



Totally Socially Mid-term Review

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Participants:

Branching Out – Dianne Lamb & Marilyn Anthony

Calla Beck Community Allotment (Whitby) – Steven Angus

Eastside Community Centre – Lisa O’Brien

Growing Opportunities – Christine Mackay

Krampus Run – Laurence Mitchell & Elaine Edmunds

LOOP – Steve Parker

Norton Hive – Marion Simpson

Parents Together – Vicki Cull, Nicole Belchamber and Debbie Rodgers

Ryedale Free Fridge – Lindsay Wrightson and Jane Weatherly

Peasey Hill People – Michelle Wade

Residents and Friends of Trafalgar Square – Una Beaumont

Scarborough Fayre – Nicola Elson, Steve Parker, Adele Corin & John Dalton

Scarborough Ideas Club – Andy Stubbs

Scardeburgh to Scarborough – Wayne Murray

Spring Café Hunmanby – Joy Ossai

Studio 3 – Taylor-Paige Tymens

The Laughter Circle – Terri-Ann Scholes

Thornton le Dale Village Hub – Roger Sharples

Weeniverse – Ruth Webster

Whitby Beach Sweep – Elaine Marsh, Geri Sharrock and Jo Hindley Richardson

Whitby Sheds – Graham Storer

Independance CIC - Kate Penny

RAF Fylingdales - Keith Burt

Staff:

Charlotte Angus, Dan Green, David Stone, Jo Laking, Mel Bonney-Kane

Part One: Introduction

1.1 Background

Totally Socially is funded by The National Lottery Community Fund and is *'all about talking to and listening to people'*.¹ The three-year programme has been established to build on Coast and Vale Community Action's (CAVCA) work in local communities, getting to know them better and what makes them 'tick'. The programme aims to help people to turn ideas for their community into action, from finding solutions to challenges to keeping good things going. The underlying ethos is about putting communities in the lead, working with what is already there and not predicting the outcomes. There are four dedicated Totally Socially outreach workers covering the areas of Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale providing responsive and regular support, from sparking initial conversations and listening to what's on people's minds to supporting people in a range of ways, at the different stages of bringing their idea to life.

1.2 The review

CAVCA appointed the Institute of Voluntary Action Research (IVAR) as its independent reviewer to look at how Totally Socially has supported people in communities so far and what has been the most important learning along the way, approximately eighteen months into the three-year funding period. In particular, CAVCA was interested in understanding the experience and views of people and groups that have benefitted from Totally Socially support in a range of ways and more specifically what had changed for them.

As well as getting a better understanding of what the local communities and the Totally Socially team set out to do through the 'experience' and how the ideas developed, we were also looking to understand progress against three outcomes:

1. Local residents will be more involved in the life of their community, more active and better able to work collectively to solve their problems, due to increased knowledge and confidence.
2. Residents will have improved transferable skills/confidence to develop community-owned solutions to locally identified needs, giving them/their communities better chances in life.
3. Local residents will be less isolated through having improved access to services and facilities specifically designed and delivered within the community to meet their needs.

Field work was carried out with over thirty people across Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale in the shape of individual conversations and groups, sometimes with two or three community groups coming together. The exercise explored: people's experience of Totally Socially; what support they had received; their experience of

¹ <https://www.cavca.org.uk/totally-socially>

the support; and what had changed as a result. It also asked about people's hopes for the future, and what their plans were to sustain and grow what they had started.

A series of short interviews also took place with staff to understand more about Totally Socially from their viewpoint, including the highs and lows. The key points from those conversations are integrated into Section Three.

Terminology

Throughout the report, the following terms are used:

- **Programme** to describe Totally Socially
- **Worker** to describe team members of the programme providing support
- **Participants** for individuals and groups in communities who received support and who were interviewed for this review.

See Appendix One for messages from participants about their experience and Appendix Two for the full list of questions asked during the fieldwork.

Part Two: Totally Socially achievements so far

In this section, we present the review findings on what Totally Socially has achieved so far, looking in turn at:

- What has changed for individuals
- Getting going
- Finding my voice
- Putting ideas into action
- Keeping going

2.1 What has changed for individuals

There were four areas that stood out:

Less isolated, more connected.

Through their experience people reported a lot more confidence in their ability, in particular networking skills: *'Since I started being part of this group I have met more people and I make more friends. It gets me out, I'm happier, others have noticed a difference in me and said I've changed. I have more self-esteem and am more confident to stand up in front groups'.*

Becoming connected to people who can help with the idea was a turning point for many of those spoken to. Support you might normally have to pay for, the more traditional support that is available for charities or small community business is being accessed and delivered in a very different way through Totally Socially. People repeatedly said that they would never have thought their idea would turn into a local group or initiative, or that others would join them and certainly not that it might actually become an organisation in its own right! Just by being in touch with new people made things happen, turning them from ideas into reality.

'It's been mainly social, people who have never spoken before, living near each other – people from opposite sides of town are coming together'

'I now have more of a network – am more organised, have more access to advice, it's been good for my business too'

Improvements to people's health and wellbeing

People highlighted positive changes to their general health, specifically mental health. One local resident who had not been in a social situation for eighteen years is now leading a group where creative craft sessions have provided an unexpectedly therapeutic way of developing people's patience, concentration and self-esteem.

'Totally Socially care, they keep me going, I mean actually caring, about my health. Just knowing they are going to be there, I was so stressed and had so much on, it's [the support] changed my stress levels'

'I was in a low place when I met them, it's helped me grow as a person – this is something I can do'

In one community group a participant recounted the people who attend; those recently bereaved, suffering anxiety or affected by depression or loneliness. Through this interaction they have been able to use and develop their own skills and share the things they have learnt about what helps them, with others.

'A large part of what we do in sheds is about improving mental health and reducing isolation'

For Growing Opportunities – a community garden run by volunteers, the primary aim is about feeding communities well, not about avoiding mental illness, helping single parents or reducing loneliness. However, it is this universal approach that means it *does* help by the very nature of how it empowers people, helping them to know more about who they are and what they can do and raising aspirations. Growing Opportunities is now connected with the Job Centre and offers volunteering opportunities through this – a link which was unintentional, but welcome.

Learning new skills

Participants talked about how they had found out about (and taken up) the roles and responsibilities of the Chair, Treasurer and Secretary in their newly constituted organisations. They had learnt how to set up and manage a community group bank account using internet banking, developing financial skills they didn't know they had. Tasks like drawing up a constitution and agreeing the document together were amongst a long list of things people had never envisaged doing and had previously thought would be beyond their ability. Participants said that developing life skills like these – a golden thread that runs through Totally Socially – is what makes them more resilient.

Improving Information Technology (IT) skills were widely referred to and people have attended courses including Health & Safety and Food Hygiene with Safeguarding training on the horizon. One group drew in funding from Tesco within the first six months of setting up, enabling them to run a programme of events. Another individual was provided with access to legal advice on setting up a company and signposted to other relevant guidance.

'I've now done a First Aid course, an online university course via Moodle about understanding autism and ADHD and through an initiative called Digital

Neighbours I improved my IT skills too. I also better understand the education system now and have started public speaking, my resilience is better'

Confidence and motivation

'My motivation has come through understanding the true impact of plastic on the environment – life has gone from having nothing in it to having no time for anything'

One community leader described the moment her motivation changed, on a street in Scarborough after observing a very dark side of the local community; *'my world turned upside down'*. Another was motivated by a poorly run disco for learning disabled adults that left her feeling disappointed and determined to do something about it.

People have begun to appreciate their creative skills and discover they can make things with their hands, with one participant even becoming a skilled crafter, a talent revealed through joining a local group. Stories centred on people's growing sense of achievement in settings where they feel safe and where there is no pressure – these conditions are supporting people to flourish and develop new confidence.

'[Totally Socially worker] gives me the confidence to speak to people'.

2.2 Getting going

Typically, people found out about Totally Socially through social media – Facebook primarily. If it resonated or triggered something for them about what they were already doing in their community or wanted to do they went on to 'like' the post and then connect with the individual, group or Totally Socially team. This has been fundamental to 'getting going'. It was easy and straightforward to make the first step and the feedback on this method of universal access was unanimously positive from all those interviewed. Other participants reported finding out about Totally Socially through:

- A Scarborough Ideas Group discussion
- In a public space where a worker had initiated a conversation about the programme
- Hearing about it through a friend
- Reading publicity in community spaces.

One example of 'getting going' was simply neighbours talking over the fence discussing the lack of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) provision in Whitby. This conversation was the starting point for a group and, through contact with the Children's Centre and Eastside Community Centre, led parents to Totally Socially where they met and were able to share their ideas and concerns. This triggered other things such as starting a few coffee mornings and then forming the constituted group - Parents Together.

Once individuals or groups had made and received first contact with Totally Socially, the next step involved a range of options. For example, workers have been described as a sounding board to run ideas past and work out what is possible or

viable, and as helping to connect people with others that have skills and knowledge of doing similar things in other places: *'Everyone helps each other out'*.

This approach is regarded as 'ground up' with the Totally Socially team providing reassurance as well as practical support to make things happen.

A range of needs have been addressed:

- Practical in-depth support to establish a community hub
- Recruiting volunteers
- Providing guidance on creating policies and processes (embedding skills development all the way)
- Light-touch encouragement and faith in a project
- Support for people to get closer to an idea and then go beyond it.

Totally Socially support was described as being *'like a philosophy, opening up all sorts!'*:

'The group would have started up ok but Totally Socially got us thinking about how to get it off the ground and now it feels like it will move on, with this useful resource to draw on. The regular meetings with [Totally Socially outreach worker] were key'

Requests for help included finding vacant land to grow organic vegetables for Scarborough Fayre; a volunteer Chair to kick-start an initial meeting; or simply brokering contact with someone who could provide the right advice. Participants recounted how great the workers were at finding and organising free conversation space and their offer of small amounts of funding to get things going made a huge difference.

'[Totally Socially outreach worker] liaised with the farmer, supported on a practical level every step of the way, and we were fed and watered'

There were several examples of people connecting with Totally Socially themselves and then passing the information on, so they were able to share their discovery with others they thought it might fit with. In one particular example in Filey the initial contact with Totally Socially led to peer support group being initiated and then handed over when members felt more confident to take the lead. The Totally Socially team were pivotal in making these sorts of things happen and helping people to 'get going'.

2.3 Finding my voice

'Totally Socially is a voice for the people'

There was consensus among participants that support from Totally Socially had helped to build their confidence to take forward an idea and to share it in a more public way. Examples of this included being asked to speak at Beavers and Cubs groups, in schools and universities, even in one instance the to the RAF (Whitby Beach Sweep). Through taking part in a film participants were also supported to be interviewed by the BBC. In one case this new-found voice led to individuals campaigning and writing letters to the local MP and North Yorkshire Council's education team. Learning as you go – or training by stealth – has held things

steady. Much of what participants say they have learnt is transferred between them and the workers, in particular ways to communicate with local government.

‘I stand up for myself now, there’s no rolling over, I’ve understood the power of parents’

Participants frequently talked about things that they may not have had the confidence to do before receiving support from the programme, such as confronting prejudice. Involvement in a local initiative and Totally Socially support has given people greater confidence in themselves and their ability:

‘Without it he wouldn’t have had the confidence, it helped him to spread his own wings’

‘I can do stuff now that I didn’t know I could’

‘I never thought I’d be good at leading a group – he says I am an ideal person to be a leader and has helped give me the confidence and bring that to the table so we can all work together’

Campaigning stories run through the narrative of Totally Socially. One community overturned a dog ban on the beach in Whitby, ‘through the support of our worker’. This sort of action has brought people together.

2.4 Putting ideas into action

‘We will continue to need Totally Socially’s support in guiding us in the right direction’

A wide range of community action ideas are being explored and carried out by Totally Socially. There have been some significant moments along the way:

1. A Local beach litter pick that has connected to a national and global plastic-free movement

‘I just started picking up litter on the beach and people ask what you are doing ... and then they are interested and you don’t expect it’

2. A digital currency inspired by recycling and incentivising people to do more

‘The Totally Socially experience has made me a more active member of the community, more aware of problems like this [plastic] and ways to resolve them’

3. An Ideas Club set up in Scarborough to support community-led initiatives is a regular fixture, bringing people together in a natural way, and at the same time supporting local business, as it is held in a local café.

‘Joining the Ideas Club has been a surprising journey as I have never been interested in making a difference, I always accepted the way things were and had very low opinions on it. However, since meeting a variety of inspiring people through the club, it has changed my view on how working as a community can make a difference’

4. A team in place working to create a Town Council where the people's voices of Scarborough can be heard, and through which positive changes can be brought to the town and the people in it.

'Totally Socially is breaking down barriers all the time'

5. A support network for parents of children with SEND, sharing what's going on through a Facebook group with Totally Socially feeding into that.

'It's like how the Children's Centre should be'

One group has found that the information they now have access to locally is better shared via their network rather than through the Children's Centre so people feel better informed, possibly because they are now driven to be more proactive.

'Now people know stuff! We communicate a lot'

'It's motivating to be part of it, service families are so transient and lack local information, this approach is perfect for that, it supports community integration'

One individual attempting to set up a children's outdoor group was looking around for suitable spaces, using the usual routes and connecting to community venues. She found herself not getting anywhere fast but described how the Totally Socially worker helped 'put it into perspective' in particular by looking at what was getting in the way.

'Then I could see why I wasn't getting there – she simplified it and could see where I was trying to get to – she saw a route, a way in'

Peasey Play in Malton has led to parents with young children forming a games group (traditional board games) for all generations: 'it brings people out of their houses and into the Community Centre'.

'There was nothing here, now there is Party in the Park, coffee mornings, Peasey Play...this wasn't expected'

2.5 Keeping going

It is of course as important for the ideas to keep going as well as starting up after the initial getting-off-the-ground phase.

'Totally Socially is there for us. [Totally Socially worker] is very good at getting ideas across and has a wonderful way of dealing with the flaws.'

Asked what was next up or on the horizon for groups elicited a range of responses about the size of the task ahead. Sustainability is communities doing it for themselves and for some this will be (or is) a hurdle. There are plans to get more leaflets printed or have open days and fun days to grow an idea. Fundraising is in the pipeline for a host of projects, as are meetings to review progress and set goals for the future, for bigger and better things. People talked about moving to a new location or site and extending what they have started. And top of the list was more networking – a network of people trying to do things.

Totally Socially helps keep things going by holding regular meetings, developing policies and reviewing and checking action plans. Sometimes it gets 'big and complicated' so there is often lots of background work to do. One volunteer Chair described herself as '*a duck paddling away underneath*'.

And on what next people said: '*going to become a pop-up museum*', '*find a new site for Scardeburgh to Scarborough (a social history museum)*', '*discover more groups like these for military families*'.....and most of all; keeping connected.

Knowing you are on the right track is sometimes all it takes to keep going. While some of the projects are at this stage, many are up and running and independent of support. The input has led people to think beyond their original plans to new ideas and activities like more events, expanding to more age groups and making bigger applications for funding.

Part Three: The Totally Socially approach – what works

We have split the review findings on what people and groups said about their experience and what helped into five sections:

- Relationships
- Starting where people are
- Supporting adaptation
- Spreading the word and sharing ideas
- Practical support.

3.1 Relationships

The relationship with the Totally Socially workers is central to all of the support provided. Participants repeatedly referred to ‘trust’ and how that was built. Some important features of their approach as shared by participants included:

- Very available with an ‘open door’ approach that *‘finds people where they are’*
- Moving quickly to find a way to speed things up or unblock a problem
- *‘Showing us how to do things but not doing them for us’.*

These favoured ways of working have led to strong and trusting relationships – with Totally Socially workers, as well as with other groups and individuals: *‘We could have done it on our own but it would have taken forever, we trusted [our Totally Socially worker].’*

Often people talked about who they had met through the process and how as valuable it was to share successes as well as disappointments (when things didn’t quite work out).

‘If we didn’t have Totally Socially involved we wouldn’t have gone ahead – their encouragement, and the way they recognised ideas was very good’

Meeting the Totally Socially Worker for the first time was often a significant ‘lights on’ moment for participants. Their being relaxed about the whole process was described as *‘unusual’*. People weren’t put under pressure but encouraged to draw on their strengths (which often they didn’t know they had) and the workers’ ability to be nimble and reliable has meant a lot to people and has built strong and lasting relationships. This dual approach of drawing out what is already there in a person or group, and then complementing that with some quick wins to move things along has been very effective.

‘Totally Socially gave me back my independence I am a completely different person now’

3.2 Starting where people are

The support approach used by Totally Socially Workers is in itself unusual for participants. They were supported to hold pop-up meetings in a local café; contact the Council; apply for funding; find a space; or simply to speak to customers.; This varied approach has had a positive response and workers are always encouraging to speak with. One worker described the approach as: *‘it’s about helping people to help themselves – not doing it for them. So valuing their ideas with local people driving the agenda so the ideas are more likely to last’*.

From a worker’s perspective it is about watching people develop, providing a little support and then seeing people grow: *‘It’s like you plant an idea and sit back at watch it grow’*.

Words used to describe the worker’s approach were: *‘mentoring’*, *‘coproduction’*, *‘working alongside’*, *‘reassuring’* and *‘building confidence’*. There was a marked lack of hierarchy in the way workers thought of themselves, describing it as a peer relationship, with a two-way flow of knowledge:

‘I am just me – not an officer to tell them what to do – I listen and enthuse.’

‘All the way through [Totally Socially worker] has been there to help us. She’s not told us what to do, she’s helped us set up a system and if we have any questions, she’s at the end of the phone. Now we are entirely confident and she never lost her patience. Her interest is from the heart, she has vision’

‘I have a real sense of purpose now’

‘I’ve met so many people through this, friends I didn’t know before, like-minded people who are accepting and open minded’

3.3 Supporting adaptation

Fundamental to the support is **adaptation**. This runs through everything, workers gauge the type and level of support needed, tailoring it as needed and deciding whether to take a light-touch or hands-on approach. Three features of this support to adapt emerged through the review:

- 1) **There will be a way.** Totally Socially did not withdraw support for any of the initiatives covered in the review. Things sometimes stalled but usually this meant that the worker was exploring the best way of supporting a group – or on occasion that the project belonged under the wider CAVCA support umbrella.
- 2) **Keeping an eye on things.** As the group progresses the workers keep in touch, always talking, reflecting back to the participants. One participant commented: *‘Totally Socially can take a step back now, I can take the reins from here’*.

- 3) **Failing forward** – a phrase coined by a worker and picked up on by participants, a mantra for Totally Socially. Participants are always made to feel this is okay.

‘The support has been a gateway for me – they believed the ideas would work, I have the skill base to do it but not the business knowledge – having these people around with their honesty and ambition [is] very positive but not unshakeable – they ask is it realistic? They support you to fail positively through the process’.

‘It doesn’t feel like there are any boundaries even if there are. If we want to do something the workers say let’s find a way and do it and that creates a rippling effect – it creeps into all aspects of your life’.

One participant is now a company director and has made applications for funding – she described the support as short and sweet and to the point – ‘he taught me not to twaddle on about stuff and just get to the point and how to do that well’.

3.4 Spreading the word and sharing ideas

Support with publicity played a big part. The use of social media, a Facebook page or messenger service, and getting groups connected were all valued. Added to that there were advertising posters and a newspaper column for Totally Socially, all of which have noticeably increased numbers of those interested and taking part: ‘after the first couple coffee mornings there were double figures attending’.

‘[Totally Socially worker] helped us with an Open Day – I didn’t have a clue how to set up a group. He’s supported us throughout and put us in contact with other groups – helped us grow’

‘We have put leaflets in the GP surgery and asked them to refer – lots of people are on anti-depressants, they say coming to the group has improved their mental health – then they are put in touch with other groups. It’s the social aspect, getting out and meeting other people’

It all starts with a conversation. Totally Socially place themselves in community spaces, like a library in Norton, to offer support for ideas. They talk to people on the street, mix in with families outside schools and build support on a new build estates.

‘[Totally Socially worker] has done thorough research into how we can make the changes we so desperately need in the town – he has taken on thoughts and feelings on the topics discussed and always come back to the next meeting with more information and/or the steps we need to take to reach our goals’

‘I didn’t realise how much help they could give us and contacts to make a good event – they even helped me with a printing company for a poster to promote an event’

Many have been inspired by Whitby Krampus Run, which is a winter festival where the Krampus, a fierce horned creature accompanies Saint Nicholas on his rounds. This is a great example of creative groups and ideas coming together, upcycling and folklore, creativity and re-purposing – it’s all there. The group have found new ways of caring for the environment and taking things to another level, bigger and

better ways of being eco-friendly and putting skills and knowledge to a different use, with the local mantra 'to do better together'.

3.5 Practical support

'Initially Totally Socially were providing refreshments and now I have the confidence to approach local cafes directly and ask them to support us., and we now have 58 volunteers due to café and Facebook publicity'

The advice on **how to attract funding** is considered invaluable. This includes not just where and how to apply for funding but showing groups and individuals how to do this for themselves. Participants felt liberated and there are several examples of success, such as the Tesco Community Grant.

Refreshments are a fundamental aspect of all Totally Socially projects, providing an immediate welcome and a small reward for participants.

Locally embedded. Totally Socially workers are plugged in locally. They are recruited with local connections so from being out there in the community, listening, and through word of mouth they are able to make connections more quickly and easily. This requires a particular set of skills, especially at times when it feels hard to get things off the ground. Participants were motivated by the resilience, stamina and incredible positivity of the Totally Socially team.

The **availability of workers** is highly valued by participants. When people are encouraged to take on projects for the first time, it can mean them doing a lot of new things. There is a tendency for workers to be present all the time, as the Totally Socially team can answer many questions quickly and help people avoid unnecessary worry. Setting boundaries around this and getting support to do so is important for the team and sharing and learning about each other's approaches to this.

'If [Totally Socially worker] wasn't there, I'd have no one to back me up – the trustees won't always take ideas forward'

Workers saw participants develop their **self-esteem and confidence**; celebrated their achievements; and watched their abilities develop – enabling in many cases, people to move on and undertake new opportunities – in some cases even employment – as a result.

Developing **training** for participants is a more recently introduced element of the Totally Socially support and a new challenge for the team. The opportunity to expand how communities are able to learn through the programme will add a new dimension. Workers are embracing the task and acknowledge the value of past experience; and are keen to develop a whole team approach to the design and delivery of future training.

Action plans are initiated and supported so things don't drift and there is also support with **recruiting volunteers**; 'we now have a volunteer bank, offer training, getting people to come in and do a bit of reading, knit and natter, learning to crochet and connect between groups'.

'I've learnt a lot about the towns history through one of the other members, it's made me view the town in a different light as well as the people in it, I have been more willing and active in getting involved in other community projects,

such as volunteering to help with the Scarborough Fayre farming group and beach sweeps that are happening'

Part Four: Final reflections

There is inherent team development happening all the time through the fostering of ideas. This element has helped people come together, avoiding prejudice and with a developing commitment to community equality and diversity.

It is notable that the type of support provided through Totally Socially is very different to that provided by other agencies including the Council or infrastructure organisations. The way the team are able to work so independently and on their own initiative sets it apart. The scene for this is set by permissive leadership – the workers themselves are empowered to try things out, to trust their instincts and have a strong sense of self-belief. The support approach they go on to offer is very natural; they break things down into digestible learning, demystifying processes and using clear and plain language and this has contributed significantly to participants feeling supported and building confidence in their ability to get something going.

‘We are an anchor but don’t take any of the power or control’

‘Totally Socially are in the background, I know where they are if I need them’

Doing a lot in a small space of time is a recurrent theme. Ryedale Free Fridge opened just five months after their first meeting, and Totally Socially played an instrumental role in their promotion and subsequent success. Achieving quick wins has been a real driver behind some of the ideas. However, workers say it can feel like a long time and requires a lot of hard work and persistence just to ‘get going’. Certain places are very hard to engage with and there is important learning about the time it takes to do that. It’s clear that if a worker is local and connected, there’s benefit in being able to get things going quicker. Some networking has happened faster because of existing connections and it can be harder to join things up in a new area.

Sharing the learning of Totally Socially and where it can benefit or add value. In service delivery there is a tendency to be caught in the trap of telling people *how* to live their lives, without having real insight into their communities. In health for example, and now with Social Prescribing schemes spreading nationwide, it’s important not to under-estimate the value of community activity and its often unexpected outcomes. Learning to ask a different set of questions to find out what people need and being open to what you find, especially peer approaches and removing the stigma of illness throughout. Can this way of working be expanded to more groups and geography, building capacity and harnessing the learning from this programme?

There were lots of questions about knowing where Totally Socially fits in with the overall CAVCA work and how it all joins up. People asked about what membership of CAVCA means and how it fits with what they are doing. There is an appetite for a better understanding of how you transition from a community idea to a business,

so when does Totally Socially support stop and the other business or social enterprise support start? Can CAVCA (as whole) see you through your whole journey? There may be some merit in finding ways to make this ambition more visible, especially given the entrepreneurial spirit of Totally Socially people. The profile of the organisation has risen considerably through this adventure, and there is scope for more.

Going forward there were a few requests. Further support to be offered in the area of Filey (whilst) recognising the limited capacity to be everywhere, and more help with marketing ideas, a few struggled with this aspect. There was also an ask – is there more the programme and workers can do to connect the groups up? One contributor felt that they seem quite isolated from each other and in order to create more of a movement that there needed to be more ways to link things up. There was also support for the conferences held, with participants making supportive connections and feeling motivated to do more.

There is a strong enabling ethos embedded in Totally Socially that takes its lead from communities. Below are some of the ways that participants described the workers:

- *Approachable*
- *Friendly*
- *Empathetic*
- *Not official*
- *Normal*
- *Down to earth*
- *Listening ear*
- *Tower of information*

The Totally Socially programme is now in the second half of the Reaching Communities funding period. Much has begun and been learnt already and there is a unanimous feeling from staff and participants that; *'we are just getting started'*. The programme has opened eyes, ears and doors and there are already questions arising about how that can be shared in a way that makes sense to others, not as a 'model' but as an approach to doing things, an ethos even – for encouraging and empowering people in communities. A question to be explored through the next phase could be: What have we/are we learning about what it takes to work in this way, alongside people in communities? How can this approach be tried out or tested by other organisations and agencies even sectors? How can the Totally Socially team find ways to spread this way of doing things so others can appreciate the value of investing time in communities, putting them in control and able to realise their own potential?

While more ideas will continue to be initiated and supported as Totally Socially continues to reach more people and communities perhaps there is also a need to look at what is needed to really 'make things stick'. So that the learning can be embedded and the support sustained in this or a more developed form across CAVCA, making it even more central to the organisation's core purpose.

Appendix One: The last word

The last word

As part of the review exercise we asked individual groups what they would like to say as 'the last word' so a message about their experience to the Totally Socially team and the funder. People said:

On Totally Socially

- *'Trust in the Totally Socially brand – it's honest'*
- *'The programme is timebound and if it disappears – [Totally Socially Worker] has given us the confidence to carry it on (but it would be ace if they don't go anywhere)'*
- *'Wouldn't have got that support anywhere else, very positive, inspiring, easy to work with'*
- *'A big thank you'*
- *'Whoever came up with the concept it's absolutely wonderful – it's touched an awful lot of people and got them out of the situation they are in'*
- *'The support is there for any idea and they will let you know if it's got legs or not'*
- *'Help you to get there. I've not come across this before. In lots of years working with communities'*
- *'To the funder – they couldn't have given the money to anyone better, they are careful with it, properly listen and take on everything you say'*
- *'Totally Socially are amazing – always there no matter what the problem is – general all-round help. Posters, publicity, coming along and joining in – getting us info we never knew was there. Now we are a group running smoothly helping others with huge confidence – all due to them!'*
- *'It empowers people in the community – can't reach them if ideas don't come from them in the first place'*
- *'If you don't encourage – meet people where they are (geographically or at the stage they are at)'*
- *'Meet people where they are (geographically or at the stage they are at)'*
- *'What we have in place is robust and sustainable with vision to grow'*
- *'To the funder – thank you very much for the three years but we've only just got started – look at what we've done already – and imagine with another three!'*

On the Totally Socially Workers

- *'The skills of the workers ... she plants ideas, stretches us and gets us thinking long term'*
- *'The right people are needed – it takes a specific set of skills'*
- *'They are ALWAYS there'*
- *'Team – keep up the good work, and thank you – we wouldn't be where we are without you (or I would but I'd be struggling)'*
- *'There are the backbone'*

- *‘They get what it takes – an understanding’*
- *‘Meet you on your terms, don’t overwhelm, don’t steal your ideas (or take ownership)’*
- *‘They listen AND hear and you continue with your own journey’*

Appendix Two: Review topic guides

Topic guide for individuals and community groups

Understanding the context (how the story starts)

1. How people came to know about Totally Socially

How did you initially get involved? What was it that made you respond or decide to engage? What /who was your first point of contact?)

2. The ideas and community challenges that people became involved in (and why they did)

Where it started/or came from, what it was motivated by etc. Capturing the story so far and what it's been like/felt like, anything that's been surprising?

Working with Totally Socially and help for 'the idea'

3. The help available and what difference it made up to now

E.g. support to get the idea going, training and learning etc, any ongoing support you think you might need in the future? Has help given through Totally Socially been/felt different to other help you've had in the past – explain

4. What's been learnt along the way (e.g. learnt new skills, gained new knowledge)

Draw out specific new skills, things you can do that you couldn't before, how you will go on and use them, 'training by stealth'

Networks and connections

5. Who have you met/joined up with as a result of being involved?

- a) How has this helped/supported you or your organisation?
- b) The project/challenge?

(Specific examples, the effect, what it's felt like being connected)

Change, what that is starting to look like

6. What the Totally Socially experience has changed for individuals and organisations

- a) What is different now? (community life, being active, playing a part, making a difference etc.)
- b) Is this what you expected? (if not – explain)
- c) Any surprises?
- d) Anything you do now that you didn't before?

What's next?

7. What's next for you/the project? (future plans and making it stick) and what support do you need from here?

(The future, what your plans are what support you might still need, anything Totally Socially hasn't been able to help you with that you wish it had?)

8. Your reflections.

(Having the last word – what people said they would you like to say to the team/the funder/someone else? What they wanted to share about their experience?)

Topic guide for the Totally Socially team

Questions for Totally Socially Workers

1. What interested you most about joining the Totally Socially team?
2. The best/most difficult things about the job/role?
3. What did you expect/didn't expect or what surprised you?
4. What's stood out the most as the most significant change Totally Socially has brought about
5. Next thing on your to-do list, the future - a wish?
6. What would you say to the funder/others about how to engage with communities successfully?

Questions for Totally Socially Managers

1. The concept – where the idea came from
2. What interested you most about leading the Totally Socially team?
3. The best/more difficult things about the job/role?
4. What did you expect/didn't expect or what surprised you?
5. What's stood out the most as the most significant change Totally Socially has brought about (so far)?
6. Given what you have learnt already, what would you like to see more of?
7. Next thing on your to-do list, the future and how things shape up - a wish?
8. What would you say to the funder/others about how to engage with communities successfully?