

Dott Cornwall



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In partnership with

Cornwall Design Forum

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Executive Summary

Designs of the time, Cornwall (Dott Cornwall) has been working for a year now with local citizens, professionals, experts and designers to co-create new solutions to local issues that in turn may have a national or international significance. This review sets out to describe how we are working in real time so that lessons can be learned, knowledge can be shared, and insights can be drawn from related projects with the goal of optimising our activities on the ground.

Through experimenting with a series of practical projects, Dott develops sustainable solutions to social and economic challenges. It aims to increase the capacity for innovation within a region by building skills, knowledge and awareness of the Dott approach. If you like, Dott seeks to set in motion a powerful engine for development and for addressing local issues through the lens of innovation. Practically this means catalysing change by operating on three levels as follows:

1. **Practice:** Ten practical projects demonstrating new thinking in action.
2. **Capacity:** Developing local knowledge and skills and effective legacy.
3. **Policy:** Developing new insights that can inform national policies.

These ‘framework conditions’ are designed to maximise the potential to increase the innovative capacity of a range of different people in an area. Put simply, Designs of the time enables local people to develop their own visions and scenarios. It’s most valuable legacy will be that people develop new ideas, acquire skills and deliver bold and visionary projects.

As the world becomes more complex and prone to rapid change, dispersion of innovation to citizens, users and the public at large will be vital in enabling mixed economies to generate relevant and new opportunities and to cope with unforeseen challenges. This makes innovation an imperative rather than an option, where new ideas will need to be tested and implemented effectively. There are lots of compelling reasons why empowering citizens and communities to innovate makes good sense. Set against a backdrop of escalating costs of socio-economic change, there is a growing sense that the problems of climate change, population growth, health and food security are too big to be tackled by governments alone and that they will require our collective creativity. Firstly, dispersing the ‘capacity for innovation’ to a broader group of people is potentially empowering and efficient in developing new solutions. Secondly, in an extension to ‘user centred’ design, participatory approaches accept that ‘end users’ are uniquely placed to judge the quality of existing services and to make informed decisions about potential improvements. Thirdly, based

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on the premise of a highly educated yet underutilised creativity within the workforce, it can add value and meaning to individuals' lives enabling them to be part of something bigger that resonates with their value systems and supports community cohesion.

We believe there are clear parallels in our work to the concept of Big Society. Since it was created five years ago, Dott has been working to develop new ways to devolve responsibilities to communities and citizens. However, we have found to be successful we must ensure we provide citizens with power, information, knowledge and skills to solve the problems they face. Based on experience in Dott07 and Dott Cornwall, key to the success of Big Society will reside in two factors; firstly motivating and building citizens' confidence and secondly by providing the skills and knowledge to take action. We believe Design can make this process of transformational change both exciting and practical.

Indications are that this will involve two key drivers:

- Increased participation from the public in services, from top down delivery to co-creation.
- Radical innovation to generate entirely new models of service provision and commissioning.

Our process typically follows the following stages: Diagnose phase, Co-discovery, Co-design, Co-delivery and Legacy. And whilst citizens are central to our activities, creating collaborations between local people and experts, working with world class designers has enabled communities to achieve greater degrees of professionalism in the management and outcomes of their activities. During our work on the ground we have given significant consideration to the role and importance of leadership in the collaborative mix. We have been able to identify the qualities we see in our designers which fit with the collaborative leadership models. Key to developing local capacity to innovate has been to develop the skills of professional designers 'on the ground' in areas of collaboration, co-design, service development and multiple stakeholder management.

However, the challenge of 'democratising design' is polarising people, most obviously designers. There exists a vocal core community who are interested in new ways of working, and another much larger group who are relatively uninterested, regarding the methodologies as a departure from design practice without a proven business model. This means Dott will need to do more work in identifying which designers have an aptitude for this way of working and in developing new business models to support their practice.

We have sought to codify some of the characteristics of the ways we work to help communicate the value of our projects. This we are calling the 'Dott ethos' which is based on an action research methodology. The following ten points have emerged from working across projects and start to point to the conditions that have led to good outcomes on the ground:

1. **Be a humanist:** Focus your effort on what is desirable as well as what is technically possible.
2. **Stay positive:** Everyone is creative, and our collective creativity is greater than the sum of the parts.
3. **Unite over a common quest:** Find a question everyone cares about and has a passion to solve.
4. **Think big:** Great design can and does change the world.
5. **Start small:** Build ideas and solutions with people not for people.
6. **Get out:** Design in the real world; it is an infinite source of inspiration, opportunity and fun.
7. **Splice things up:** New ideas emerge at the intersections between disciplines, subject knowledge and experience.
8. **Get it wrong:** In the current climate it is more important to fail fast than succeed slowly.
9. **Design doesn't stop:** Create platforms for participation rather than fixed solutions, as these will be more flexible to changing needs and evolve in real time.
10. **Show value as well as have values:** Good design doesn't need to cost more, it needs to do more.

In this review we have chosen a few case studies that exemplify the Dott process in the areas of community cohesion, skills & employment and energy generation. Of particular value has been the opportunity to test out collaborative processes in one of the most deprived communities in Cornwall.

Dott will conclude its programme in Cornwall in March 2011, when we will be publishing full evaluation and conclusions from the initiative. In the meantime we welcome suggestions and connections to the programme.



Dr Andrea Siodmok

Programme Director, Dott Cornwall
September 2010

Acknowledgements

To produce this interim review we tried to pull together and make sense of lots of different perspectives, some brand new and some based on years of experience on the ground with Dott. In true Dott style it has been a collective effort.

Central to the tenets of the document are thinking from the core Dott team, based on our many (sometimes heated) discussions on the value and uniqueness of Dott.

However, the practical perspectives that bring such insight come directly from our projects, in particular from our talented Senior Producers and Designers working on the ground who have given time to review their projects and share ideas across the programme. The design agencies Leap Media, Livework, Mor Design, Something from Us, SEA Communications, Stby and Think Public have all helped bring these ideas to life through their collective experience of Dott and of wider social and service design projects.

We would also like to thank our academic partner, University College Falmouth and the other attendees of the think tank in March at the Bedruthan Steps Hotel. High octane keynote presentations from Nabeel Hamdi and Ezio Manzini set up the think tank, framed the debate and set the tone for contributions from Jeremy Myerson (RCA), Emily Campbell (RSA), Mat Hunter (Design Council) as well as experts and academics from across the UK and Europe. All of the talks can be found in our videos online at www.dottcornwall.com/designmatters

For putting the practice into theory, Antonia Ward and Lauren Tan have been critical in making sense of the various discussions we have held over the year so far and who has encapsulated a range of different expert perspectives in written papers, transcripts and blog entries.

A special mention goes to John Thackara, for his written contribution to the document. John developed the section on the global context and has added a lot with his thinking around the 'edge effect' and sustainability.

Finally, we also thank the contribution of our Advisory and Executive Boards, in helping frame and discuss the legacies and in reviewing early drafts.

The ink is not quite dry, we welcome all suggestions to improve the review and will publish a final version in 2011.

Introduction

In late June the new coalition government put out a call to front-line staff to find new ways to make public services more efficient and cost effective. The request for ideas was straight forward enough; “Don’t hold back. Be innovative, be radical, challenge the way things are done.”¹ And in two weeks, rather impressively, the website received over 62,000 ideas. It is a timely reminder that we are all creative regardless of our official job titles. Just as the abundance and ubiquity of knowledge has defined the knowledge economy, now a decade or so into the ‘creative economy’ it seems we are not short of ideas.

The challenge we face is not in the generation of ideas, but rather in the successful implementation of the good ones. This if you like is the innovation challenge, as defined in the private sector as ‘the successful commercialisation of new ideas’ or in the Oslo Manual as: “the implementation of a new or significantly improved product (good or service), or process, a new marketing method, or a new organisational method in business practices, workplace organisation or external relations.”

Set against a backdrop of escalating costs of socio-economic change, there is a growing sense that the problems of climate change, population growth, health and food security are too big to be tackled by governments alone and that they will require our collective creativity.

This collectivism is often described as citizen-led, participatory, co-production. It works on the premise that change is no longer top down, but rather will involve a dissolution of the boundaries between service providers and ‘end users’, thereby allowing knowledge and capabilities to be reconfigured in new ways.

National Endowment for Science, Technology and Arts (NESTA) and the New Economics Foundation (NEF) make a strong case for participatory innovation in their policy paper ‘Right Here Right Now’ in which they call for change: “By transforming the way public services are understood and conceptualised, designed and delivered, it promises more resources, better outcomes, reduction of unnecessary waste and diminishing need.”²

Dott Cornwall has been working for a year now with local citizens, professionals, experts and designers to co-create new solutions to local issues that in turn may have a national or global significance. This review sets out to describe how we are working in real time so that lessons can be learned, knowledge can be shared, and insights can be drawn from related projects with the goal of optimising our activities on the ground.

¹ David Cameron, 24 June 2010.

² Right Here Right Now, Taking co-production into the mainstream, David Boyle, Anna Coote, Chris Sherwood and Julia Slay, NESTA and NEF, July 2010.

What is Dott?

Designs of the time (Dott) is a grass roots programme, conceived by the Design Council, that involves local people in the design and development of the services they use. Following a successful Dott07 in the North East of England, Dott is working in Cornwall, with Cornwall Council, University College Falmouth and the Technology Strategy Board to run design projects that develop sustainable solutions to its social, environmental and economic issues. The aim is to demonstrate how innovative thinking can add value to Convergence, European economic regeneration funding, and other investments, and offer an approach to driving transformation and creating lasting shifts in expectations and ways of working.

Dott acts as a catalyst or springboard for action. We are seeking to create a powerful engine for development and for addressing local and global social challenges. It works on three levels;

- **Practice:** Demonstrating new thinking in community centred innovation through working directly with citizens on ten practical projects, in particular generating evidence to show the return on investment (ROI) and value for money (VFM).
- **Capacity:** Developing local knowledge and skills to replicate and scale the projects by creating the conditions for effective legacy. Fostering an entrepreneurial culture by instilling the skills and attitudes needed for creative enterprise.
- **Policy:** Developing new insights that can inform national policies. For example showing how Big Society might work in practice with local communities.

Put simply, Designs of the time is not about telling people how to live. On the contrary: its purpose is to enable local people – bringing together inspiring and visionary protagonists from around the locality and beyond - to develop their own visions and scenarios. In that sense, Dott is in the acorns business. Its most valuable legacy will be the people who develop new ideas, the projects they have started, and the skills they have acquired to carry them out.

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Part 1

The big picture

The case for change

For forty years, largely driven by globalisation, the pace of change in our world has been gradually and then rapidly speeding up. To the point where it is clear that many of our institutions and management processes are no longer fit for the world we find ourselves in. Where western political leaders are actively seeking new ways to deal with global climate change, ageing populations and greater threats around dwindling environmental resources whilst simultaneously aspiring to offer greater efficiency and attempting to meet (if not exceed) growing public expectations for quality in public service provision. Where a relatively narrow group of experts (predominantly in politics, economics and science) are trying to ‘think’ their way out of the problems we face.

The other side of the story of the last four decades has been one of rapid democratic enlightenment. Where knowledge and human capacity for self reliance has been increasing to a point where in many economies in excess of 30% of the population are degree educated. Where, at our fingertips we have instantaneous global networks of information, knowledge and more collective wisdom than you or I could amass in a lifetime. And where whole new industries have emerged flourished and been replaced within considerably less than the time span of one person’s career.

These changes in themselves haven’t appeared particularly revolutionary as they have emerged relatively incrementally, but taken together speak of a need for a paradigm shift. We are rapidly moving to a position where the negative consequences of growth will exceed the positive contribution of profits. Often portrayed as a dark cloud of doom and gloom ‘the good times are over’.³ Human resourcefulness and resilience being what it is, the big ‘challenges’ of our times are just as likely to result in radical new models of effectiveness.

The question remains how? How should society re-organise itself to respond to the new realities we face, precipitated by the financial crisis of 2007, but inevitable at some point in time given that indefinite growth in a finite world is ultimately impossible.

As the shock waves reverberate from the unprecedented cuts in public spending, we would do well to remember how we got here. Heavy investment in public services in recent years has led to widespread improvements without fundamental service transformation. In many areas this has masked the more urgent need for change. As increased demand meets decreased public spending, current service provision will be tested to the limit. If you like, the frog in cold water has been heated up to the point where it was inevitable that something has to change.

“Human resourcefulness and resilience being what it is, the big ‘challenges’ of our times are likely to result in radical new models of effectiveness.”

³ Mervin King, Bank of England Speech.

“Today’s recovery from the global financial and economic crisis remains fragile. As countries seek to improve productivity performance and ensure sustained growth, they will need to boost their capacity to innovate.”

The OECD Innovation Strategy: Getting a Head Start on Tomorrow, June 2010

In an attempt to tackle the £155 billion deficit through cuts in departments and local government of up to 40%, we will see old commitments torn up and an increased pressure from all sides to come up with new ways of working that genuinely deliver the same or more for less. This ‘prosperity without growth’ model is timely in a world with limited natural resources and growing need for great human resourcefulness.⁴ This makes innovation an imperative rather than an option, new ideas will need to be tested and implemented effectively. As the OECD noted in their recent innovation strategy: “Today’s recovery from the global financial and economic crisis remains fragile. As countries seek to improve productivity performance and ensure sustained growth, they will need to boost their capacity to innovate.”⁵

If it is accepted that countries need to increase their capacity to innovate, the obvious next question is how? At the heart of the notion of innovation is a sense of novelty, renewal and challenging the existing practice or conventional wisdom. Yet ironically many of our approaches to delivering innovation for the last century have been based on a narrowly defined group of experts utilising relatively unchanged approaches and techniques. Given that the role of innovation to date has been defined more often as the commercial exploitation of new technology, the corporate approaches to delivering innovation have been widely assumed to be ‘fit for purpose’.

At Dott we would argue that in today’s fast changing, highly interconnected, culturally diverse world our current approaches to innovation also need to be expanded. In times of change, the lack of certainty and the prevalence of ill-defined problems set against the absence of concrete datasets to back up decision making, also call for different modes of leadership. At Dott we tailor the innovation strategy to be intrinsically linked to the context within which it operates, both locally and globally. A working hypothesis of Dott is that to tackle the big issues of our times sustainably (demographic change, climate change, economic change and so on) it is not enough just to be innovative, we must also create the conditions for innovation to thrive and evolve. At the heart of Designs of the times is the idea that our approach to innovation needs to be tailored to the needs of our current times, that it should be flexible and diversified through widespread use. Rather than concern ourselves with the diffusion of the outputs of innovation we are seeking to find new ways to diffuse the capacity for innovation itself.

Indications are that this will involve two key drivers:

- Increased participation from the public in services, from top down delivery to co-creation.
- Radical innovation to generate entirely new models of service provision and commissioning.

⁴ ‘Prosperity without Growth’ the transition to a sustainable economy. Sustainable Development Commission. March 2009.

⁵ The OECD Innovation Strategy: Getting a Head Start on Tomorrow, June 2010.

The age of social participation

So far, every 'age' has been described by their respective predominant tool-making technologies. From the three ages of stone, bronze, iron to our more modern concepts of the 'atomic age', 'information age' and perhaps for the first time breaking with the tradition, the 'knowledge economy'. The defining characteristic that has been the resource that brings value to the economy or society at large. Next up the catchy 'low carbon economy' defined not by what it is but by what it is not.

I prefer the age of 'social capital' or participation society, where we tap into latent human potential and direct it towards common goals. There are hints of this in transition towns and other socially intermediated activist groups. But the reality is that, as we rapidly head towards 7bn people, we are already experiencing a world where 'human' resources are plentiful yet the planetary resources are limited. In this context motivating people to direct their behaviours towards common goals will be key if society is to benefit from this abundant yet to date underutilised collective resource.

As the world becomes more complex and prone to rapid change, dispersal of innovation to citizens, users and the public at large will be vital in enabling economies to generate relevant new opportunities and to cope with unforeseen challenges.

Agrarian	Industrial 'production'	Information 'distribution'	Social 'participation'
Physical Labour	Physical objects	Information-Communication	Physical Labour
Food	Product	Information	Service
Local	Mass	Global	Local-Global
Vernacular (localised)	Inventor (Ford)	Corporation (Sony)	Collective (wikipedia)
Evolutionary -single purpose -long lived -variable -repairable	Specialised -divergent -short lived -standardised -replaceable	Generalised -convergent -mass customised -disposable	Collaborative -inter-disciplinary -personalised -evolutionary

Table 1: Showing different aspects of economic development by age.

The political context

With so much focus on the immediate need to reduce individual countries' fiscal deficits it is tempting to re-prioritise the global challenge presented by climate change.

Despite a growing global awareness of the challenges of climate change, Government departments or ministries responsible for sustainability, or 'the environment', are too often constrained by small budgets and modest influence. Their very existence allows traditional departments - 'industry', 'economic affairs', 'finance' or 'transport' - to carry on their ways as normal. A similar problem persists in business where Corporate Social Responsibility has long been treated as a sideline to the real action. A growing number of individuals in government or industry want to work collaboratively with their peers in other silos - but they are often stymied by a system that imposes constraints.

Dott, in this context, connects with what business writers are calling 'Strategic Niche Management' (SNM) or, more colloquially, 'innovation spread betting' - trying out multiple small experiments in real contexts. Although many will fail, there's a better chance with an 'edge effect' approach that one will 'take' and emerge as a system-scale solution. The thinking is that the cumulative effects of small steps can be a system-wide paradigm shift. In social and technical terms, and indeed in science, what history often describes, retrospectively, as a 'revolution' often turns out, on closer inspection, to have been the outcome of a series of small incremental adaptations over time.

To the extent that Strategic Niche Management is designed to facilitate the introduction and diffusion of sustainable technologies through protected societal experiments, then Dott is right up there as a live case. SNM has been most discussed in the context of wind energy, biogas, public transport systems, and electric vehicle transport. But it is just as applicable to Dott-like projects with a more social and care focus. As a team of Dutch researchers has put it, "The assumption is that if protected spaces are created to allow the co-evolution of sustainable technologies, user practices and regulatory structures, and interaction between stakeholders to learn and exchange experiences. This would contribute to a shift toward broader societal changes and sustainable development".⁶

⁶ www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~content=a791474926~db=all~jumptype=rss

The global context for Dott

Professor of Sustainability Ezio Manzini suggests ‘Dott-like initiatives’ are proliferating in other countries. “In a small, densely populated, highly connected planet, people’s intelligence, sensitivity and creativity are the most abundant resources. These social resources, if and when catalysed, become powerful drivers for sustainable changes”. Manzini himself has established a network, DESIS, in which schools of design and other institutions, in China, Brazil, India, and other countries, are connecting with local companies and non-profit organizations to engage in design for social innovation and sustainability.⁷ Ezio Manzini, also talked about design and the ecology of place. In Milan, for example, he’s associated with a new project called ‘Feeding Milan’. It’s all about linking and enhancing existing small projects – “amplifying the creativity of communities that already exist” – farmers markets, purchasing groups, community supported agriculture (CSA) projects.

In France, too, a new organization called La 27^e Region (The 27th Region) has set out to help regional governments run collaborative projects that enable them to experience social innovation in practice. In recent months, seven multi-disciplinary teams have conducted three month residences, in different regions of France, on topics ranging from health centres, or the working lives of elected officials, to ‘augmented citizenship’ and the role of school canteens in tackling childhood obesity. Despite countries like the UK having 600,000 community groups, citizen organisations, social movements, interest groups and neighbourhood forums, there remains concern about both a lack of community and low levels of social capital. Whilst in France, there are more than 500,000 associations. ‘La Vie Associative’ – an associative life – appears to be taken more seriously.

In Sweden, which plans to be world’s first oil-free economy within 15 years, a team of graduate students at Blekinge Institute of Technology is researching collaborative services as a vehicle to move communities towards sustainability. As team-leader Sophia Howitz explains: “We have spent months learning and applying the Framework for Strategic Sustainable Development to municipal, educational, business and community organizations across Europe. Collectively we are a team of process facilitators, designers, architects and planners with experience working with community, and multi-stakeholder planning and dialogue processes”.⁸

The lessons of Dott07 have also inspired a workshop in southern California last year where the Planning Center explored, in the words of producer Kati Rubinyi, “practical examples of small-scale innovation that can be models for broader systemic, sustainable solutions to diverse community challenges”. The idea was to find out how design might help existing grassroots projects improve and scale up. Jules Dervaes, for example, a pioneer in urban edible gardens, sought input on ways to enhance his new social networking site.⁹ Mud Baron, who develops gardens and nature projects with schools all over the region, needed help to persuade planners and architects to design active contact with nature – not just LEED-compliant structures – into “green” schools.

“In a small, densely populated, highly connected planet, people’s intelligence, sensitivity and creativity are the most abundant resources. These social resources, if and when catalysed, become powerful drivers for sustainable changes.”

Professor of Sustainability,
Ezio Manzini

⁷ www.desis-network.org

⁸ www.bth.se/ste/tmslm.nsf/pages/msls_home

⁹ www.freedomgardens.org

Also later last year, the same team helped to organize Four Days Halifax (in Nova Scotia, Canada). Billed as ‘a time-compressed mini-festival’, its aim was to “help the city get its hands muddy in a green economy”. The producer of Four Days, Rachel Derrah, explained that “our starting point was that many elements of a resilient Halifax already exist in embryonic form – but not all of them are visible in our own backyard. The most important preparation work was to identify these local assets: people, mainly, but also projects and places”.

In New York, where nobody expects governments to pay for such things, a new project called ‘All Day Buffet’ has set out to turn Dott-like projects into viable enterprises. It’s an intriguing alternative to traditional venture funds. One of its founders, Mike Karnjanaprakorn, suggested that their idea is to “invest in creative misfits and entrepreneurs”. When asked how this is different from existing social venture capital funds he continued: “We’re like a record label – minus the evil” explaining, “we find super-smart people and give them the resources, connections and collaborative structure they need to launch their purpose-driven ventures and turn their ideas into successes”. Their method revolves around internal collaboration.”Our secret sauce lies in a cross-disciplinary culture that cultivates rampant idea generation, productivity, and happiness”.

As a response to UK conditions Dott is not a globally applicable model. Forms of citizen participation vary from country to country. A book on citizen participation and public action emphasizes this point. It is filled with cases from Dakar, Rabat, Cotonou, Jerusalem and Sanaa. These rich stories describe a synthesis of the soil, the land, the earth, biodiversity, culture, law, philosophy and sustainable development and show the complex local interdependencies for successful innovation.

¹⁰ www.alldaybuffet.org/



You know the potential of a group of people to create amazing results (or not!) Your role is to facilitate and mediate the people in your group to allow each person to be heard and everyone's skills and potential to be utilised.

The

Social Entrepreneur

You believe in the power of people to create change. Your role is to make sure Group's idea is designed for the people it aims to benefit. Is there potential for idea to be run by the people it aims to help?

ative so

The Dreamer

Anything is possible. Your role is to help the group overcome boundaries or constraints, anything is possible. Your role is to help the group to come to life. Your role is to help the group think bigger and brighter. You live in a world without boundaries or constraints and allow dreams to come to life. Your imagination of the team forget constraints and think bigger and brighter.

The Creative

You can see different ways to do things. Your role is to encourage the group to think outside the box and be caught up in the excitement.

The Creative

You are inspired by new ideas. Your role is to encourage the group to look at the challenge to have amazing ideas. You can see different ways of doing things and are inspired by new ideas. Your role is to encourage the group to look at the challenge to have amazing ideas. You can see different ways of doing things and are inspired by new ideas. Your role is to encourage the group to look at the challenge to have amazing ideas.

The Business

You are an expert at spotting investment opportunities. Money makes the world go round. Your role is to spot the earning potential.

The

The Business

Anything is possible. Let your imagination of the team forget constraints and think bigger and brighter.

The Mediator

You are inspired by new ideas. Your role is to encourage the group to think outside the box and be caught up in the excitement.

Part 2

Collaborative Innovation

A systemic approach

Dott seeks to catalyse change by operating on three levels and by creating knowledge networks and legacy vehicles to support change systemically across a region or county (See diagram 1). These ‘framework conditions’ are designed to maximize the potential to increase the innovative capacity of the locality. The framework may include some or all of the following interventions; policy, procurement, fiscal incentives, skills, knowledge, networks, tools and curriculum development. All the fundamental building blocks of an effective innovation strategy to allow innovation to thrive. Engineering change at a regional level seeks to ensure that the right conditions are created to attain a tipping point that removes existing market failure and creates a self sustaining system.

Design Level One (D1)

Projects showing thinking in practice: Demonstrating new thinking in community centred innovation through working directly with citizens on ten practical projects, in particular generating evidence to show the return on investment (ROI) and value for money (VFM).

Design Level Two (D2)

People: Developing local knowledge, skills and capability to replicate and scale the projects.

Design Level Three (D3)

Policy: Developing new insights that can inform national policies. Fostering an entrepreneurial culture by instilling the skills and attitudes needed for creative enterprise and creating the conditions for effective legacy.

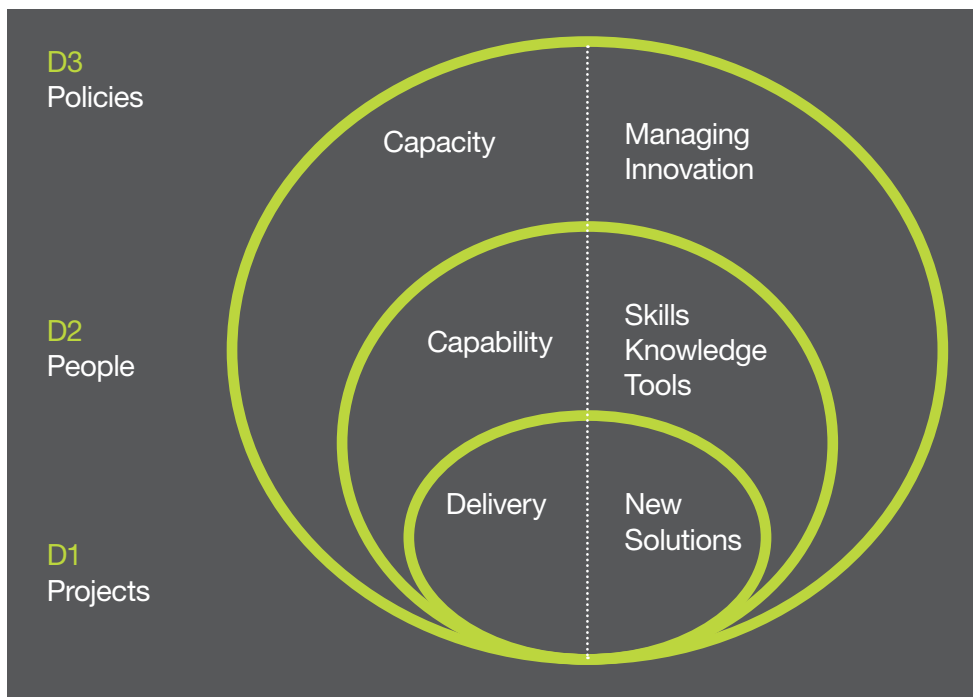


Diagram 1: Showing the systemic nature of Dott Cornwall (Model developed in part from University of Northumbria research into a new Design Praxis).

Being bottom up in a top down world

Most political systems are based on a command and control model, where policies are directed from the centre and implemented through the machinery of government in one form or another. As Associate Director of the IPPR, James Crabtree notes; “Britain has the most centralised state in the western world, so it’s not surprising it’s hard to innovate... Traditionally the British public sector has been strong at ‘Soviet-style’ innovation. That has advantages – you can quickly roll out certain leading-edge innovations by putting a lot of money into them. But this isn’t as good as taking small innovative local projects, recognising what’s good about them and migrating them into other areas”.¹¹

“Driving change from the top can be unhelpful. The role of policy makers is to create an architecture or landscape that supports innovation.”

Su Maddock, Design Council Magazine, Issue 4, Summer 2008. p19

The idea of government-led innovation could be an extension of top down, expert led innovation from the ‘centre’. This focused innovation can work well for particular kinds of problems. For example where the issue is well defined and the scale of the problem demands a centralised ‘push’ to deliver solutions, as typified in military or aviation innovations (such as Trident or Concord). Here the optimum response is often to collaborate between companies or even countries to achieve the necessary ‘scale of expertise’, a combination of professional know-how and collective effort. A key weakness of this approach can be seen during times of change, where the centralised model can also set in motion inflexible responses at a high cost (such as the NHS database or air traffic control systems at Swanage).

Within the context of state controlled innovation the whole premise of co-creation and participation by citizens is potentially stifled because of the top down nature of the political system in the UK. As Su Maddock notes: “we need to rebalance the system to recognise the space people need to operate at the local level. That doesn’t have to mean local government, but any local players. Innovators need the space to work with other people addressing similar problems, even if they’re from diverse backgrounds – the introduction of designers for example has been phenomenal. Driving change from the top can be unhelpful. The role of policy makers is to create an architecture or landscape that supports innovation.”¹¹ More than simply the on-the-ground or local delivery of national policy, Dott works in a way that is both top-down and bottom-up. It’s informed by national policy, such as the Big Society, but it also feeds into it by demonstrating the effectiveness of particular design-led approaches. It takes national issues and pilots solutions to them at a local level, involving local people not only in defining the challenges they face but also by engaging them throughout the creative process.

¹¹ Design Council Magazine, Issue 4, Summer 2008. p19

¹² Design Council Magazine, Issue 4, Summer 2008. p19

What Dott seeks to create is ‘thinking big, by acting small’. The setting up of multiple small projects in real contexts, but with an overarching innovation framework to ensure they do not remain homespun grass roots activities without the potential to scale. Although some will fail, some will ‘take’ and emerge as a system-scale solution. More importantly than an ‘open innovation’ approach has been the ability to work in new ways. We sometimes describe our work as operating ‘in the gaps between the rules’ by acting in very small ways. For example by making small scale commissions that are relatively free from bureaucracy, Dott projects have more chance to behave badly, to procure creatively and to work with mavericks with a social enterprise ethic.

This factor is important in understanding how to propagate and stimulate different kinds of bottom up community activism. We would do well to consider changing our frameworks and processes, to provide new models, which are acceptable to the political system, so they can see how the co-creation model can actually thrive. Alternatively, we may end up with pockets of activity which will be great case studies, great examples, but it will never be systematised.

“By making small scale commissions that are relatively free from bureaucracy Dott projects have more chance to behave badly, to procure creatively and to work with mavericks.”

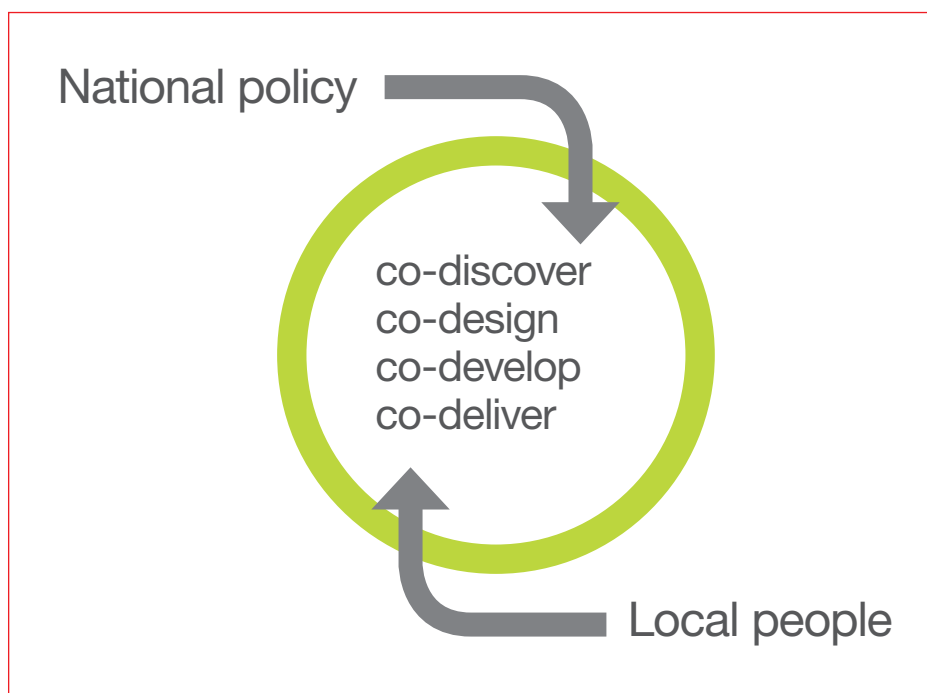


Diagram 2: Top down and bottom up combined in collaborative innovation.

The collaborative journey

Our approach uses collaborative design methods and processes to work with communities to design and develop new solutions to local issues. We work with local and national designers who bring innovation and user-centred methods to our projects.

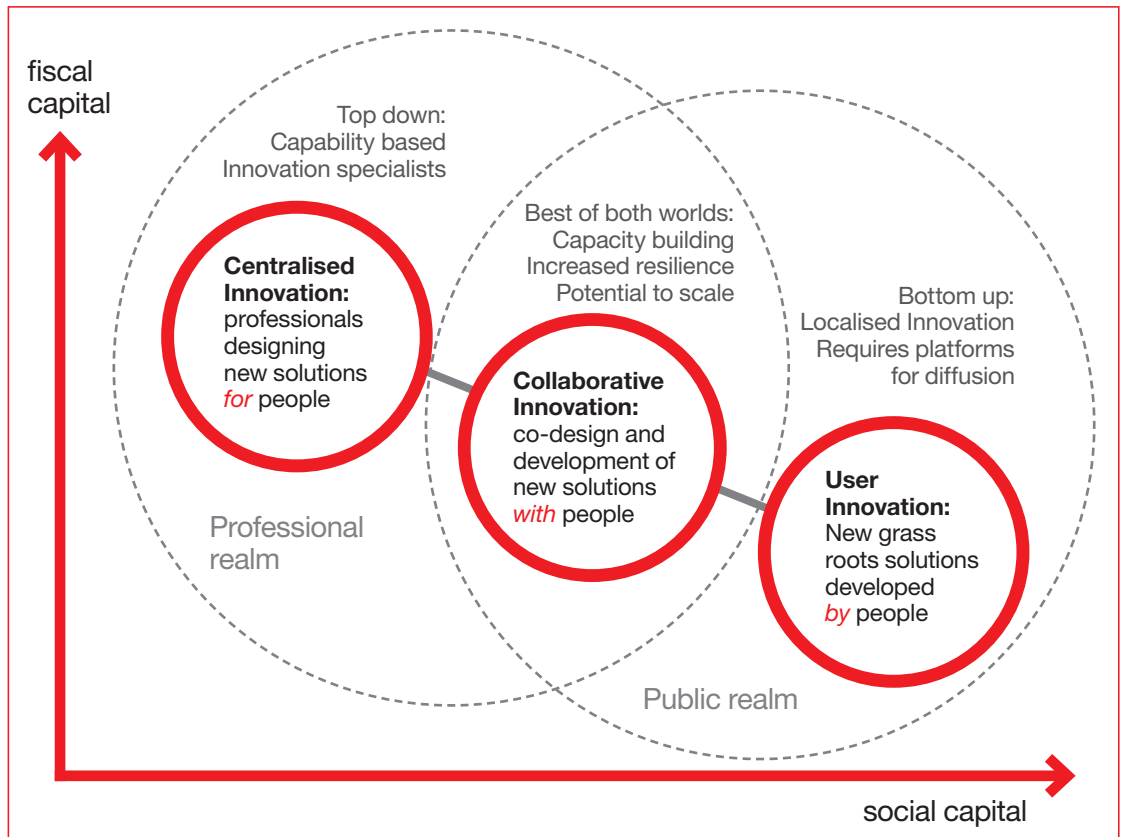


Diagram 3: Different kinds of innovation in the public and professional realm

The approaches we have been utilising across the Dott projects seek to improve service provision by developing mechanisms to tap into the latent creative capacity in society at large.

Alongside these design professionals we use the knowledge, skills and creativity of the people who will benefit, and the people who will deliver a service or product within the community.

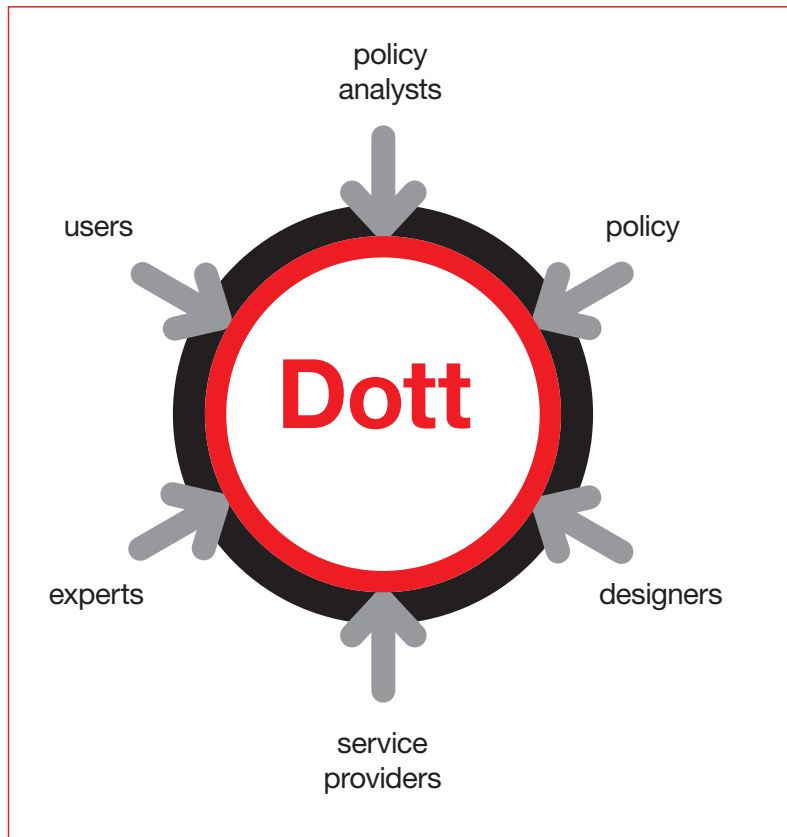


Diagram 4: 'Round table' methodologies

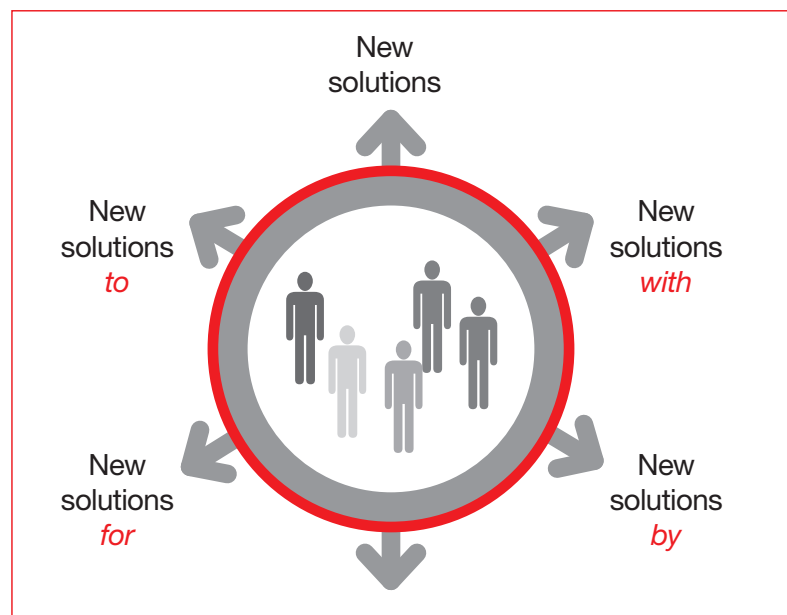


Diagram 5: Generation of new solutions through collaborative innovation

The Dott process is therefore highly participatory, in that ‘users’ work throughout the process and are part of the ‘design team’ devising and testing concepts and therefore owning the solutions.

This practice of involving people through all phases of the creative process means that Dott Cornwall’s projects provide additional benefits, by embedding skills within individuals and community groups, and building capacity for change for the communities in which the Dott Cornwall projects are operating.

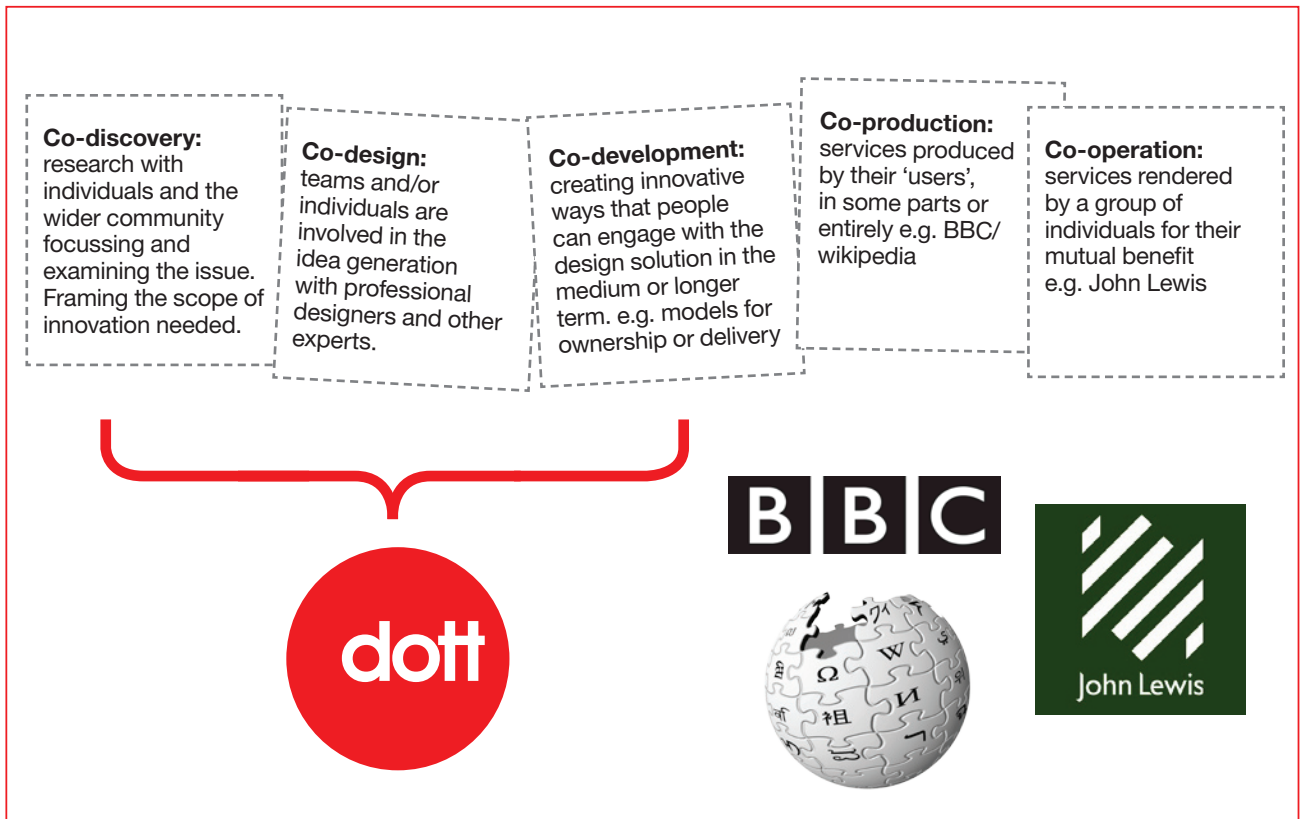


Diagram 6: mapping Dott onto other commonly known collaborative ventures

The Dott methodology

The projects undertaken by Dott in Cornwall have come in all shapes and sizes, with and without clients and in traditional and non traditional areas. What has been consistent across the project portfolio has been the use of the Dott methodology. This Dott DNA has been well documented and will continue to be captured and codified through our knowledge management strategy. However, bringing this theory to life beyond Dott will require developments in curriculum, training and ongoing support and knowledge sharing.

Our process typically follows the following stages:

Diagnose phase: This phase is about setting up the project, and diagnosing the nature of the problem, including:

- Identifying existing research and activity happening around the issue.
- Bringing together a co-design team i.e. the right people to be involved in the project.
- Building a picture of the existing services, expertise and best practice.
- Sharpening the brief toward a more focused issue that is closely aligned to the community.

Co-discovery phase: In this stage, research with the wider community is undertaken focussing and examining the local issue. The design teams work with user groups, particularly local communities, and a wider stakeholder group including service providers and other experts. We use a range of well know and emergent design tools such as observation, cultural probes, design ethnography, user diaries to name a few. The most important insights are often 'latent', the things people do or want that they don't always tell you.

Co-design phase: Co-designing is where the team and/or community are involved in the idea generation with professional designers and other experts. The design team uses the research with local people from the co-discovery phase to generate new ideas and innovation.

The Design Team builds on the key ideas from the co-design stage, creating tangible aspects to them so they can be communicated and prototyped with the community, including:

- Building on ideas, moving from sketches to formalised visualisations.
- Prototyping of ideas (which can be 'low fidelity' mock ups or working prototypes).
- Gathering feedback from local people on improving ideas before implementation.

Co-delivery: Outputs and outcomes at this stage vary. Dott projects typically create innovative ways that people can engage with the design solution in the medium or longer term, including:

- Transferring ownership of the project to the community.
- Ensuring project management skills are in place for implementation.
- Scaling the project or business planning.
- Ongoing design changes.

Legacy: Legacies can include the visible outputs from the projects or also embedded legacies such as:

- The thinking, ideas and practices that reside in, remain and continue being used by the individuals who participated on the projects.
- Participants who become champions for design, sharing new approaches of thinking and doing in their organisations and communities.

Embedded legacies are not highly visible and usually manifest themselves in other ideas and areas that may or may not be related to the Dott project. Part of this prototyping activity focuses on learning how to replicate and scale the methodologies behind the projects more effectively, as well as developing a better understanding of the systemic conditions that would enable this to happen.

Emerging roles for designers

Collaborative Leadership

During our work on the ground we have given significant consideration to the role and importance of leadership. Whilst our processes are inclusive, equal and reciprocal, leadership of this form of collaborative innovation is important. Dott has carefully selected fourteen ‘Senior Producers’ from across the UK and Europe to support our community projects. Senior Producers are typically expert in collaborative design and although many are also trained designers, some are not and this is not a prerequisite for success. These leaders are responsible for the vision of the projects and mentor local teams and experts through the process of collaborative design activity. Key to developing local capacity to innovate has been to develop the skills of professional designers ‘on the ground’ in areas of collaboration, co-design, service development and multiple stakeholder management.

The qualities we see in our Senior Producers include:

- Willingness to take risks.
- Empathic listeners.
- Passion for the cause.
- Optimistic about the future.
- Able to share knowledge, power and credit.
- Energetic, passionate willingness and drive on projects.

Designers

The challenge of democratising design is polarising people, most obviously designers. There exists a vocal core community who are interested in co-creation, co-development, participative models, and another much larger group who are relatively uninterested, regarding the methodologies as a departure from design practice without a proven business model.

A real risk is that this creates a two-tiered system within our design industry. Where some designers lack the confidence and skills to actually embrace this kind of work. The question set by Dott to designers is thus: where can, and should, designers focus, if they aspire to make a difference? As Jeremy Myerson, noted at the Dott Think Tank: “Designers have done well out of globalisation; the challenge facing designers now is whether they have the skills and sensibility to make a meaningful contribution at a local scale”.

Empowering and equipping citizens and communities to become the change-makers

There are lots of compelling reasons why empowering citizens and communities to innovate makes good sense. Firstly, dispersing the ‘capacity for innovation’ to a broader group of people is potentially empowering and efficient in developing new solutions. Secondly, in an extension to ‘user centred’ design, participatory approaches accept that ‘end users’ are uniquely placed to judge the quality of existing services and to make informed decisions about potential improvements. Thirdly, based on the premise of a highly educated yet underutilised workforce, it can add value and meaning to individuals lives to be part of something bigger that resonates with their value systems and supports community cohesion.

The Big Society

Modelled on the Canadian approach, the UK Chancellor, George Osbourne MP asked in his spending review of June 2010 “Can the activity be provided by a non-state provider or by citizens, wholly, or in partnership?” This fiscal motivation provides the imperative for the Big Society policy.

Central to the Big Society idea is devolving responsibilities to communities and citizens. “Shifting power is about creating citizen-centric public services through the transfer of political, administrative and financial powers away from the centre.”¹³

The Prime Minister, David Cameron has described the Conservative-Liberal Democrat Government’s plans for ‘building the Big Society’ as series of initiatives which, together, will aim to ‘give citizens, communities and local government the power and information they need to come together, solve the problems they face and build the Britain they want.’¹⁴ To do so, he has argued, will mean drawing on ‘the skills and expertise of people across the country as we respond to the social, political and economic challenges Britain faces.’

In our projects we work around the busy lives of citizens. Our expectation is that individuals are ‘experts’ in their own lives, so can form an equal and reciprocal relationship with public service professionals and others, working together to get things done. Philosophically our assumption is that real change requires a concerted effort that needs ‘all hands on deck’. We describe the power of collective innovation as a force for change. “Asking how many professionals it takes to solve the big issues of our times is a bit like asking how many electricians it takes to change a light bulb – the real solution is for everyone to develop self reliance and capacity to become the change makers.”¹⁵

Key to the success of big society will be two factors, firstly motivating citizens and secondly providing the skills and knowledge to act on this desire.

“Asking how many professionals it takes to solve the big issues of our times is a bit like asking how many electricians it takes to change a light bulb – the real solution is for everyone to develop self reliance and capacity to become the change makers.”

¹³ 2020 Vision: A far-sighted approach to transforming public services, 2020 Public Services Trust, June 2010.

¹⁴ Building the Big Society, David Cameron, May 2010.

¹⁵ Dr Andrea Siodmok “Big Society by Design” July 2010.

As Deborah Szebeko from Think Public notes in a recent Design Week interview: “If we really want to bring in the big society and engage citizens we need to do that in an appealing way and motivate people. Design can help to make it exciting.”¹⁶

How do we actually create this sort of energy within our citizens to participate in the way that we all have a vision that they will? Because the experience that we find in our projects is that it isn't that obvious. The citizens aren't waiting there all the time, wanting to get involved.

How do we use design to make that happen on a more practical basis?

The key barriers we are experiencing to participation include lack of confidence in citizens and the absence of practical tools to coordinate individuals' activities within a bigger programme. Where we have prototyped real services with citizens (for example in our 50+ project) people have found the toolkits we developed give them a sense of how their contribution can make a difference.

¹⁶ Designers want to be part of David Cameron's 'big society', Design Week, 29.07.10.

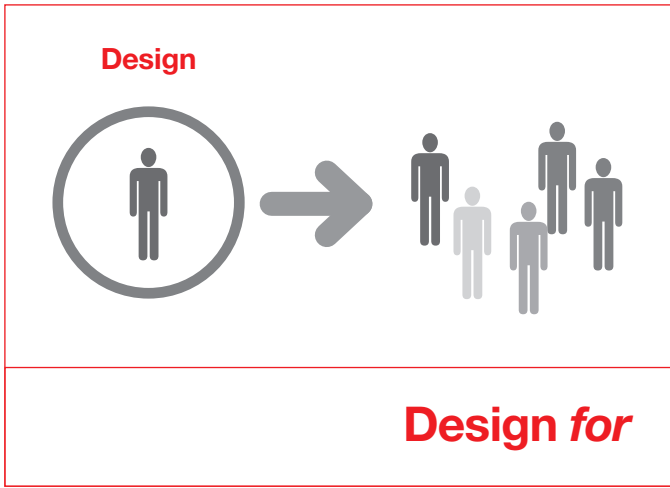


Diagram 7: Design professionals designing 'for' people

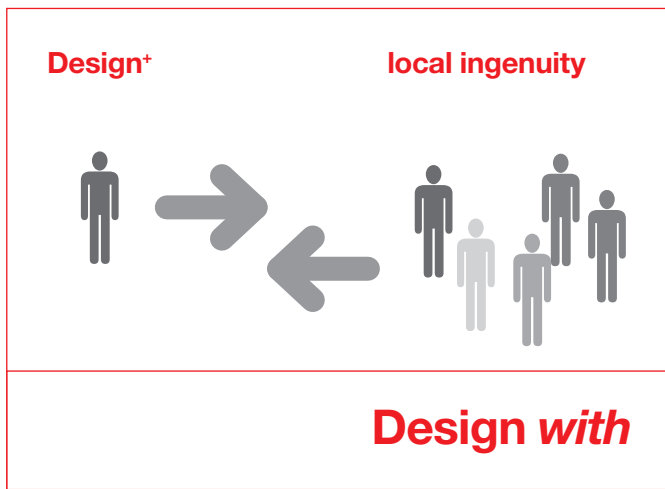


Diagram 8: Collaborative innovation with local ingenuity and creativity



Diagram 9: Diffusion of the capacity for innovation to citizens and communities

The Dott ethos

In emergent areas of practice, the scope and definition of activity is determined by the nature of the projects undertaken. In the medium term this can develop into a critical mass of examples that become definitive. However we have found it more valuable in setting a broad scope for activity through using sets of principles and a working ethos rather than prescriptive rules and processes. The following ten points have emerged from working across projects and conditions that have led to good outcomes. In collaborative design we have found it is important to:

1. **Be a humanist:** Focus your effort on what is desirable as well as what is technically possible.
2. **Stay positive:** Everyone is creative, and our collective creativity is greater than the sum of the parts.
3. **Unite over a common quest:** Find a question everyone cares about and has a passion to solve.
4. **Think big:** Great design can and does change the world.
5. **Start small:** Build ideas and solutions with people not for people.
6. **Get out:** Design in the real world; it is an infinite source of inspiration, opportunity and fun.
7. **Splice things up:** New ideas emerge at the intersections between disciplines, subject knowledge and experience.
8. **Get it wrong:** In the current climate it is more important to fail fast than succeed slowly.
9. **Design doesn't stop:** Create platforms for participation rather than fixed solutions, as these will be more flexible to changing needs and evolve in real time.
10. **Show value as well as have values:** Good design doesn't need to cost more, it needs to do more.

The impact

The single biggest factor in driving more Dott-like activities will be based on the real and perceived social and economic benefit of the Dott methodology. This can be demonstrated in a number of ways from better value for money to the long-term sustainability and success of projects.

This evidence of value for money of projects has been lacking in public sector innovation across Europe as noted by the OECD: “Innovation can occur in any sector of the economy, including government services such as health or education. However, the current measurement framework applies to business innovation, even though innovation is also important for the public sector. Consideration is being given to extending the methodology to public sector innovation and innovation for social goals.”¹⁷

Across our projects we have found the collaborative process to unlock the latent capacity of citizens to be creative and contribute to service provision. In particular from our 50+ project we have found the project has:

- Created a broader base of advocacy and delivery from the council to the community.
- Maximised the efficiency of existing support services by joining up different silos of activities.
- Moved disengaged people towards a service therefore reducing the benefit burden.
- Increased confidence in public sector managers and citizens to move forward.

We are evaluating this project currently and will be able to report more on the return on investment (ROI) and the value for money (VFM) arguments.

¹⁷ OECD and Eurostat (2005), Oslo Manual – Guidelines for Collecting and Interpreting Innovation Data, OECD, Paris.

The legacy

The most important success of any Dott programme is the legacy that is left behind within a region. Locally the legacy encompasses what is left behind, remembered and valued, as well as what has influenced the future path in Cornwall. Colloquially we call this as the ‘stickiness’ of our interventions and activities. The long-term value of Dott to Cornwall will be reflected in the changes that continue once the formal period of Dott Cornwall concludes. A second element of legacy may be national or international as knowledge feeds into the total Dott programme by ‘joining up the Dotts’. Whilst there are lessons to be learnt from the legacy planning for Dott07, an in depth understanding of the unique context of Cornwall has enabled Dott to make recommendations that are bespoke and that are designed for the current times.

The fundamental distinctiveness of Dott lies in its ability to work at the systemic level, to affect change in different stakeholders that in turn has the potential to create a tipping point where there can be a paradigm shift in working practices. These innovation ‘framework conditions’ are designed to maximize the potential to increase the capabilities of a range of different people in the area. Practically, this means simultaneously addressing all aspects of the ‘creative supply chain’ from education, to consultancy, to clients and beyond to the public at large. Recognising the interdependencies within this system is critical if we are to ensure the possibility of bridging the existing market failure and leave long-term sustainable practices. However, to make the system ‘flow’ requires an understanding of the dynamics around leadership, fiscal incentives, skills, knowledge and individuals’ motivation and willingness to change, both during and after Dott.

Our interim review indicates that the primary factor for creating a strong legacy within Cornwall lies in the conviction, confidence and leadership of a few ‘permission givers’ who can support the development of a cultural shift towards citizen centred collaborative innovation. Individuals in the public, private and third sector (including designers) who both understand the power of co-design and co-production, and can convey the benefits that can be achieved by working in interdisciplinary teams (centred on citizen’s experiences) to others.

If the design sector is to respond to the opportunities presented by Big Society and public sector transformation then the capacity building work will need to continue and scale. Skills that will need to be enhanced include; user-centered co-designing, presentation skills to public sector clients and the ability to successfully complete the procurement process.

Three tangible large scale ‘vehicles’ are in place to take up the Dott methodologies and sustain new ways of working. These include:

- **AIR** – The Academy of Innovation and Research at University College Falmouth’s ability to develop the design sector skills at an undergraduate and post graduate level as well as running projects in the future with business.
- **Cornwall Council’s** culture and capacity to continue Dott-like activities as a good client, commissioning future work.
- **Cornwall Design Season**, to raise the visibility of design in Cornwall and to promote new ways of thinking.

Conclusion

This review has set out to describe the ways we are working on the ground so that knowledge can be shared, and insights can be drawn in real time. The programme still has six months to run, and as a result our conclusions and observations are interim and will firm up in due course.

In this review we have chosen a few case studies that exemplify the Dott process in the areas of community cohesion, skills & employment and energy generation. Of particular value has been the opportunity to test out collaborative processes in one of the most deprived communities in Cornwall. In all our case studies final solutions have yet to be implemented in full which prevents any detailed ROI or VFM evaluation, time will tell.

Throughout the document we have set out parallels in our work to the concept of 'Big Society'. We recognise that plans for 'building the Big Society' will encourage a range of responses, from different sectors and organisations. In this review we have sought to put forward a view about increasing the innovative potential of Big Society through working with designers and innovators. We believe a design and designers can and should have a meaningful role in shaping this debate.

What is clear is that Dott is one of many varied transformational projects around the world currently experimenting and trying out new ways of creating a sustainable society. Through experimenting with a series of practical projects Dott is seeking to make transformational change both exciting and practical. And where relevant we have sought to connect our insights with networks across the UK, Europe and beyond.

Dott will conclude its programme in Cornwall in March 2011, when we will be publishing full evaluation and conclusions from the initiative. Until then, we welcome all suggestions, connections and ideas.

Part 3

Case studies

Dott is working with over 50 practitioners to develop ten citizen-led collaborative innovation projects across Cornwall. These are demonstrating collaborative approaches to community centred design in the areas of:

- Sustainable transport.
- Skills development and pathways to work.
- Energy generation.
- Regeneration.
- Community cohesion and increased life chances.
- Schools and education.

Part of the Pengegon Estate.
Image © Chris Chapman,
SEA Communications.



Case Study 1

Designing Communities

Transforming a troubled housing estate – Pengegon

Camborne, Pool, Redruth (CPR) Regeneration, commissioned Dott to work with local residents and service providers in Pengegon to identify if there was a local need for a new community centre.

The Pengegon Estate in Camborne, is a neighbourhood named in the top 5% of the country's most deprived areas.



Public service workers workshop

The Pengegon Estate in Camborne, is a neighbourhood named in the top 5% of the country's most deprived areas. Its problems include high levels of unemployment, drug/alcohol abuse, domestic violence and child poverty. The neighbourhood has been consulted by support agencies and received investment, but has also been described as 'hard to reach' and still has many complex, unmet needs.



Local allotments where films were produced.
Image © Chris Chapman,
SEA Communications.

CPR Regeneration used the Dott process to better understand some of the issues affecting local residents and service providers in the area. Starting with the question ‘What kind of community facilities and services would improve your lives?’ The design team worked to co-develop a clearer picture of existing services, unmet needs and possible solutions.

Working with more than 80 residents in and around Pengegon, the Dott design team, SEA Communications, made several short films with community groups, enabling them to share their thoughts and voice their opinion regarding a possible new community centre in the heart of their housing estate.



Community co-design session

Building on these insights various design methods were used to raise awareness, encourage community involvement and bring the needs of the community into a public arena, including an article in the community newsletter, a residents’ survey, social documentaries, co-design sessions and opinions published via SMS and blog. The designers also used some more unusual techniques to help people get involved – such as getting children to build a mock-up of their ideal community centre using cake.

Whilst the project is still ongoing, according to those who work with the Pengegon community, this project – unlike many others which have tried and failed - has seen huge improvements in residents’ confidence, optimism, participation in the life of the estate and in communication skills. There’s a positive atmosphere, and the bespoke community centre is on the way to being a reality. It was observed that through this intense engagement process the community have started to ‘own’ the building even before the first brick has been laid. As Neighbourhood Manager Claire Arymar noted at a localism meeting: “The residents already feel that they own the new community centre, even though it doesn’t exist yet”.

...according to those who work with the Pengegon community, this project – unlike many others which have tried and failed - has seen huge improvements in residents’ confidence, optimism, participation in the life of the estate and in communication skills.



Persona badges, 'toolkit' used in participant workshops

Case Study 2

New Work

Helping newly-redundant people back into work

Targeting groups at real or perceived risk of redundancy, the New Work project aims to improve signposting to new employment opportunities relevant to the economy and society of 21st century Cornwall.



Understanding local people: Jock the hairdressing Parish Councillor from Par

Sponsored by the Skills Funding Agency and the European Social Fund (ESF), the project was commissioned to bring a fresh, innovative, people-centred approach to the development new services addressing issues of redundancy and worklessness.

A national survey recently revealed that only 35% of job vacancies are advertised through the Job Centre, so New Work set out to find out where other employment opportunities were being communicated and design effective ways to signpost people towards these jobs.

Targeting people at risk of redundancy and who are out of work, the Dott team sought to understand their perspectives and challenges and to find innovative ways to remove barriers (real or perceived) that prevent people from accessing skills and future employment opportunities in Cornwall.

New Work set out to find out where other employment opportunities were being communicated and design effective ways to signpost people towards these jobs.



Public sector and third sector 'Enablers' workshop looking at the array of existing services on offer to people in Cornwall

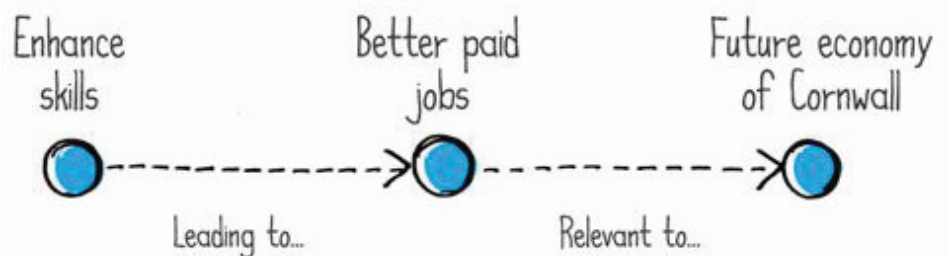
Campervan touring Cornwall to meet local people and understand their issues



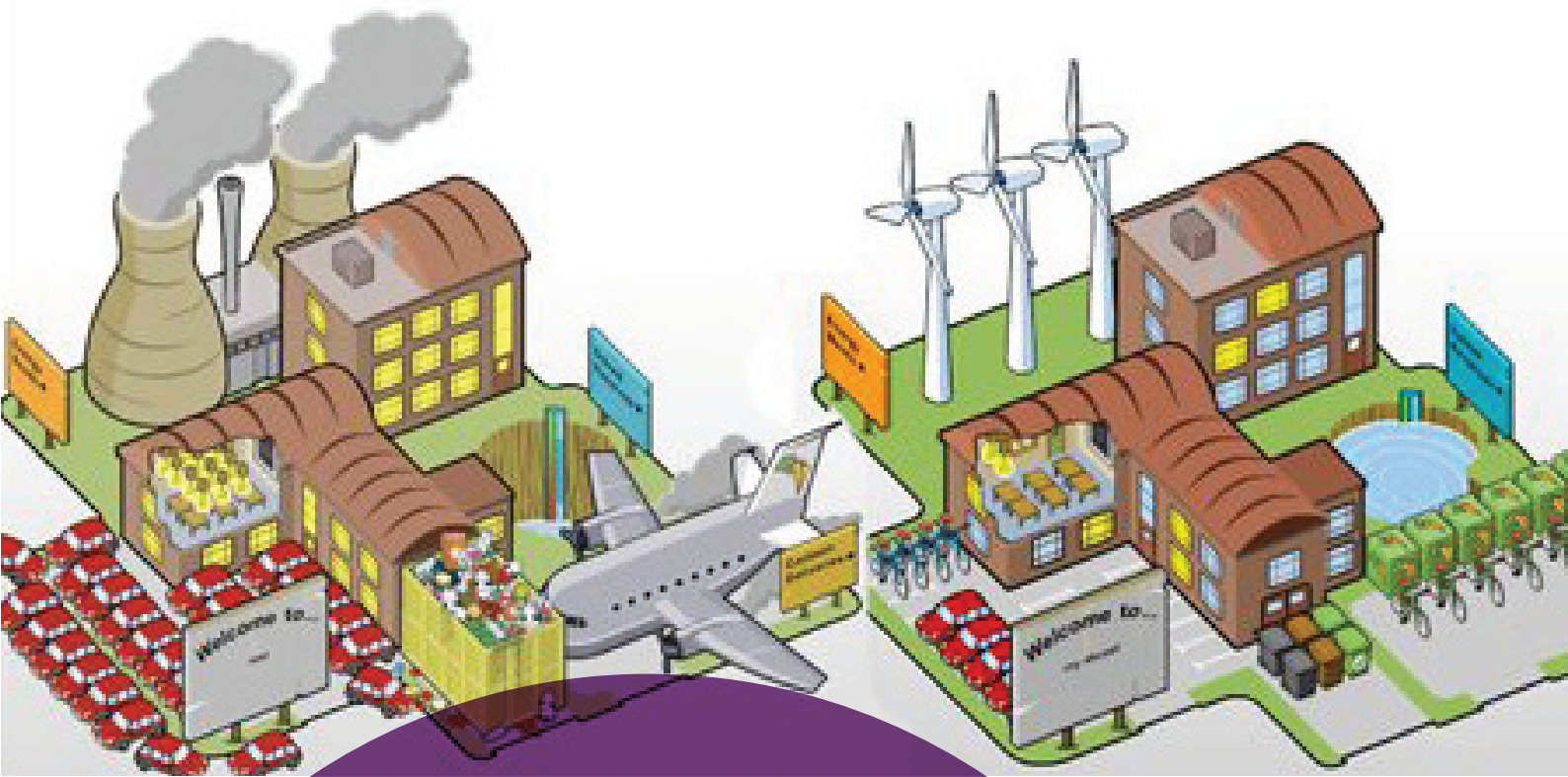
...engagement methods have included a touring 1967 split screen VW camper van called 'Scarlett'...

In the early co-discovery phase, the design team identified that one of the key problems faced by those confronting redundancy was that they did not know where to turn to for advice and support. Working with local people, businesses and services providers the team have started to prototype service solutions to assist in the journey from joblessness to employment.

Some engagement methods have included a touring 1967 split screen VW camper van called 'Scarlett' as well as working with local businesses champions to build advocacy behind the New Work 'campaign'.



Eco Calculator providing schools with a relative measure of their carbon footprint



Case Study 3

Eco Design Challenge

What design changes can we make to reduce the ecological footprint of our schools?

Dott has enlisted the enthusiasm and creativity of secondary school students and their teachers from across Cornwall to calculate the carbon footprint of their schools and devise design solutions to reduce them.

Having identified the area they wish to improve and produced an initial brief, professional design mentors worked with students to help refine, enhance and further develop their proposals

Working with specially produced digital toolkits and lesson plans, in schools across Cornwall, students have been able to build an accurate picture of the needs of their school. Having identified the area they wish to improve and produced an initial brief, professional design mentors worked with students to help refine, enhance and further develop their proposals. Leading designers like Sebastian Conran and Sophie Thomas joined local architects and designers in supporting the schools.



Students at Penryn working collaboratively

The challenge culminated at Cornwall's DesignEd event where finalists presented their Eco solutions in a "Dragon's Den" style finale in front of their peers from their own and other Cornish secondary schools and FE colleges. The judges were led by sustainability expert Dick Strawbridge and comprised representatives from the Design Council, NESTA, Dott and Cornwall Council.

The winning school, St Ives, was presented with a prize fund from NESTA of over £6,500 to refurbish their tired 1970's art block with the help of Helen Brooks of RLT Architects in Penzance. The pupils designed a series of large roof windows that will flood the currently dreary space with natural light and will provide a south-facing structure that will be used to mount photovoltaic panels.



Finalists being mentored in presentation skills

Given that along with most other schools in Cornwall St Ives will no longer be refurbished as part of the Building Schools for the Future programme, this award has enabled the whole school community to come together and solve its own problems whilst also representing great value for money. Since winning the Eco Design Challenge back in July, St Ives School have steamed ahead with their winning project. The new school year has brought meetings with Cornwall Council: "Following on from St Ives School's success in the Eco Design Challenge we have had a meeting with Kate Keogh from Cornwall Council" Helen Brooks said, "She is looking into what grants are available for the renewables. We expect to be meeting up with the school in the early part of next week. Everyone is very keen to move the project forward".

This award has enabled the whole school community to come together and solve its own problems whilst also representing great value for money.



Case Study 4

Ageing Workforce

Cornwall Works 50+

Finding new ways to support older people to overcome the challenges they may face when seeking employment. Dott is using creative techniques to identify the opportunities for service design innovation build a more inclusive society.

Supporting Cornwall Works (a partnership approach to delivering welfare to work support in Cornwall), and funded by the European Social Fund, Dott has been working to co-develop fresh design solutions to the issues faced by older people in, and looking for, work.

With an ageing population, the workforce is getting older and by 2017 about 34.4% of the workforce is predicted to be over 50. There's no shortage of ambition amongst older people – they really want to be as economically active as everyone else - but the workplace will have to adapt, and there's a big challenge in finding out how to go about that transformation.

Engaging and hearing the perspectives of people over 50 who have or are experiencing challenges such as care responsibilities, health conditions or confidence and skills issues was central to the approach.

Dott Cornwall's 'Cornwall Works 50+' project has been using unusual ways (including a 'listening armchair' full of electronics) of getting older people and employers to overcome barriers faced by those over 50 wanting to return to the workforce.

A number of new solutions have been developed and prioritised with stakeholders and local people. The top five have started to be prototyped including innovative new volunteering schemes, job signposting and home skills exchanges.



Peer to peer 'community reporters' gather insights and views



Christmas 'tree of talent' uniting a community

Opportunity #2

How might we help people discover pursuing a new career is an exciting opportunity?

Summary:

- Many people are not aware of the benefits of a new career.
- People are often discouraged by the perceived costs of a new career.
- People are often discouraged by the perceived risks of a new career.
- People are often discouraged by the perceived uncertainty of a new career.

Key Message:

Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.

Key Message:

Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.

Key Message:

Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.

Opportunity #3

How can we support people to explore work opportunities without losing their benefits?

Summary:

- Many people are not aware of the benefits of a new career.
- People are often discouraged by the perceived costs of a new career.
- People are often discouraged by the perceived risks of a new career.
- People are often discouraged by the perceived uncertainty of a new career.

Key Message:

Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.

Key Message:

Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.

Key Message:

Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.

Opportunity #4

How can we help people who are struggling to find work to become employed?

Summary:

- For many people, finding work is a struggle.
- Individuals who can't find work can become isolated.
- Long periods of isolation can start to affect an individual's confidence and self-esteem.
- We have also found for this age group in particular, good working and social interaction are key to success.

Key Message:

Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.

Key Message:

Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.

Key Message:

Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.

Opportunity #8

How can we educate employers to the benefits of working with people over 50?

Summary:

- Employers are often not aware of the benefits of working with people over 50.
- Employers are often not aware of the skills and experience of people over 50.
- Employers are often not aware of the reliability of people over 50.

Key Message:

Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.

Key Message:

Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.

Key Message:

Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.

Opportunity #9

How can we change Government procedure to support the needs of people in their 50s?

Summary:

- Government procedure is often not supportive of people in their 50s.
- Government procedure is often not supportive of people in their 50s.
- Government procedure is often not supportive of people in their 50s.

Key Message:

Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.

Key Message:

Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.

Key Message:

Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.

Opportunity #10

How might we help transport people to work more easily?

Summary:

- Public transport in Cornwall can be infrequent and often expensive.
- Running a car is a large expense, especially for those on a low income.
- We've heard people lose confidence in young drivers on the roads or want to avoid travelling long distances to work.
- When jobs are available, individuals can be limited by their access to transport.

Key Message:

Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.

Key Message:

Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.

Key Message:

Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.

Opportunity #13

How might we share the wisdom and experience of people over 50?

Summary:

- People over 50 have a wealth of wisdom and experience.
- People over 50 have a wealth of wisdom and experience.
- People over 50 have a wealth of wisdom and experience.

Key Message:

Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.

Key Message:

Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.

Key Message:

Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.

Opportunity #14

How might we encourage and support enterprise as a way of working?

Summary:

- Enterprise is a great way of working.
- Enterprise is a great way of working.
- Enterprise is a great way of working.

Key Message:

Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.

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Key Message:

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Opportunity #15

How might we help 50+ to promote employment?

Summary:

- People over 50 have a wealth of wisdom and experience.
- People over 50 have a wealth of wisdom and experience.
- People over 50 have a wealth of wisdom and experience.

Key Message:

Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.

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Discovering a new career is an exciting opportunity.



First prototype at the Royal Cornwall Show

Case Study 5

Serious Play

Generating local energy through kinetics

Students from Camborne Science and Community College and members of RedYOUTH have worked with scientists and designers to create a piece of green play equipment that will also generate energy.

Serious Play sets out to inspire the next generation by putting human kinetic energy to positive use in these energy-hungry times. At its outset, the project is seeking to discover whether we can harness the energy of children at play, and feed it into the energy supply. Making energy generation community-based and seriously good fun, the focus of the project is to co-design playground equipment, co-create sustainable power and co-build an adventure playground.

The young people have collaborated with design experts and students from University College Falmouth in a project being led by Dott Cornwall's Senior Producer and design team.

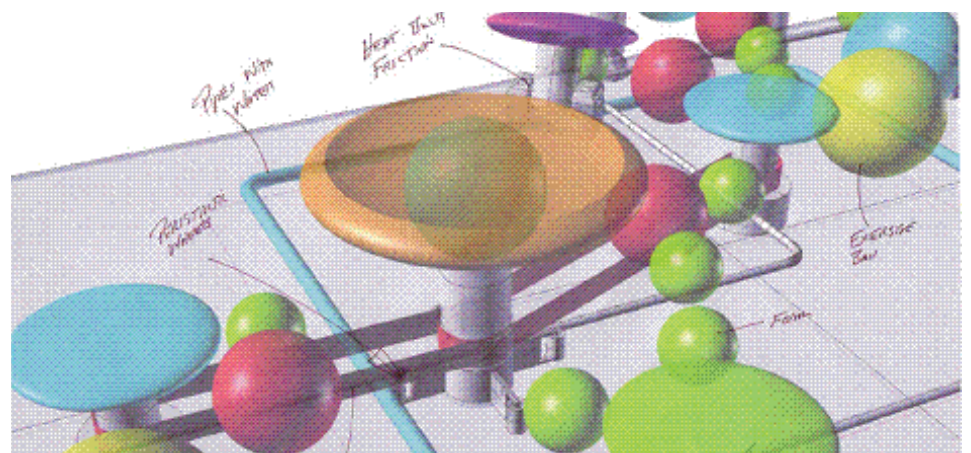


Co-discovery day in Redruth

Co-discovery workshops at the former Gweal an Top school at Redruth have seen the young people working with simple materials like clay and wood to create three-dimensional models of their ideas.

All of the ideas generated from these workshops and those planned at a variety of locations around Cornwall are going to be combined to create an exciting adventure playground piece.

Over a 1,000 children tried out the prototype at the Royal Cornwall Show in May 2010. Since this time the prototype has been further refined and is currently touring Cornwall, hosting co-design sessions with children.



Computer Aided Design of prototype



Children testing the equipment

All of the ideas generated from these workshops and those planned at a variety of locations around Cornwall are going to be combined to create an exciting adventure playground piece.

Notes

Definition of design

Good design is sustainable design. It is a process that uses a sequence of steps that defines problems, discovers solutions and makes them real. Creativity generates ideas and innovation exploits them. Good design connects the two, shaping them to become practical and attractive products and services.

The Dott programme

Dott is a programme that supports community led innovation by involving people in the design of local services. It uses a design approach in a series of projects to develop sustainable solutions to social and economic challenges. It aims to increase the capacity for innovation within a region by building skills and knowledge and awareness of the Dott approach.

The Dott approach

The Dott approach uses a collaborative design process to work with communities to design and develop new solutions to local issues. Dott provides the design support and facilitation allowing communities to devise and test prototype concepts across a range of issues, e.g. healthcare, transport, education sustainability.

Alongside design professionals we use the knowledge, skills and creativity of the people who will benefit, and the people who will deliver a service or product within the community.