



The Art of the Possible



**WELLNORTH
ENTERPRISES**

Unlocking Potential
In People And Places

The Art of the Possible

Early in the Well North programme we realised how important it would be to utilise creative thinking and doing to achieve our ambition of unleashing healthy and enterprising communities.

We wanted to encourage different ways of seeing and have conversations that took inspiration from turning convention on its head.

We wanted to show creatively and visually the amazing work that was emerging across our Pathfinder sites.

So, we engaged Matt Worden, a visual artist, to work as a key part of the team. Matt has a long history of helping people to understand themselves and the world around them through pictures.

As our resident artist, he uses his skills to capture the special moments that community members experience in visual form, and to engage people in new conversations by showing them how to use creative thinking to confront the challenges they face.

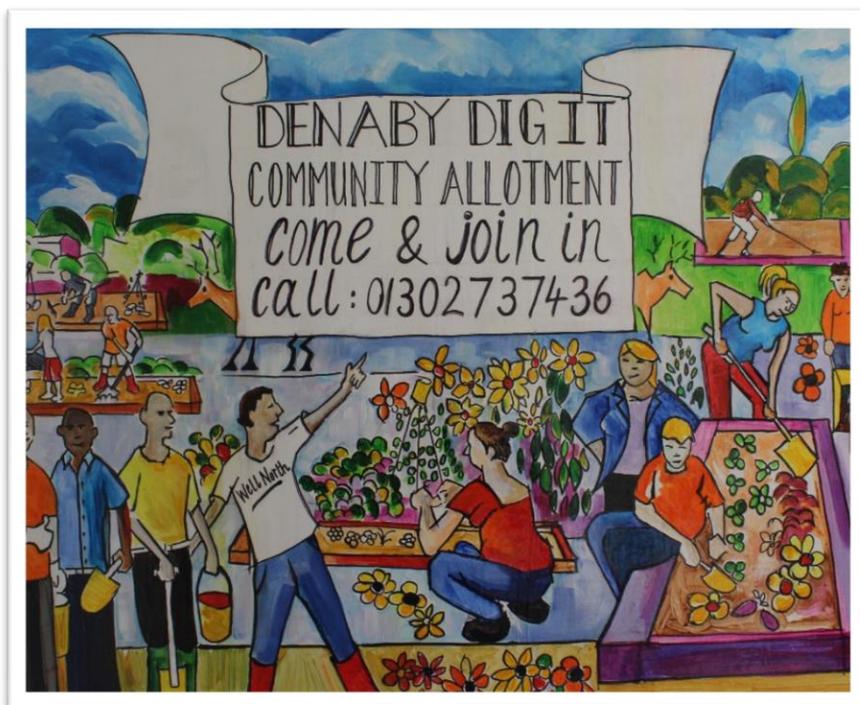
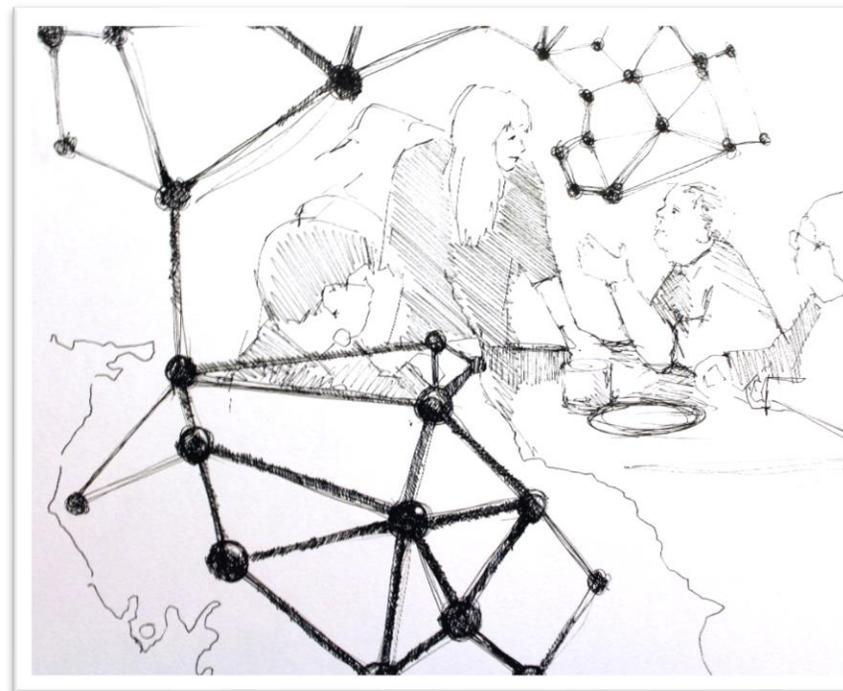


The photographs and artwork illustrated here have either been produced by Matt as he worked across the Pathfinder sites or produced by people attending events.

Above is a map showing the original ten towns and cities where Well North works to mobilise actions from leaders and communities that will make lasting change.

Well North takes time to form new connections. Relationships are created and forged in different spaces.

The drawing (right) was inspired by a photograph taken at The Darling Buds of Denaby, a community led luncheon club in Doncaster, overlaid on the map of Pathfinder sites and the connections that formed in this new way of working.



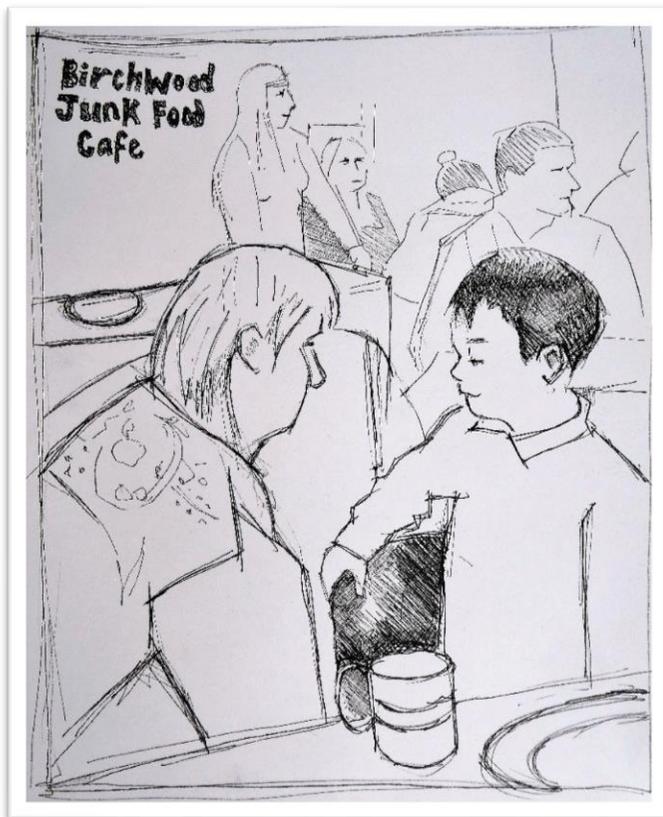
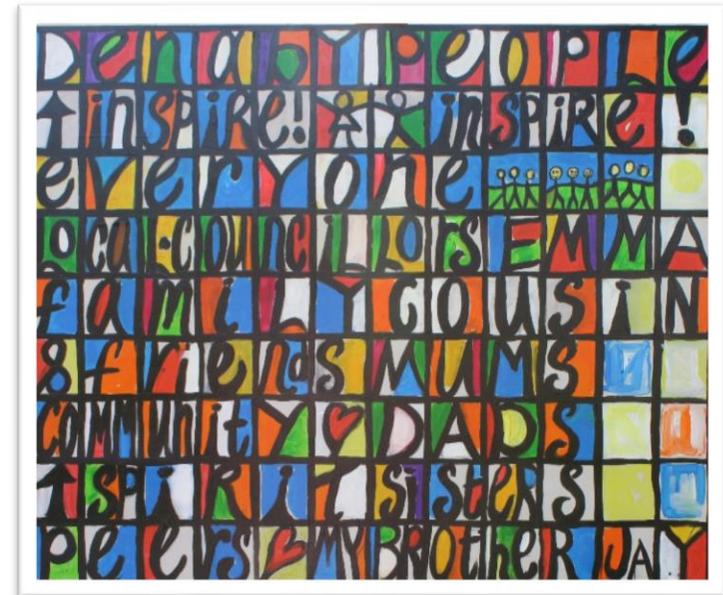
Matt produced the 'Denaby Dig It' signboard (left) after visiting and experiencing the community allotment initiative run as part of Well Doncaster. The signboard is a 'call to arms' to advertise the initiative and get the community behind this great idea. Matt took inspiration from banners he saw in Denaby and Cadaby Miners Welfare club.

The community allotment is part of Well Doncaster's aspiration to make everyday a good day in Denaby.

The illustration, right, is a detail of one of three 4ft x 6ft panels produced live by members of the community at an appreciative inquiry event in Denaby Main.

During the activity led by Matt people were asked to paint the things that inspire them about their community.

In this detail it is obvious how much family and friendship are the corner stone of a good day in Denaby.



Well North takes an entrepreneurial approach to all that it does.

This can be exemplified by Skelmersdale's Birchwood Junk Food Café (JFC) that diverts food destined for landfill and makes high quality food sold at a very low cost.

Brain-child of Stella Connell, Birchwood Centre CEO, the café has been also been providing fantastic volunteering opportunities to a whole range of people in Skelmersdale.

Stella, who worked with a team of volunteers to make this real said, "we took Well North's entrepreneurial message of 'just do it' literally and brought the Real Junk Food Café ethos to Skelmersdale".

Matt produced this sketch after experiencing the café and helping out for the day.

As well as serving great food and providing volunteering opportunities the JFC holds event celebrating significant community days in the year.

At an event marking International Women's Day people were asked to provide pledges and thoughts on inspirational women, with the promise these artefacts would be made into a lasting art piece.



Stella approached Matt to discuss his thoughts on how this promise would be achieved. He settled on the design after discussing ideas with Stella who told Matt how people from Skelmersdale were upset by the portrayal of their town in Grayson Perry's documentary 'All Man'.

This got Matt thinking: what is Perry best known for? Ceramic vessels that tell stories. He took this as the starting point for creating these two large papier mache vessels incorporating all the pledges and positive words said about inspirational women. To add value to the experience they were made at two participatory art events held at the JFC to mark Mental Awareness Week. 64 people worked on the making of the vessels which are now displayed in Skelmersdale Library.

Well North has been instrumental in supporting many other community initiatives and ideas to get off the ground.

One such event took place in Bradford, the inspiration of Mumtaz Khan who runs Onna Bike community cycling initiative based in Girdlington. She wanted to challenge the tired stereo type that women of Pakistani heritage don't ride bikes and get as many people as possible to join the event that celebrated community cohesion.

Matt was there to photograph this amazing community cycling event that went alongside the 2017 Bradford to Sheffield stage of the Tour de Yorkshire.

On the day of the event over 200 riders took to the road behind the professional cyclist.

Well North worked to secure sponsorship from Brewin Dolphin and support the organisation of the event by bringing Cycling UK alongside Onna Bike who still regularly run community cycle events.

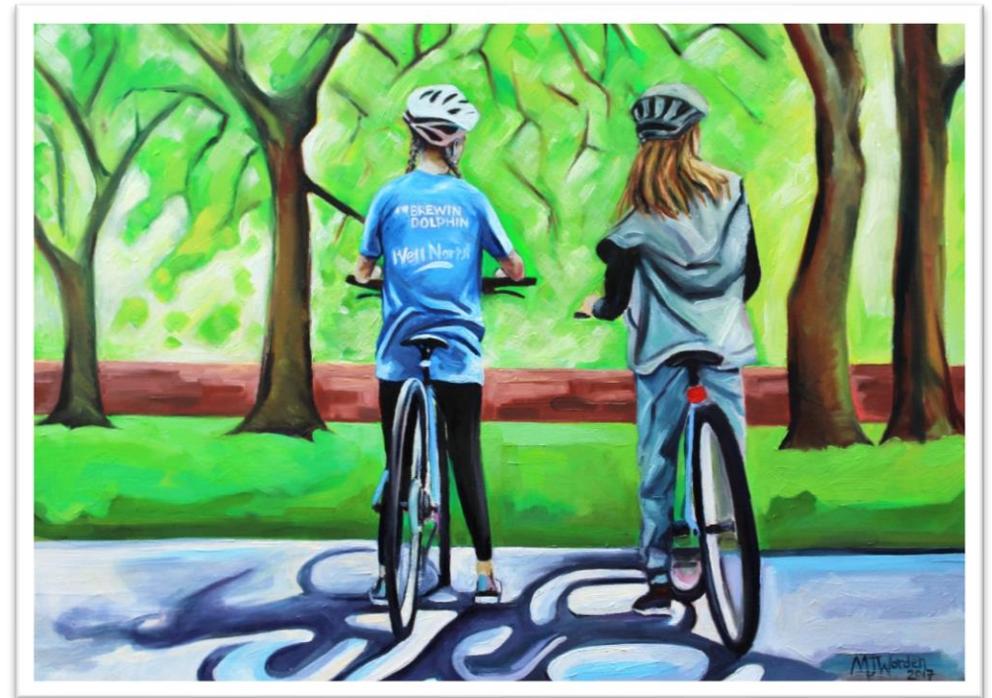


After the event Matt used the 100's of photographs he took and produced a body of work inspired by what he saw and felt.

For one section Matt took inspiration from the most famous Bradfordian artist David Hockney, using photographs of riders to create long collages, a detail of which can be seen above.

Matt used the collage process to highlight how seemingly jigsawed communities fit together to do amazing things.

He also produced paintings and selected significant photos that captured the magnitude of the event.



To date the work has been displayed in several venues across Bradford. It's been seen by 1000's of people in settings as varied as St.Philip's Church, Girlington, Kala Sangam South Asian Arts Centre, Brewin Dolphin HQ Leeds and Bradford Cathedral (left). Matt installed a pop-up exhibition at the Cathedral to help illustrate a speech delivered by Well North's executive chair, Lord Andrew Mawson at a Flourishing Cities event. The work is currently displayed in Bradford Royal Infirmary.

It is envisaged that the exhibition will find a permanent home in the proposed Squire Lane Health Campus which Well North is currently developing with partners.

In September 2017 Well North supporting Well Whitehaven worked with partners to deliver the Infinity Science Festival. The festival, held at West Lakes Academy, Egremont was for young people from across Cumbria with Brian Cox as the key note speaker. Matt was invited to work with students to create an artistic response to it.

Infinity's focus was to promote the 'STEM' science subjects by inspiring young minds. The festival organisers wanted to include an inclusive art activity to create 'STEAM' in acknowledgement of the importance art & creativity plays in science.



Matt conceived an installation piece as an inclusive activity that would produce a site-specific sculpture linked to the festival theme. It was meant as a metaphor linked to the theory of the 'butterfly effect'.

The term 'butterfly effect', coined by Edward Lorenz, refers to the impact that minor disturbances like the flapping wings of a distant butterfly can have on a seemingly unrelated event.

Lorenz illustrated this theory beautifully when he described how a butterfly's wings could have the power to influence the formation & path of a tornado.



On the day over 600 origami butterflies were crafted by attending students, staff and other visitors. The WLA student ambassadors then curated the installation in the atrium of the school supported by Matt.

Singularly the origami butterflies were beautiful but by displaying them together they made a kaleidoscope representing ideas and aspirations where each piece is seemingly the same whilst being unique.



The 'butterfly effect' can also be applied to Well North's approach of working at grass roots level, backing ideas that will reap rewards that in turn support communities to become healthier places where people can live, work and thrive.

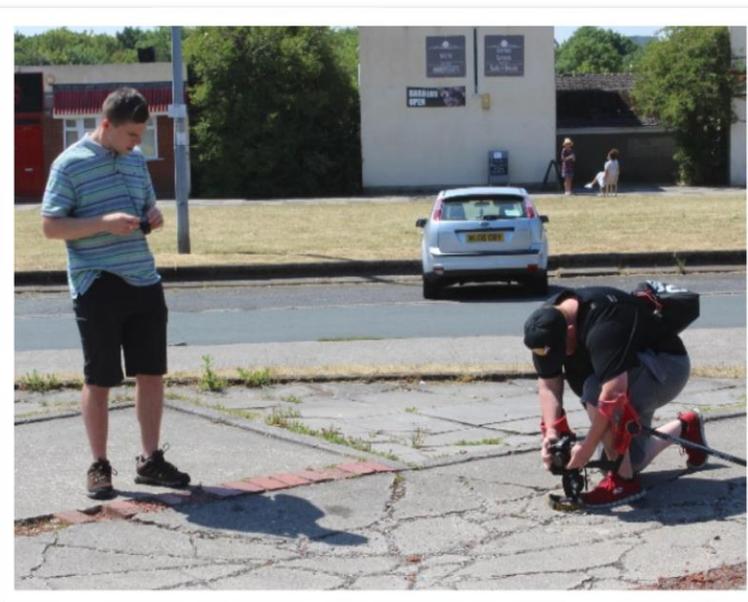
The students and Well Whitehaven team loved the work so much that Matt was invited to reinstall the work in the Florence Art Centre, Egremont in Jan 2018.



In addition to single artistic projects and exhibitions Matt has worked for longer periods in Pathfinders sites coming alongside communities to support new initiatives.

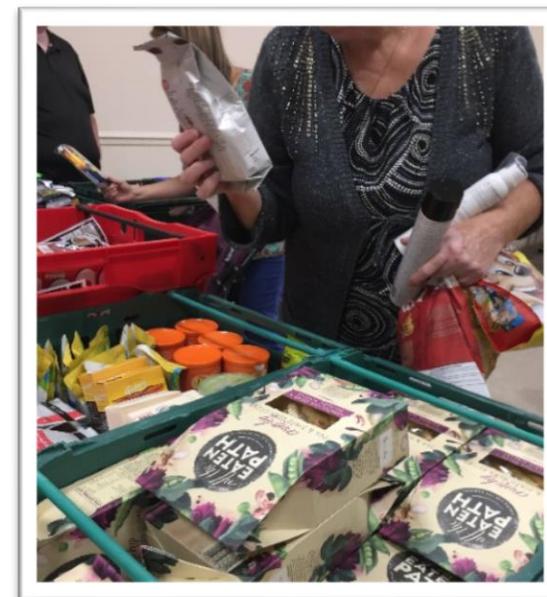
One such project is the development of new Health Campus in Digmoor, Skelmersdale where an existing community led project, Evermoor Hub (above) will co-locate with a new NHS primary care and GP practice.

Matt has been using art activities to develop a 'state of readiness', building links between the volunteers who run the community centre, the staff at the medical centre and the community at large.



Activities have included undertaking photo walks (left) to document and capture change as it happens on the Digmoor estate.

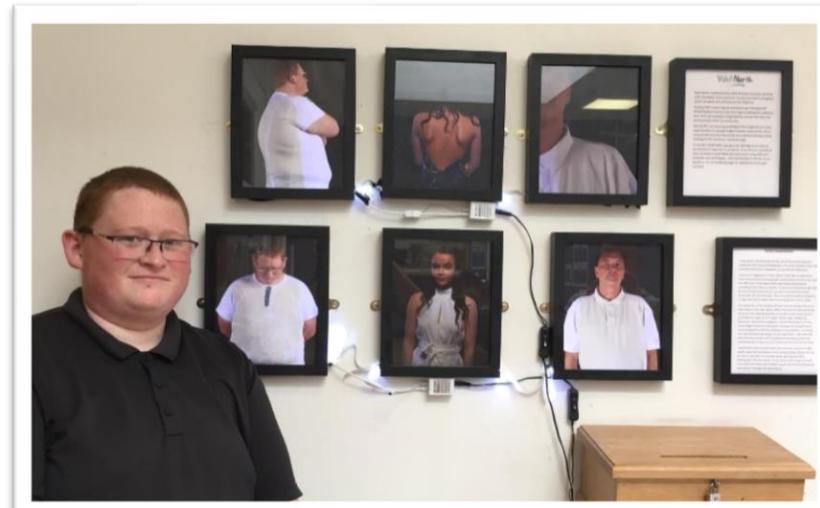
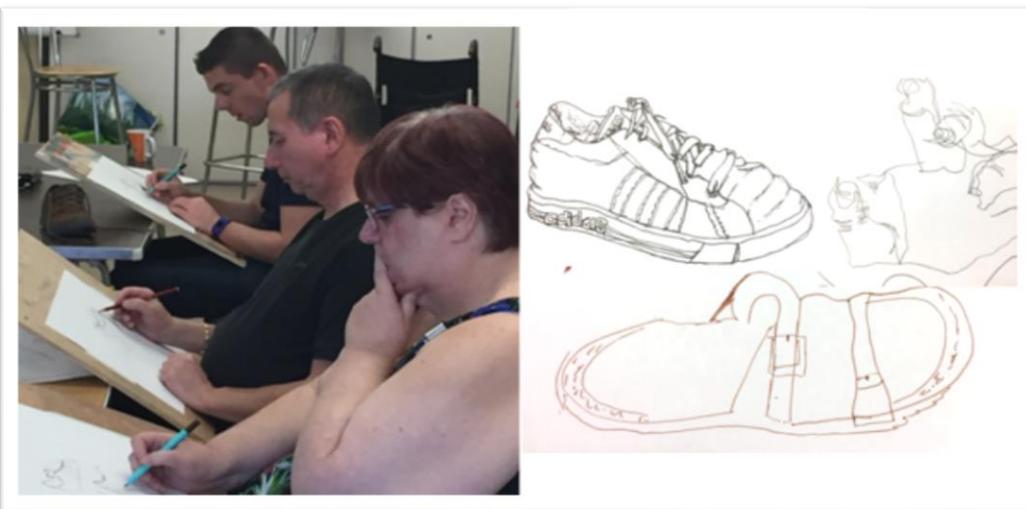
Matt has also thrown himself into working alongside volunteers who run Evermoor, helping at the weekly sales that are vital to raising revenue for the centre (right). From this valued insight is gained into the how the centre meets the needs of the local community.



A key aim of the health campus is to work alongside local people enabling its long-term success by embedding creativity into the everyday. Matt hopes to support this aim by supporting individuals who have aspiration in this area.

One such person is Phill Newby (right). An active community member and recent photography graduate Phill wants to use his personal experiences and creative flare in his community. Phill also produced the panoramic image of the Evermoor Hub shown above.

Matt worked with Phill to install his recent degree show photographs into Birleywood Medical Centre to both show this fantastic work to a local audience and build links with the community. Phill's work is also pertinent to Well North as it describes unseen and hidden disability.



To support Phill's longer term ambitions he also participated in the Well North leadership programme which aims to champion future leaders.

To put this experience into practice Matt and Phill have also been collaborating running free and inclusive Art for Wellbeing sessions (left) at Evermoor Hub and Birleywood Medical Centre.

Response to the sessions has been very positive. Comments have highlighted how the sessions have distracted from pain and ongoing health issues, provided purpose and a reason to get dressed and real life social networking opportunities plus the sessions provide a great learning opportunity – vital to people's continuing wellbeing.

Another situation where it's been vital to have creative input has been at the Well North immersion events.

These events bring community figures together from across communities, including the business, voluntary, social enterprise and statutory sectors. Here they deepen relationships and put the wheels in motion for developing a positive culture for embedding long-term change. Matt produced the illustration on the right at one such event in Burnley, Lancashire.



At immersion events Matt, working with other skilled facilitators, uses creative methodologies and activities to encourage new thinking that help breakthroughs to happen.

Creative activities support people to share what's important in their lives and the building of trusting relationships.

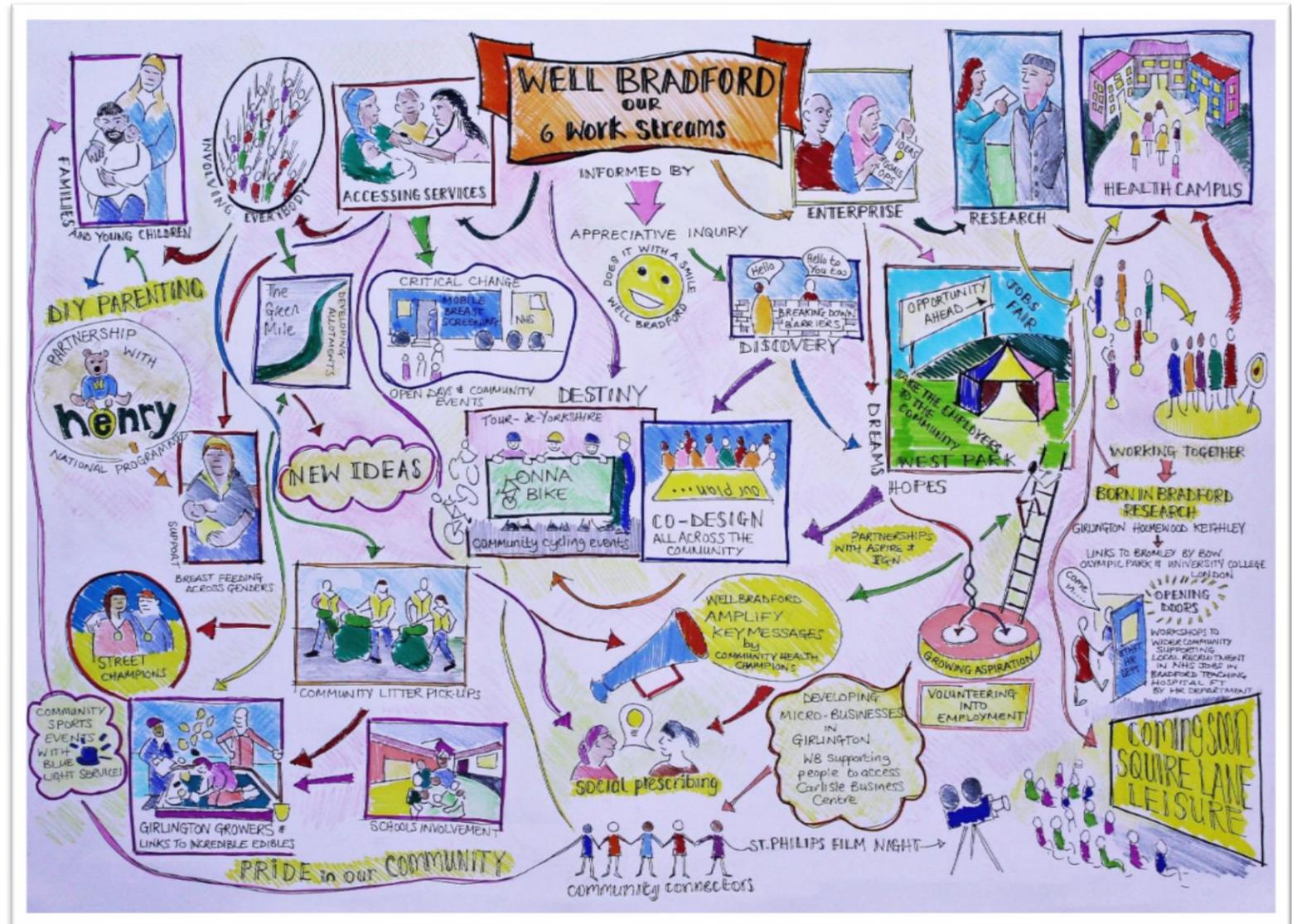
For example, Storyboards (right) are created by delegates which outline the ambition and hopes of communities and people leave with a comprehensive plan of action, collectively designed and which is all about lasting change.

At Well North in addition to producing written reports we present information in different formats to ensure we communicate effectively with varied audiences.

We have produced short films relating to stories and Matt has produced animations of events and workshops.

He has also been producing diagrams that capture the critical change events and amazing developments being achieved across Pathfinders.

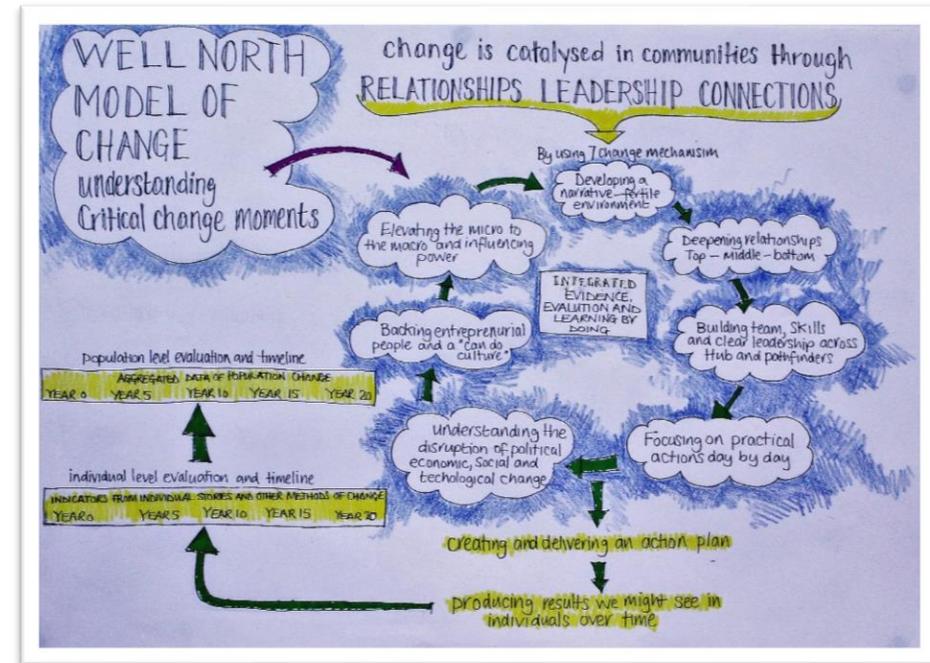
The drawing right of Well Bradford's priorities and aspirations illustrates clearly the ambition but also how all aspects interlink and the complexity of the task.



Bradford's diagram also illustrates that change happens in free space with arrows representing a flow of ideas, conversations and people stepping up and bringing people along with them. It's focused on practical and not the theoretical.

We've distilled all the learning from the Pathfinders into a model of change (right) and a three-stage process.

This process incorporates the aforementioned diagnostic and immersion stages and a mobilisation stage which takes actions forward.



Matt has illustrated all these aspects of our story (above and left) which have been used to good effect on our new WellNorth Enterprises website. He will continue to work with us as we build on our approach bringing creative thinking and flare to all that we do.

We hope you've enjoyed gaining an insight into how we've benefited from having a resident artist working on the Well North programme and that it's given you a taste for how we work and what we achieve.

If you'd like to know more get in touch:

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