distinction emerged between the impact of the *building renovation* projects themselves, and the impact of EDP *on* those projects. The original bid documents, for example, referred to 'capturing the impact of community-led design practices on people, communities and places', but it was felt that it would be unrealistic to talk about a direct impact of EDP on places, given that most of the renovation initiatives at the study sites are long-term projects.

The team realised that what they wanted to focus on was the impact of EDP on *individuals and groups looking after historic places of worship*, and on the ways that they lead the projects, rather than on the historic places of worship themselves.

The wider communities in which these historic places of worship are located can also be viewed as beneficiaries. In some cases, EDP activities were also organised for the benefit of other individuals and groups, such as architects or postgraduate students.

3.1.3 Mapping out the framework for the Implementer Values Lens

An initial framework for the Implementer Values Lens was drafted by mapping the three main types of potential direct beneficiaries of the Community-Led Design activities of the project (*People, Groups and Communities*) against the 13 main impact themes identified from the exercises carried out in the first, third and seventh partner meetings (*Challenge, Cohesion, Connectivity, Economic Benefit, Engagement, Empowerment, Learning, Morale, Perceptions, Sharing, Time Out, Resilience, Wellbeing*).

Within each of these main themes, sub-themes were created as starting points for indicator identification (e.g. 'sharing resources' and 'building networks' under *Connectivity*). These were revised as necessary through discussions with project partners.

It was also suggested that there might be a separate arena of 'educational impact', which is separate from the 'direct impact' of CLD activities carried out as part of the EDP project. The educational arena would involve a different set of beneficiaries, including academic institutions, Continuing Professional Development providers, training and development providers, and registrants on open-access courses. Impacts in this arena could include, for example, new educational resources,

training, and new facilitation techniques. These outcomes will be manifested over the medium/long term.

3.2. Funders' Values Lens

In addition to the direct impact of the project activities on people, groups and communities, and the potential impact on educational provision as discussed above, we also adopted a parallel way of looking at impact by using the vocabulary and values of the UK Research Councils, RCUK.

This was grounded in the RCUK document *Pathways to Impact* (2017), which states:

“Across the dual support system, the Research Councils and UK Funding Councils are committed to supporting excellent research and to realise the importance of impact. Research Councils require academics to consider the future impact of research at the point of applying for funding. UK HE Funding Bodies, in context of the REF, assesses the historic evidence of impact. All funders have a common understanding of the importance of societal and economic as well as academic impact.”

<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/innovation/impact>

In the *Pathways to Impact* online document, RCUK further clarifies the definitions of ‘academic impact’ and ‘economic and societal impacts’ as follows:

Academic impact: The demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to academic advances, across and within disciplines, including significant advances in understanding, methods, theory and application.

Economic and societal impacts: The demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to society and the economy. Economic and societal impacts embrace all the extremely diverse ways in which research-related knowledge and skills benefit individuals, organisations and nations by:

fostering global economic performance, and specifically the economic competitiveness of the United Kingdom,
increasing the effectiveness of public services and policy,
enhancing quality of life, health and creative output.

(RCUK Pathways to Impact, <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/innovation/impact> accessed 25 July 2017)

Each of these definitions yielded themes for the draft framework, as indicated below. For example, within the arena of Societal and Economic Impact, *Boosting Economy*, *Creative Output*, *Policy Changes* and *Practice Changes* were all identified as impact themes that might be relevant to the EDP project.

3.3. Assembling the Impact Framework

The Implementer Values Lens and Funder Values Lens were merged to create a framework with four main arenas of impact, namely *Direct Impact of CLD Activities*, *Societal and Economic Impact*, *Academic Impact*, and *Educational Impact*. It was recognised that while *Direct Impact of CLD Activities* and *Educational Impact* had originated from the Implementers’ values work, while *Societal and Economic Impact* and *Academic Impact* were taken directly from the RCUK report, all of these four arenas are of interest to both the funder and the core project team.

After discussion, a fifth potential arena of impact was added, namely ‘ripple effects’ from changes in policy and practice. If a new policy is introduced by the Heritage Lottery Fund as a direct result of EDP, for example, the impact of implementing this policy (an impact which would not be *entirely* attributable to EDP, but would retain a connection to it) could later be tracked under the heading of ‘ripple effects’. However, impacts in this arena may not be evident for many years, and certainly do not fall within the scope of this consultancy.

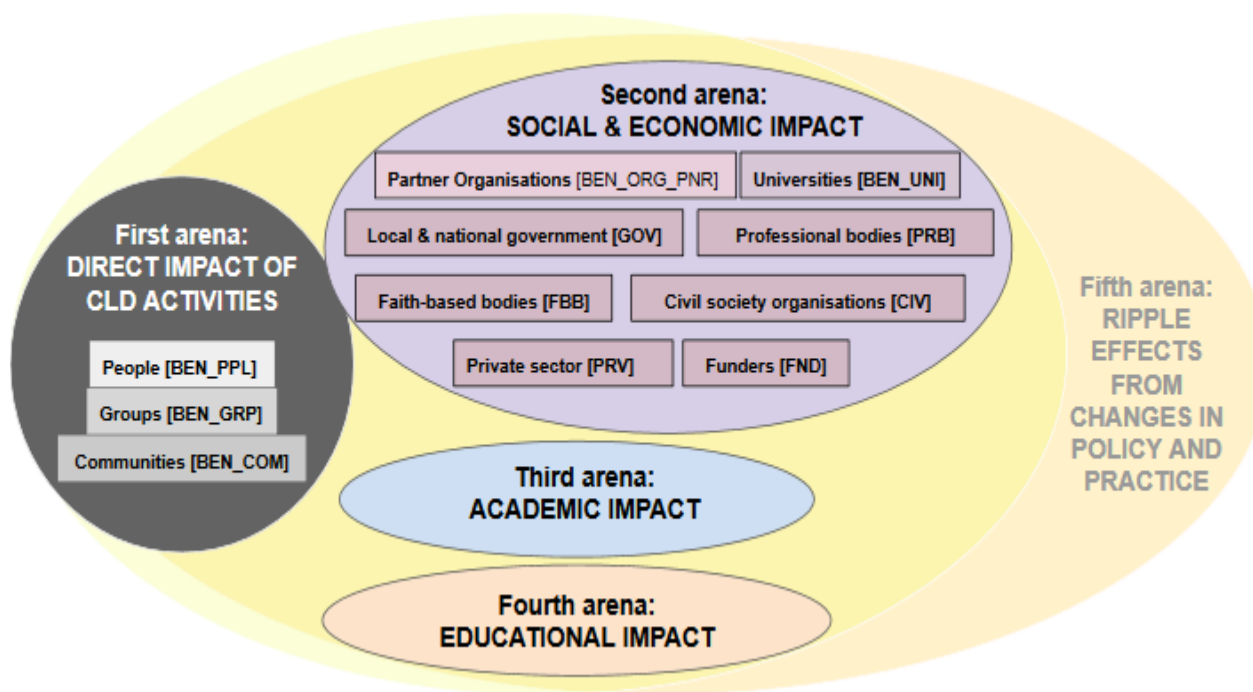


Figure 4: Overview of the five arenas of influence

3.3.1. Piloting the framework

The draft framework was piloted by using it to analyse an initial sample of project feedback forms, corresponding to a focus group held with heritage officers and architects, two workshops conducted with a longitudinal project (St Peter’s, Chester); a themed workshop in Bradford with people from various places of worship; and a targeted workshop in Bideford, respectively.

It was found that the initial draft framework had too many main categories to be practicable for data analysis. Accordingly, the framework was reviewed with members of the core delivery team from the Open University and The Glass-House to create a simplified version with only five main themes relating to ‘People’ and ‘Groups’ in the Direct Impact section (*Connecting, Learning, Morale, Perceptions, Resilience*) and a new overarching main theme that was defined as *Empowerment To / Through Design*. The main theme of ‘Engagement’ was identified as relevant to communities only (see Table 1 below).

The new main theme reflected the twofold purpose of the project, namely to empower people to design (e.g. redesigning the interiors of historic religious buildings) and to empower them *through* design (e.g. to become more proactive in their local communities, so that the projects to transform historic religious buildings into multi-purpose community facilities become ‘catalysts for connecting communities’, as the EDP project describes them in its tagline).

Table 1. Direct beneficiaries of Community-Led Design activities and main impact themes

	People	Groups	Communities
Empowerment to Design / Empowerment through Design	X	X	X
Connectivity	X	X	
Learning	X	X	
Morale	X	X	
Perceptions	X	X	
Resilience		X	
Engagement			X

At this stage of revision, new categories were also added in the two impact arenas derived from the Funder values lens, to reflect the Implementers' values. These were *Networks & Partnerships* in the 'Societal and Economic Impact' arena, and *Datasets* and *Interconnections* in the 'Academic Impact' arena (the latter referring, for example, to interconnections between disciplines or research areas).

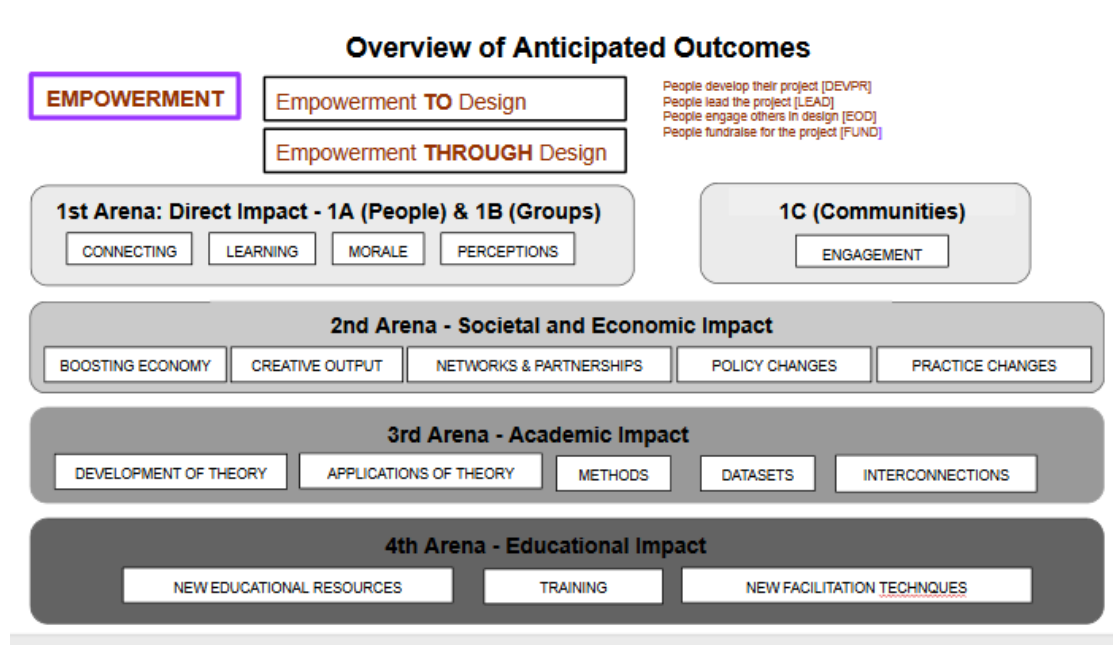


Figure 5: Overview of main impact categories across the whole framework, by arena of impact.

For each theme, sub-themes were derived initially through the analysis of the project documents listed above, and finalised through discussions with the Open University and The Glass-House. A few sub-themes were also derived directly from the data analysis in the initial pilot.

In Table 2 below, the indicators marked with an asterisk (*) are those that were added directly from in-vivo data analysis. These are indicators that were not initially anticipated, and not mentioned in the partners' meetings, but were evident in the data (e.g. feedback forms and interviews) during the initial pilot. These will be discussed in more detail below.

Indicators shown in italics are those for which evidence is not yet available to support an argument for this type of impact at this midpoint stage of the project. Where an indicator is in italics, this does not *necessarily* mean that the project has not yet achieved this objective, but only that there is insufficient data to draw conclusions about whether it has been achieved or not.

For 'communities', which we defined specifically as the geographical community in which a historic place of worship is located (rather than communities of practice, etc.) we noted that only the 'Empowerment To/Through Design' category from the above list would be applicable. We also added *Engagement* as a quantitative category based on recording the numbers of people engaging with the EDP project and/or its outputs in different ways within each geographical community.

Indicators for the second arena (Societal and Economic Impact) were developed through a consultation within the core team.

Table 2: Themes and indicators for 'Direct Impact of CLD Activities' (first arena of impact). Indicators shown in italics are those for which no evidence has yet been found, while those with asterisks were not present in the initial project documents but have been derived directly from the data analysis – see below.

Theme	Indicators of Success
Empowerment To Design / Empowerment Through Design (n=5)	People / Groups / Communities develop their project <i>People / Groups lead the project</i> People / Groups engage others in design <i>People / Groups / Communities seek new resources for the project</i> People develop their team
Connectivity (n=8)	People share resources with others The group shares resources with others / other groups People share skills, methods, knowledge & understanding Networks are built <i>Partnerships are built</i> <i>The group changes its internal communications</i> <i>The group changes its external communications</i> Group cohesion improves
Learning (n=5)	People / Groups acquire skills, methods, knowledge & understanding People / Groups apply skills, methods, knowledge & understanding People / Groups develop skills, methods, knowledge & understanding People take time and space for reflection People identify challenges inherent in their initial designs or plans*
Morale (n=17)	<i>People have a sense of achievement</i> <i>People's / Groups' aspirations are raised</i> People / Groups feel more confident People are actively engaged People feel excited or enthusiastic People have fun <i>People express their fears</i> People feel inspired <i>People feel useful</i> <i>People / Groups feel their horizons have been widened</i> Group vision is strengthened People feel affirmed* People feel less isolated or less alone* People feel a sense of catharsis* People feel uplifted* People / Groups have a greater sense of clarity, or a clearer focus* People / Groups have a greater sense of purpose*
Perceptions (n=7)	People / Groups change their perceptions of their place of worship, places of worship in general, community, faith, heritage, the project, or their group
Engagement (n=4)	Number of people actively engaged in the event

(Community level only)	Number of people engaging with EDP activities or resources Number of people engaging with the place of worship in the project <i>Number of people engaging with place of worship in decision-making role</i>
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3.3.2 Prioritisation of Indicators

Among the recommendations of the Phase 1 report were the following:

- The number of **high-priority indicators**, for which impact data is actively and systematically collected even when it requires a dedicated investment of time and resources, should be limited to **a maximum of twelve** across all four arenas. These indicators collectively constitute a clear vision of highly valued impacts, which in turn should lead to:
 - o specific, measurable, agreed, realistic and timely (SMART) objectives;
 - o a detailed project implementation plan for achieving the impacts;
 - o a detailed data capture plan for monitoring the impacts, and also enablers and barriers;
 - o review of both plans at every partner meeting.

- The number of **medium-priority indicators**, for which data on impacts is actively collected but without additional investment (e.g. adding extra questions to an existing feedback form, focus group or interview), should be limited to **no more than twenty** across all four arenas. These indicators can also be included in the implementation and data capture plans if appropriate.

- Any unnecessary indicators should be removed from the framework.

- For the remaining (low-priority) indicators, no active data collection should take place, but an effective system should be created to ensure that impacts are systematically logged if noticed.

In accordance with these recommendations, the EDP core team consulted together on which indicators should be designated as high-priority within both the first arena (direct impact) and the second arena (societal and economic impact). This exercise resulted in a designation of eight indicators as high-priority in the first arena (two each for ‘Empowerment through Design’ and ‘Morale’, and one each for ‘Engagement’, ‘Learning’, ‘Connectivity’ and ‘Perceptions’. Each was assigned a unique code, with A representing high priority and 1 representing the first arena.