

Co-production and Investing in Community Expertise

From the outset of the pilot, the initial steering group were keen to **'try' something a bit different** and to focus its efforts in a place but **really listen to, work with and invest in communities on community led solutions to support people to be more active.**

In the early days this took the form of **investing in the expertise of the local** community to lead on, with support from Action Together, initial community engagement. This was done through focus groups, Community Ideas Factories and events and to share our learning and approach from these with other stakeholders.

Post-covid it became evident that there were lots of stakeholders and services who wanted to work in this way, **to co-produce with the community**, and have **community-led solutions**. However, community leaders started to express concerns about meeting 'burn-out'; they had all worked so hard to support their community over lock-down and were glad that they were being asked to be involved in decision making about their 'place' but it was just getting too much. Therefore, Action Together wanted to try to respond to these concerns; sessions **were then organised where community representatives and stakeholders were brought together**. The aim of these was for the community to share with the various stakeholders what was important to them, what they wanted to prioritise to work on collectively and to identify where they may need help to develop ideas or solve a particular problem. This was as an alternative to the continuation of lots of separate meetings about separate (but often connected) issues.

This approach led to the Violence Reduction Unit investing into a partnership of FOUR organisations in Oldham to help develop mentoring, youth work and sports programmes for young people at risk of or vulnerable to serious youth violence and exploitation, programmes that empower young females, and projects that engage young people and their parents. This partnership has formalised themselves as **'Develop Glodwick'** and is **a good example** of the **community coming together to work jointly and co-produce** with each other on a common issue, with AT being the enabling catalyst that helped this to happen.



The Oldham local pilot has continued its **investment into the expertise of community organisations** and has recently commissioned the community organisation Oak Development to provide ongoing community development support for the next 2 years, alongside Action Together, to local community groups in the Glodwick area.