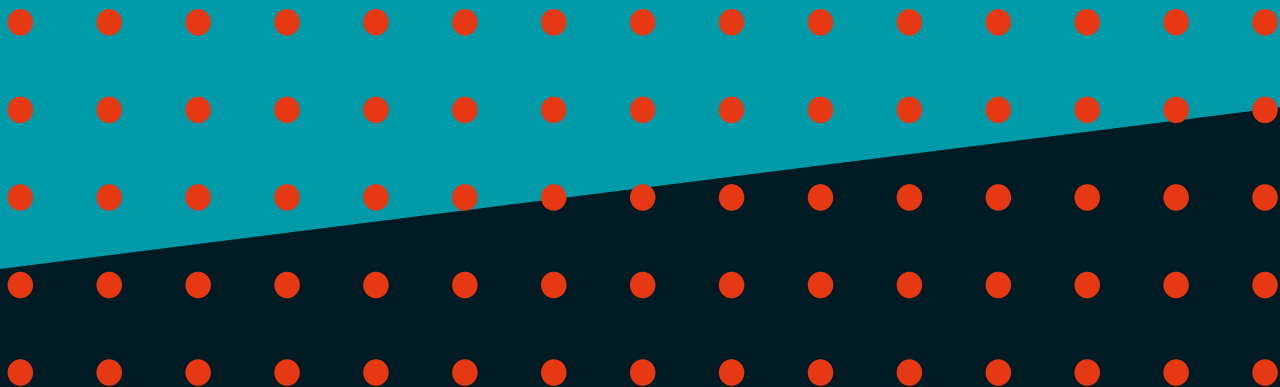


ORGANISING TOGETHER ACROSS DIFFERENCE:

Relational Experiments in
Community Organising



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Organising Together Across Difference Report reviews an 18-month research-action project undertaken by Citizens UK and Associate Professor Amanda Tattersall that developed and analysed strategies to strengthen community organising's ability to respond to widening social polarisation and division. The goal was to use organising practices to create new ways of forging relationships between groups that foster our ability to find common ground with people that are different to us.

The result was the development of the 'relational experiment.' Relational experiments, such as Weaving Trusts, are short local workshops that can be run by leaders and/or Organisers to create opportunities for people from different organisations to meet. They can be as small as a house meeting or as large as an assembly, and their focus is supporting individuals to have multiple one-to-one meetings with other people in their community. Through 37 interviews, participant observation and case studies from across six Citizens UK Chapters and Alliances, this report distils a series of best practices for organising relational experiments.

This project found that relational experiments support leadership development and deepen broad-based organising. For individuals, relational experiments can be a powerful entrée to public action and community organising, where individuals with no prior organising experience can have powerful conversations with people they would not normally meet. The experiments decentralised Citizens UK's broad-based network, allowing people to explore common ground beyond campaigns. Frequently, the consequence of these experiences was a heightened interest and greater confidence in working with people different from them, and a deeper appreciation of diversity in the place where they live.

When it came to organising, we found that relational experiments could be a powerful tactic as part of the '5 Steps to Social Change'. Relational experiments can help the formation of new broad-based organisations by providing opportunities for relating while groups build power. They can also help advance research-action by providing a space to test policy ideas and gather further community input.

The success of a relational experiment was dependent on context, and relational experiments thrived when they were undertaken alongside other community organising strategies. The evidence was that relational experiments enhanced organising. However, experiments on their own, without a broader plan to build community power, would likely not have the same impact.

We also found that culturally, a new relational tactic such as this needs time and support for it to take hold. While this project developed a series of resources to make it easy for leaders to undertake their own relational experiments, embedding this practice will require ongoing training, mentoring of leaders and Organisers, and a commitment to more deeply locating these relationship-based goals in Citizens UK's work.

In addition, longitudinal analysis that tests the lasting impact of relational experiments on individual leaders, Citizens UK Chapters and places would be useful future research as it would help define the specific contributions that an experiment like this can make to social connection in these polarised times.

HOW TO CITE

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ORGANISING
together
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Finally, I want to thank Professor Neil Coe and my colleagues at the School of Geosciences at the University of Sydney where I work as an urban geographer; and The National Lottery Community Fund for providing funding for such an important topic at such an important time.

Designed by Dawn Kelly.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Amanda Tattersall is an Associate Professor of Practice in urban geography in the Faculty of Science at the University of Sydney, Australia, and is a globally recognised social change researcher and community organiser. Amanda founded community organising in Australia by establishing the Sydney Alliance, Australia's largest civil society coalition of community organisers, unions and community organisations. She also co-founded GetUp Australia's largest digital campaign organisation.

She researches social change strategy and coordinates a series of community-led research projects that have translated community organising into a research method, including the 5 year Real Deal for Australia project on climate change. Her ChangeMakers Podcast (which has over 1.5 million downloads over 8 seasons) was created to share stories about people changing the world. Amanda is the author of *Power in Coalition* (Cornell), *People Power in Cities* (Oxford, forthcoming) and *Conscious Tribes* (Hardie Grant, forthcoming), all of which speak to the art of collaboration and social impact.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The author acknowledges the generations upon generations of Traditional Custodians that have held responsibilities for Country, "custodian-ing" it from one generation to the next. The author and the University of Sydney acknowledges the cultural protocols of protecting and holding knowledges that have sustained culture and Country for over 60 000 years. We acknowledge the Gadigal Elders, past and present, and the beautiful Gadi country where we work. We extend this acknowledgement to the Country, Elders and Ancient Ones of many other First Nations communities across Australia. We honour and respect the sovereignty of the many Nations where we live and work.

We are committed to working respectfully with First Nations communities across these beautiful lands, seas and skies. Sovereignty was never ceded. Always was, always will be, Aboriginal Land.

FOREWORD

Stockholm's underground stations are, in my humble opinion, home to the finest collection of public art in the world – each one decked out in a distinct artistic style and adorned with the quotes of great thinkers. And my favourite is in the suburb of Tensta – where each morning, as I emerged to train eager Swedes in 1-2-1s recently, I would be affirmed in my task by the words of the philosopher, Martin Buber: "All real living is meeting", emblazoned on the station wall.

Those of us who build a practice of 1-2-1 relational meetings into our personal and professional lives will feel the resonance of Buber's quote, and know how meaningful an experience it can be to forge a public relationship with someone different to us. It was certainly evident in the October 2023 'Weaving Trust' event in Southend – where over a thousand relational interactions took place between strangers. It was a powerful action to observe.

And yet, people in our communities outside of our broad-based organisations are increasingly struggling to relate across difference. Far from Buber's vision of recognising the sacred in encountering one another, increased societal polarisation and an emphasis on identity encourage us to huddle with those who are like us, and often to fear, exclude or avoid those who are different.

I saw this for myself in 2019, when a celebratory post-Accountability Assembly meal for leaders descended into discord when a young middle class Black student from London demanded of a middle-aged white man from a working class estate in a provincial city: "Until you recognise the pre-eminence of my oppression, we can't even have a conversation. I don't know you, and I have no idea of what you and your community have experienced, but I know it will be nothing compared to what I have experienced because of the colour of my skin." The tension dissipated when another young Black man from a local working class community suggested, in somewhat robust terms, that the student might want to spend some time getting to know people before making such judgements. Two hours before they'd been collaborating to win commitments from a politician on issues that mattered deeply to them all – the real Living Wage and improving renters' rights – but their commitment to social justice was not enough to bridge the identity divide. We are in desperate need of relational experiments that help us organise across difference – even inside our broad-based organisations!

As the political scientist, Danielle Allen, says in her book 'Talking to Strangers': "Trust grows only through experience; habits of citizenship are fashioned only through actual interaction." (Allen, 2004, p182-3). The good news, as Amanda Tattersall shows in this excellent report, is that community organising offers us both a framework and some practical tools to develop and spread such 'habits of citizenship'. The Weaving Trust model has been shown to be a highly effective 'relational experiment', capable of building public relationships across difference at community level, in a way that is accessible to a wide variety of people, consistent with community organising methods and processes, and has the potential to achieve scale. Already six Citizens UK Chapters have pioneered relational experiments – and we hope that others will follow and make Weaving Trusts a staple of their organising activity as they build power and act together to make change in their communities.

In addition to practical tools, Amanda offers us a new dialectic of 'Sameness' and 'Difference' to add to our theoretical armoury, to help us better understand what we have always understood implicitly, that "when we organise we explore our differences relationally, and our sameness in action."

And she offers us a powerful agitation – to lean in to our community organising method and traditions when navigating the tensions presented by polarisation and 'big difference'. To be more explicit about the role that community organising plays in enabling people and communities to navigate diversity and difference.

Perhaps a radical first step towards that would be for Citizens UK to take up Amanda's agitation in this report and add a fourth strategic aim. Our aims would then be to:

1. **Develop leaders;**
2. **Strengthen institutions;**
3. **Make change;**
4. **and relate across difference.**

But an even more meaningful step would be for readers of this report to commit to a habit of intentionally relating together across difference in their communities. We can adjust our plans and aims on paper, but as Buber and Allen remind us, it is the real encounters and the actual interactions that matter.

So, I commend this report to you, but I also encourage you to get out there and use community organising to become a weaver of trust in your neighbourhood.

Jonathan Cox OBE

Deputy Director, Citizens UK

INTRODUCTION

In the UK, and indeed more broadly across the world, there is a rise in political polarisation and division. We see it in tensions around race and ideology, and divisions across geographic and class lines. These tensions were intensified during the 2016 EU referendum where already present fault lines were calcified into two camps. But we also see it more generally in mainstream political culture, where the stranger is depicted as a source of fear.

A collective focus on difference is evident in various culture wars, where there is an increasing emphasis on how our different identities can set us apart. While our sense of who we are is shaped by big differences, like our gender, race, sexual identity, or ability; over-emphasising the impact of these differences can generate barriers for building solidarity between us.

Tensions around difference have been heightened this year. Global conflict has generated fear and mistrust at home, most notably since the terrorist attack in Israel and the ongoing war in Gaza. The upcoming general election has also heightened polarisation, where attempts by political parties to distinguish themselves have resulted in a public debate that has emphasised differences around race, migration, ideology and culture. These national and international narratives focused on division and suspicion impact us locally in our cities and communities, making it harder to forge connection and trust where we live.

As one Citizens UK Leader described it, “we are living in fractious and divided times. It means that we need to build deeper cross-community bonds – strengthening those connections in place” (P). This report takes up that challenge, documenting lessons learnt from an 18-month project exploring how using and innovating Citizens UK’s practice of community organising might begin to help the UK ameliorate these divisions and tensions by strengthening relationships across difference.

FOCUS OF THE PROJECT

The rise of ‘big difference’ politics is antithetical to the mission of broad-based community organising, which seeks to build relationships so we can act together for social justice and the common good. It was the intensification of difference-focused politics that prompted Citizens UK to explore if and how the community organising tradition could play a bigger role in addressing this challenge.

The intention of the project was to ‘stand on the shoulders’ of Citizens UK’s 30-year organising tradition, and community organising’s 80-year global tradition, while working to lift up and test new and emerging practices in its extensive network of Chapters. At the same time, the goal was to see and test new concepts and ways of teaching organising that could respond to the challenge of ‘big difference’ in public debate.

The result is two key contributions. Practically, this report documents the ‘relational experiment’, a collective activity that can occur anywhere from a house meeting to an assembly that focuses intensely on nurturing relationships between different people. Building on the organising practices of Citizens MK (Milton Keynes) and Community Organiser Tom Bulman’s pioneering work developing ‘Weaving Trusts’, the report explores the experience of more than 35 Leaders and Organisers from across six Chapters and Alliances, trialling and testing different relational experiments. Conceptually, the report introduces a new ‘dialectic’ of community organising to complement the pedagogy that Citizens UK uses to explore the tensions in public life called ‘Sameness and Difference.’ Sameness and difference helps us see how public life is simultaneously a place where our essential differences set us apart as leaders, while our sense of sameness with others creates our capacity to act powerfully together. When we organise, we explore our differences relationally, and our sameness in action.

For Citizens UK, this report is an affirmation and an agitation. The research recognises that community organising, and relational practices in particular, play a critical role in allowing people and communities to connect across difference. While further time and research will be necessary to make broader claims about whether relational experiments are able to improve our ability to sustain connection across fissures in our communities long term, this study draws attention to the impact of this practice on individuals, and how intensive collective relational work can create and strengthen the work of broad-based organisations in those areas’.

As an agitation, this project argues that Citizens UK could be more explicit about how important organising across difference is to its practice, by integrating it into its strategic aims as an organisation. To date, Citizens UK has three strategic aims:

1. Develop leaders
2. Strengthen institutions
3. Make change

This research suggests that a fourth goal could be useful: to relate across difference. Community organising has long built connections across difference with that goal implicit in its purpose. By explicitly naming ‘relating across difference’ as a goal of Citizens UK, this work could become even more conscious in Citizens UK’s day-to-day practice.

CHAPTER 1

FOUNDATIONS FOR ORGANISING TOGETHER ACROSS DIFFERENCE

WHAT IS COMMUNITY ORGANISING?

Community organising seeks to make change for the common good by building lasting sources of democratic community power. It builds power by organising and connecting people, and the institutions that they are part of, so they can identify the challenges they are experiencing in their lives and work out how they can do something about them together. Its greatest strengths are that it focuses on developing the skills and capacities of community leaders as agents of change, and it brings different kinds of people into relationship in the process of making change (Tattersall and Iveson, 2021). Broad-based community organising as practiced by Citizens UK, organises people across local geographies, like cities, regions and boroughs, by creating alliances that act for the common good (Wills, 2012). Citizens UK as a national network allows this organising-to-scale so that local communities can work with people from other places and engage with decision-makers across the country.

This organising tradition is more than 80 years old and was first developed by Saul Alinsky in Chicago. On the south-side of Chicago Alinsky built people-power organisations involving diverse faith groups and unions to respond to the deprivation of the 1930s Depression. Over decades, this tradition spread through the United States through the Industrial Areas Foundation, a network Alinsky created. In 1989, Quaker and social worker Neil Jameson spent time with that US network, then sought to translate those practices to the UK context. The result was Citizens UK, now the largest and strongest broad-based community organising network in the UK.

Community organising has a series of pre-existing strengths and practices that it brings to the question of organising together across difference, which also in practice has some limits.

• Organisations, leaders and members

Community organising practices the principle of subsidiarity, devolving decision-making to the most local level possible. This means that organising focuses on the development of local faith, community and education leaders as the drivers of any Citizens UK Chapter. In using the word 'leaders', I am not referring to positional leaders, rather any member of an institution that has a following and exhibits the qualities required to draw others into public action.

There is an iron rule in organising, 'don't do for someone something they can do for themselves,' which has the effect of putting local leaders in charge. Consequently, there is a focus on training and developing leaders, with extensive 6-day residential training, a culture of coaching and mentoring, and a commitment to hiring professional Organisers that can help leaders 'organise' themselves into teams to lead the work of their Chapters.

When it comes to organising across difference, all this means that individuals and groups across an alliance's diversity are frequently in practical relationship with one another 'doing the business' of running the alliance. Community organising, in this way, 'organises across difference' every day. However, while more active alliance leaders are frequently in diverse relationships, organisational members often have fewer of these experiences. While a broad range of organisational members attend mass public actions and assemblies, at those events organisations tend to sit with their own organisation and have limited interaction with the other groups. Community organising could decentralise and deepen the opportunities for organisational members to meet and exchange with one another.

• Relationships and relational meetings

Relational meetings (known as 1-2-1s) are a core practice of community organising, and Organisers focus on teaching community leaders the art of having a meeting whose purpose is to build a relationship rather than simply engage in polite conversation or a transaction. Most leaders are introduced to Citizens UK through relational meetings, where they are asked about their broader story and who they are as public people.

Relational meetings are a valuable practice for organising across difference as they offer a way to have a conversation that privileges listening and curiosity rather than a rush to action or an assumption of sameness. By creating space for seeing the many paths that all of us take in coming to public life, they are a means of treasuring difference. Equally, they can be experiences where people see similarities and find connection. In the world of social change, this slower and more intentional relationship-based practice is counter-cultural, and a natural asset for working across difference.

That said, how Organisers teach relational meetings can likely be strengthened. At times during the project, Organisers reflected that in relational meetings it can be easy to use 'sameness' as a way of establishing connection as opposed to just sitting with difference. That is, an Organiser or leader might race to elevate similar experiences in their past or present to create feelings of connection or trust instead of sitting patiently with the more uncomfortable, but equally important recognition of another person's difference.

• Power: community relationships for the long term

The phrase 'broad-based organising' speaks to the diverse range of organisations that come together in a community organising alliance. Organisers often use the phrase 'standing for the whole' to reflect how organising brings together the many different identities and constituencies that make up a city. Any individual or organisational relationship-building happens in the context of building a long-term, diverse, powerful alliance. Unlike one-off events, like a candlelit vigil, relationships in community organising are intended to be long-term. Consequently, there is an emphasis on the quality of relationships that are built, and relational power is not simply measured based on the number of connections someone has. Relationships in a broad-based alliance are not just about networking or having a coffee in passing, here relationships are built so that people and organisations can trust each other enough to come together to exercise public power together and negotiate with public decision-makers. It means that curiosity not only extends to one another's stories, but to understanding the kinds of interests that each of us have in public life.

At Citizens UK, Chapters act for the common good using the '5 Steps to Social Change'. This method allows for relationships and listening to underpin and precede work on issues and public negotiation. At every step, community organising seeks to build relationships as it builds power. But as is explored in the case studies, these different goals of relationship-building and change-making can be hard to hold together.



Indeed, in any campaign or exercise of public power it is likely that different forms of success will be subject to trade-offs, where for instance the goal of achieving social change is held in tension with the goal of building the capacity of our organisations or leaders (Tattersall, 2010). Community organising seeks to mitigate these trade-offs by intentionally 'building power before using power' through multi-year sponsoring drives, and it is also committed to a process of 'disorganising and reorganising' to revive relationships in broad-based organisations and focus on relationship-building separate to campaigns (Tattersall, 2024). But there is always the possibility that new relational practices can improve how community organising nurtures relationships across difference while it builds community power.

THE CHALLENGE OF 'BIG DIFFERENCE'

Community organising is an old practice. While Alinsky crafted many of its elements back in the 1930s and 1940s, much of what is associated with broad-based community organising is rooted in the national organising training that was developed by the Industrial Areas Foundation (Citizens UK's sister organisation in the USA) in the late 1960s and early 1970s. It is also true that there is nothing new about the need to work across difference. The kind of extreme left and right ideological tensions that dominated the political life of the 1930s, or the identity tensions that emerged through the civil rights movements and second wave feminism, were around during community organising's formation. Even so, our collective awareness of difference, in particular big differences based on identity, has developed since many of the core tenets of organising were formed.

Particularly in the last ten years there has been an increasing awareness of the role that 'big identities' can play in shaping how we relate to one another. This is not only expressed in a growing awareness of how people's race or gender can shape how we see others at an interpersonal level but it has led to the rise of concepts and practices that seek to elevate the impact of 'who we are' when we gather with others. The phrase 'privilege' has become commonly used in certain civic and activist circles as a way of identifying the kinds of advantages that come from class, background, identity or circumstance that some of us bring into the room when we gather (CCR, 2024). Many groups and spaces have developed a culture of being more explicit about language and naming mistakes that are seen as offensive to other identity groups, a practice known as 'calling out' (Ross, 2019). The consequence is twofold, while there is undoubtedly a greater awareness of identity and how it impacts our relationships, there is also a tendency to focus on what sets us apart when we relate to each other through the lens of 'big difference.'

While identity has gained greater attention in progressive public culture, community organising has not changed to meet it. For some in the broad-based organising tradition, there is no need, arguing that organising's relational and broad-based practices are sufficient. Yet there are others beyond the broad-based tradition that contend that a lack of engagement with systems like race and gender have limited how organising has responded to challenges like over-policing (McAlevey, 2016, Delgado, 1997). This project, however, offers a different path, arguing that the broad-based organising tradition offers a powerful foundation for responding to the need to build connection across difference, but that the tradition can be strengthened practically and conceptually.

AN ORGANISING RESPONSE?

This project has explored if and how community organising, and in particular the work of Citizens UK, can use new practices to strengthen how it organises together across difference. Over 18 months the project has tested several 'relational experiments' as potentially viable new innovations. The focus of the research was to document how these experiments worked, and to use qualitative tools to explore their impact on participants and the broader Citizens UK alliance. The aim was to identify the contribution that these experiments can make and the elements that are making them work. In doing so, the project would also test the usefulness of 'Sameness and Difference' as a way of talking about difference and identity.

This amounted to a first step in what would need to be a longer and broader study looking at community organising and organising across difference. Future research could track the impact of individual relational experiments long term, and the impact of repeated experiments over time. Over a longer time-frame further research could also investigate the lasting impact of this work on individuals, institutions, and broad-based organising. It could also explore how organising across difference changes attitudes to difference in a place. But research like this would require the collection of a larger evidence base over a longer period of time. It is worth noting that such research would not be easy, as it would involve identifying measures or indicators of trust and quality of connection in political life. It is what led to the scope of this initial investigation to be more modest. This report documents a project that sought to develop and explore a new organising practice, test that tool in various circumstances, and then evaluate the impact of that relational experiment by interviewing those who used it.

WEAVING TRUST

To experiment with how community organising ‘organises across difference’, Citizens UK did not need to look far. In Citizens MK a former teacher, now Community Organiser, Tom Bulman, had developed a relational experiment that he called a ‘Weaving Trust.’ As a secondary school teacher and later as an employability trainer, Tom had come to value teaching tools that privileged one-to-one models of interaction. He had learnt about the power of circles where people could speak and listen in pairs:

It’s a circle, a carousel of conversations that can be adapted or varied. But essentially, we’ve got one-to-ones. They’re short interactions. But they’ve proven to create a lot of energy and lift the whole atmosphere of the room. That’s one benefit. The other benefit is that participants actually get to know more about each other. They realize their common interests and potentially generate information and energy for campaigns (Tom Bulman).

Tom has found the approach useful for scaling connection across a community of people. In his employability training he had involved more than 30,000 students in these spaces. In 2015 as an Organiser with Citizens MK he wondered, what if we did this between organisations?

The phrase ‘Weaving Trust’ came out of this experience. When they ran one of these circles at a local primary school, they noticed the school’s motto was “we weave trust with one another.” They decided to name the Weaving Trust after that motto, and soon the name stuck. Even then, recognising the power of one-to-ones had an evidence base. “Warwick University had research on the effect of two people sitting face to face for just a few minutes, and showed that it made them feel more inclined to talk with one another afterwards” (Hodgkinson, 2016; Tom Bulman).

Citizens MK had eight years of practice using Weaving Trusts before the Organising Together Across Difference project, and their experience and insights proved valuable for helping to craft the elements of a relational experiment.

METHOD

The project used a community-led research approach, with researchers and community participants working in active partnership to identify research questions, collect and analyse data. Several community-researcher teams were established to undertake the work, including a coordinating team (consisting of Amanda Tattersall, Associate Professor University of Sydney, Jonathan Cox, Deputy Director Citizens UK and Jenny Filkins, Senior Project Manager Citizens UK). There was also a team of Community Organisers from across Citizens UK that met bi-monthly, and a Southend pilot team that met fortnightly from March-September 2023.

A series of forums and workshops with Leaders and Organisers were held to explore and deepen ideas. In March 2022, Organisers and Leaders were invited to present case studies where they had organised across difference and identify key lessons. Arising out of those presentations, it was decided that the project would focus on further developing and exploring a particular organising tool. While most pre-existing Citizens UK campaigns offered opportunities for people to work across difference, these opportunities tended to be available only to the most engaged leaders. Citizens UK Organisers were interested in exploring how experiences of relating across difference could be decentralised into member institutions and involve a larger range of leaders.

Consequently, building on the experience of Citizens MK and their Weaving Trusts (see Chapter 3) the proposal was to conceptualise, pilot and test ‘relational experiments’ as a new organising tool. The core research questions that drove the project sought to understand the core attributes of a ‘relational experiment’ and unpack the experience of a ‘relational experiment’ from an individual, institutional and alliance perspective to analyse what makes it successful.

The research project operated across two tracks. Firstly, a series of relational experiments were trialled in one place, Southend, between June and October 2023. Secondly, a team of Community Organisers across Citizens UK were invited to design and run relational experiments from October 2023 to April 2024. The Community Organisers began meeting in June and played a role in designing and defining the relational experiment, learning from the work of the Southend team ahead of running their own experiments.

In addition to participating in the Southend project and convening these teams, the project conducted 25 semi-structured hour-long interviews with key Organisers and Leaders across six Citizens UK Chapters. An additional 15 short-form interviews were conducted in Southend with Leaders who attended the October Assembly in 2023. Interviews were conducted under human ethics protocols from the University of Sydney and the interviewees have been kept anonymous unless permission has been given. In the text, direct quotes are marked with each interviewee distinguished by a letter (eg (A) or their (name)).

In addition, the project ran several workshops and trainings with Leaders and Senior Organisers to test and analyse the emerging findings. These included two Senior Guild meetings (June and October 2023), two Full Guild meetings (October 2023 and June 2024), four ‘Learning Thursday’ meetings, and a pilot of a new training session called ‘Sameness and Difference’ during Citizens UK’s 6-day National Training in June 2023.

The iterative style of the project also led to additional outputs, with the development of the Organising Across Difference Teachable tool (launched January 2024), and the drafting of a Slim Volume book on Sameness and Difference that is in the process of being co-produced with Senior Organisers.

WHAT IS A RELATIONAL EXPERIMENT?

Once it was decided that the focus was to design and test relational experiments, the Citizens UK participants involved in the project needed to define what that meant. Over three workshops, Community Organisers worked with Amanda to explore the essential features of a relational experiment in community organising. The discussion sought to capture not only the idea that a relational experiment created opportunities for relationships across difference but that the tool embodied key features of the organising craft, like how it built relationships in the context of building community power.

In terms of their **intentionality**, relational experiments involve preparation. They create public space where people can be themselves and they do not need to defend who they are. They are places that invite people to be vulnerable and disavow the idea of people solving each other’s problems. They follow the iron rule of organising and are run by leaders. Most importantly, relational experiments are defined by their variety – there is not one form.

In terms of their **relationality**, relational experiments create a space where people come away from a meeting feeling known and knowing others. They are a place where it is okay to disagree in public, and they are a training ground for that kind of public practice. They are a space for making connections between our public and private lives, where we can see the public dimensions of our private lives.

In terms of building **power**, relational experiments matter because they are connected to a wider network of relationships and a wider effort to build community power. Importantly relational experiments are designed to support and build local broad-based organising.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

This report documents the findings of our efforts to pilot, spread and test relational experiments in a variety of contexts. Chapter 2 explores our work piloting a series of relational experiments in Southend. Chapter 3 documents a range of case studies in other Citizens UK Chapters that used relational experiments to supplement the ‘5 Steps to Social Change’. Chapter 4 looks at the online materials created to support leaders to undertake relational experiments through the Teachable learning management system. Chapter 5 analyses the lessons from this work, and what relational experiments offer as organising tools that can support us to work across difference.

Relational experiments are intentional, relational and build power.

CHAPTER 2

TESTING HOW WE MIGHT ORGANISE TOGETHER ACROSS DIFFERENCE

Piloting relational experiments in Southend to build the foundations for a Citizens UK Alliance

On 15th of October 2021, Sir David Amess, a Conservative Member of Parliament representing Southend West, was meeting constituents at a local Methodist Church when he was suddenly approached by a man and fatally stabbed. The murder was committed by a man sympathetic to Islamic State who was later convicted of a terrorist act. In the days that followed, the Southend community tried to quickly come together, holding candlelit vigils. Days later, on 18th October, Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced that Southend would be given city status. In the years that followed other tributary moments were held including a 'city week' in February 2022 and a concert entitled 'He Built this City' in Amess's honour.

Yet for many residents of Southend, the violent incident continued to raise unresolved questions. Some feared that the incident would worsen community tension and unease. As one interviewee explained "the murder was by a person of colour so it had the potential to create polarisation as well"(B). As national media attention

shifted away from Southend, others drew a contrast between the response to the murder of David Amess and the murder of another Member of Parliament, Jo Cox:

▶ [After her murder] there was a real push towards standing together with people that are different to you ... there was the Jo Cox Foundation ... so much positive came from it. But when our MP was murdered we got city status ... but there didn't seem to be anything that was for the community, and that was trying to solve the problem of division and prejudice and suspicion of other people (B).

Jo Cox's legacy was defined by her conviction that "...we are far more united and have far more in common than that which divides us." In 2023, as Citizens UK began to consider where it might make sense to test and trial relational experiments to organise across difference, Southend offered a powerful context. As one Organiser described "weaving trust was a way of trying to respond" (A).

SOUTHEND IN CONTEXT

Southend-on-Sea is a "classic British seaside town" (B). Located in Essex on an estuary that faces towards the UK's south-east coast, in 2021 the Southend borough was home to about 250,000 people.

Its beachside character has long given rise to diversity, even if that has sometimes had a more mythical quality. As David Miliband once remarked, "England's coastline is a national treasure ... we are an island nation. The coast is our birthright and everyone should be able to enjoy it" (original in Bunting, 2023, 127-8). But locals have long been aware of it, "I think Southend has always had that diversity, you know, those extremes of artists and anarchists" (B).

Southend has been a site of significant change over the past 20 years. In that time the local diversity has become more international with "more racial diversity and religious diversity" (A). While Southend has always been home to people moving out of East London, London's housing prices have increasingly turned Southend, which is only 50 minutes by train from London, into a commuter town: "there's been a movement of people coming out of London because it's more affordable, although it's not that affordable, but it's more affordable than London" (A). Southend has also become more cosmopolitan, with the University of Essex attracting a large international student population. Combined, "it feels like Southend is urbanising" (B).

At the same time there has been a rising "disparity between rich and poor... so there's some really, really wealthy communities and then some really poor communities, and they sit next door to each other" (A). For younger workers, seasonal summer work is often temporary and exploitative. There are "increasing numbers of voluntary sector organisations, food banks and debt advice programmes" (A), and even then there is "a big lack of services, especially since Covid, especially around mental health" (D).

What local Leaders noticed was that these changes – rising diversity and inequality – had been accompanied by greater social dislocation. "There is not really much chance for people from those different communities to mix together. It does feel like everyone kind of keeps themselves to themselves" (A).

Rising division at times had a personal dimension. For one young resident this manifested during the Brexit referendum. She had gone away to study only to return when:

▶ Suddenly all the people I knew from my childhood, friends and family members, were talking about voting leave and I was struck how they had been absorbing such different materials to me... and I wanted to go "What are you doing?"... and suddenly it was making me uncomfortable that politics was infiltrating my personal life in a way that it hadn't

before in terms of putting me in opposition to family members and friends... it felt so tense, it just didn't feel like a healthy way of doing things putting everyone into two camps (A).

It was a realisation that political life had a personal dimension, and the force of public life was doing so by pushing people she cared about apart, based on ideology. She saw the city separate, "there's a lot of labeling people, name calling" (A). To her it reflected a wider separation and division that was growing in the city, as well as across the country.

MAKING A PLAN

It was into this mix that it was proposed that Southend become a site for exploring relational experiments. Conversations took place between Citizens UK Deputy Director Jonathan Cox, project lead Amanda Tattersall and Citizens Essex Senior Organiser Juliet Kilpin to begin planning a six-month pilot project.

The intention was to stage a variety of relational experiments in the context of building the foundations for a Citizens UK Alliance in Southend so it could join the broader Citizens Essex Chapter. The connection between these two goals was important. Unlike previous efforts to draw the community together, such as candlelit vigils or concerts, this programme of work was directly connected to a plan to build ongoing and sustained relationships that could change some of the everyday challenges that residents faced in the city. Instead of building relationships alone, the idea was to build relationships as a source of community power.

The goal would be to hold a large, symbolic relational experiment to coincide with the two-year anniversary of David Amess's murder. The hope was that it would allow the community to show that it was taking up the mantle of creating greater community connection that had so far failed to materialise.

Planning: To develop a plan in Southend, Juliet along with Grace Claydon, a local Associate Organiser, committed to regular planning meetings with Amanda and Jonathan. These were critical for aligning this new project to its purpose "those conversations were really important, because there was more than one desired outcome" (B). Regular meetings also helped create focus and momentum, especially when it came to introducing a new way of working amidst an already busy organising calendar.



A team: To create the stage for relational experimentation, the Organisers needed a team of local leaders. Juliet and Grace had personal relationships they could draw on, which they used to “bring together people from education, faith, community” (B). They combined a power analysis with their own connections to create a diverse turnout for a face-to-face meeting that coincided with Amanda’s visit.

In June 2023, 20 Leaders came together in a very traditional boardroom in South Essex College. The formality of the setting was juxtaposed to the meeting’s relational content, which was an invitation for these Leaders and their organisations to initiate a series of relational experiments across the city’s diversity, and in doing so explore whether they wanted to build a more permanent alliance together.

Call to action: To begin, the Organisers asked the attendees if an organisation was prepared to host the first relational experiment. Imam Iftikov from Southend Mosque volunteered immediately. In the informal conversations that took place at the close of the meeting he committed to bring “at least 20 people” to an inaugural Weaving Trust, meaning that the rest of the organisations needed to bring 20 people combined.

Preparation: Knowing that there would be several relational experiments, Juliet and Grace invested time in creating materials, structure and systems that could make it easy to “scale up” and host multiple events over the month (B). Many of the resources are now available in the Organising Across Difference Teachable resource (see Chapter 4), but they also included practical tools like Action Network registration systems, spreadsheets to monitor turnout and follow up, and activities that could be used to provide feedback.

WEAVING TRUST AT SOUTHEND MOSQUE

The first Weaving Trust was held on a summer evening on 10th July at Southend Mosque and scheduled to start at 7:45pm following pre-evening prayers. The Mosque extended an invitation to any interested Leader to come early and watch the prayers. From the outset it made the event a new experience for many:

“For a lot of people that I spoke to there, they had never been inside a mosque before. And they had certainly never witnessed prayers... it was a really powerful experience for people to be able to see that and see what happens, and just see what it looks like inside a mosque and realize it’s just a building where people come together and worship and pray (A).”

There was something powerful about the relational experiment being set inside a particular organisation rather than being in some more ‘neutral’ space. The physical process of going into a different place produced learning about difference. Even small liturgical practices carried symbolic meaning:

“Everyone was removing their shoes as they came into this space together, it kind of placed us all on this common ground like, we’re all here, and we’re all taking our shoes off to kind of respect this space and the ground that we’re on, even if we’re not all Muslim we’ve taken the first step in... showing our respect for each other (A).”

It was powerful for the first event to be in a mosque. It had the effect of “redressing a power imbalance, giving them more power and bringing white power down a little” (A). As Saul Alinsky (1971) notes in *Rules for Radicals* when discussing how to best plan a tactic, the question of organising inside of people’s experience is important for creating a sense of agency.

That said, as people arrived some were nervous. One man remarked that they “didn’t know what to expect”, another couple were overheard asking each other “what is this for?” One man “didn’t have the confidence to speak to someone he didn’t know.” Many came in and sat down “awkwardly not quite knowing what to do, but by the end everyone around the room was chatting away” (E).

To conduct the Weaving Trust the group was arranged in two circles, one inside the other. There were some questions to help structure the conversations, like “why they love Southend”, “which part happens to be their favourite part,” and “what would they change about Southend if they could?” (A). People would meet, then after an allotted time, one of the circles was asked to move, “like move two to the left, or outer circle move three to the right” (E).



The “conversations were just buzzing, it energized the room. Every time we would try to ring the bell to stop the conversations everyone would be annoyed that their conversation had to come to an end, and they’d be like, we don’t want to finish. We’re still talking. And it was really nice that they really got into the flow of conversation with each other” (A). The contrast between the beginning of the meeting and the substance of the meeting was notable:

“So there’s an element of excitement... Especially for those people that have not done it before, you see their nervousness fade. At first they think, what am I going to say? What am I going to talk about? And then, as they do it, and they see how easily they connect. How you are left wanting to connect more. (D)”

In framing and setting up the conversations, the Organisers wanted to provide some scaffolding to help people make space for difference. The event was in a mosque and there would be people attending from Southend Pride. The Organisers wanted to assist the group by offering them a language that could “create safe and healthy boundaries or equip people with a language to use when they didn’t feel comfortable or know how to respond” (A). So the Organisers set up a framing for this when they opened the Weaving Trust, as well as writing out a form of words on cards for people, that said:

“Thanks for sharing how you feel, can we speak about something else now’, or ‘That’s really interesting for you to share that about yourself. Thanks for trusting me with that’ (A).”

For the Organisers it was important to emphasise that listening across difference was not just about needing to make space for people, opinions or experiences that were not the same; but rather about exploring how we might have similarities and differences, and knowing how to honour both. Offering this language helped people trust in the process, “it helps you open up a bit more, and helps the conversations go a bit deeper” (A).

For those who attended, the experience was a catalyst for learning and development in a variety of ways. People connected with different parts of the city and with people that they had never met.

“How truly they enjoyed sitting down in the mosque, and how well received they were, and how without the Weaving Trust they would never have done it. They would have walked past the mosque every day, not really thinking about what’s happening inside. Now, there is a humanization. We had opportunities to speak with different people to ask them questions. And you know there was tea and biscuits and chocolate.”

“I’m no different from the regular person and often I feel a little bit disconnected from different communities in my, in my wider community... and

I have to drive past the mosque every day on my way to work, and suddenly, like it brings a smile to me when I do, because of that experience, whilst before, I never really thought twice about it. I think it just made me more connected with my community, and I think that’s powerful (D).”

At the end of the evening, all the participants were asked to provide feedback answering questions about the night by voting with pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. One of the questions was “did you have a conversation with someone you wouldn’t usually meet?” Everyone but one person said yes. The jigsaw was indeed an apt metaphor.



WEAVING TRUST WALKS AT TRUST LINKS

At the end of the first Weaving Trust the Southend team already had a commitment for a second event. Matt King, the CEO of Trust Links, a charity for mental health, well-being and the environment, intended to hold its own relational experiment, adapting the format to suit its constituents.

The plan was to hold the event outside in the Trust Links garden, on a late summer evening, using a circle of chairs and a picnic bench. Instead of keeping people seated, they were encouraged to stroll around the garden. The format gave people more choice as to who they spoke to and let people “be a little more intentional with who they picked” (C). These decisions around format were intentional and based on Trust Links wanting to give participants some more agency in the process.

“We work with people with mental health issues and they might not feel comfortable with some completely random person... I don’t think we should force people, particularly if we’ve got more vulnerable people (C).”

Similarly, for Trust Links, holding the event outdoors created a more relaxed atmosphere “if you hold 30 people in an enclosed space it can feel more intense” (C). The open space created its own opportunities for connection:

“People were walking amongst the trees, and they’d allowed us to like, go and pick the vegetables in the patch. And it became like an activity that we were doing together whilst we were talking... I talked with a young man from Afghanistan and he had very little English and if we had sat opposite each other it would have been difficult. But we were walking around the garden, and we were still talking but there would be things in the garden that would strike new conversations for us. So there was a whole patch of lavender and he picked it up and smelt it. And he was like this smells like my mom’s washing... And I was like, oh, it reminds me of my Nan’s garden, and we were able to share an experience over this smell from the lavender... it kind of brought up these new elements of conversation (A).

ONE THOUSAND ONE-TO-ONE CONVERSATIONS

After the board meeting in June, a series of smaller conversations between Organisers and Leaders started to paint a picture of what the big October event might look like. One idea emerged from a conversation between Juliet and local Baptist Leader Steve Tinning at the candlelit vigil a year after David Amess’s murder. Tinning, who had previously participated in Citizens UK training, remarked “what we really need is 1,000 one-to-ones.” A few days after the June meeting, Juliet, Grace and Amanda met with Steve and reminded him of the suggestion. The idea soon morphed into practicalities as they tried to calculate how many people and how many one-to-ones would be required to hold 1,000 at an event. Over coffee, on the back of a napkin they estimated that they needed around 200 people, and about six rounds of conversation. While they might not manage 1,000 separate meetings, they could aim to create 1,000 one-to-one experiences!

That same week in a meeting between the Citizens UK Organisers and South Essex Colleges Group – Southend City, the school’s leadership enthusiastically committed to hosting the October Weaving Trust. The College had its own interest in creating a space to build relationships across diversity. Covid had left children more isolated and wary. Instead of diversity being celebrated, it created boundaries that got in the way of connection. As principal Nicki Kelly described, “one of our strategic aims is to be the heart of community transformation, so we really want to get more involved with the community.” The work of creating connection across diversity was important, but it was easy for that work to

get lost in the day job of running a College. The Principal could see that a Weaving Trust event, and more broadly a relationship with an emerging Southend alliance, could offer a way to anchor the College’s commitment to diversity and connection. For the Organisers, the strong commitment from the College was vital:

“There was a lot of organising with the college so that they knew exactly what to expect. The logistics, the whole thing. You can’t imagine what you can’t see. We really had to paint a picture of what was going to happen so that the college campus team could really get behind it. Which they did. They were totally up for it. They were really supportive. The principal of the college was delighted to be involved (B).

As hosts, the College committed to bringing 100 students.

In September as summer ended and people returned to work, the Organisers and key Leaders began to work on turnout and designing the October event. What made this Weaving Trust distinct was that it was building on the practices of community organising. This was not designed as a one-off event, but as a step in a longer practice of building community power for the common good in Southend. This affected how people were invited to the event and who was involved in planning it.

There are many ways to get 200 people in a room. Conventional mobilising strategies include using social media or mass emails, hoping that people will come. For Organisers, the act of inviting people to an event is relational – where people are approached by people they know, via institutions that they trust. There is a virtuous cycle to this kind of approach. Organisations can make commitments and be held accountable to bring a certain number of people, which can not only make a large number more manageable but it can help ensure diversity.

“There was also a little bit of last minute, ‘oh, it’d be really good to address the balance here, so can we get some other people in.’ It was quite intentional. It’s like, ‘wait a minute, we didn’t have many Anglicans registered.’ So there were some last minute calls saying can you come down for this, you know, can you bring a couple of people? (B)

Organisers do not plan events ‘for’ people but with people, and to make an event like this happen, organisers would typically seek to build a team of local leaders to make decisions and share in doing the work. However, this was a challenge as there was not an already existing local team full of trained leaders that could share the work. Despite their efforts to convene a local organising team, the Organisers found themselves having to do a lot of the early event planning. A wider array of Leaders were asked to play roles on the day, including a mix of newer and more experienced Leaders. Steve Tinning teamed up with

Ana Isidoro, an emerging Leader from Trust Links as the co-chairs. Along with the Organisers they helped write a running sheet with a script outlining what they would say and came to a rehearsal in advance. Local organisational Leaders from Southend City College and Trust Links were asked to speak, and the Organisers planned to step in and teach relational meetings and do a fishbowl demonstration of a relational meeting. Students were also asked to step up to help with time keeping.

But even with the best laid plans, you can’t control the complexity of life. Less than two weeks before the Weaving Trust event, on October 7th, there was an unprecedented terrorist attack in Israel by Hamas. Before that happened, “we were anticipating good turnout from the Muslim community, and we had also built relationships with the Jewish Hasidic community in Southend, and they really wanted to bring a bunch of people which was going to be really exciting. It would have been the first event that they had come to” (B). But understandably, both of these communities “felt really, really vulnerable” (B). Practically there were also security considerations, but the fact that people had been invited through organisations and not via public broadcast made it easier. Moreover, it was trusting relationships that meant that this global conflict did not break these local relationships:

“We had one lady from a Hasidic Jewish community coming, but she was feeling really nervous about coming because of all of the media attention around what was happening in the Middle East. But she did come, and you know she was really brave to come, and we really value that she trusted us enough to come. Then there were some ladies from the mosque who were there, and they stood in a group with the other faith communities. They were chatting... I don’t know what they were talking about. But I could see them. They were smiling, they were laughing. They were just chatting away with each other (A).

The Weaving Trust took place on the afternoon of 16th October 2023, in a cavernous atrium at the centre of Southend City College. The ceiling was three stories tall and there was a somewhat unusual, enormous red dome that rose up behind the speakers. It was dramatic and slightly overwhelming at the same time. Steve and Ana opened the event, with Steve, who had built a friendly civic relationship with David Amess, speaking about how this event and the work of Citizens UK more broadly represented the community seeking to find connection instead of polarisation by organising together across difference.

The room was diverse. That was made clear in a physical roll call, where different groups moved to different parts of the room, “we asked them to stand in groups like education groups, faith groups and community groups. And education was obviously the biggest because all the college students were there. But there was a really good split between faith and community” (B). The diversity was apparent beyond organisation or identity too, there were “people with physical disabilities” (C). The age range was really diverse.

The large number of students was both a strength and a challenge. Some of the students weren’t sure why they were there, and at first many of them sat at the back of the room slightly aloof. For the first round of one-to-ones many did not participate. To change this dynamic there needed to be a physical disruption, and the co-chairs invited all the ‘non-students’ to find a student to meet for the second round. The dynamic changed. Not every student engaged, but all of a sudden the energy in the room shifted. It was a reminder of the importance of the facilitators and the need for them to have the wherewithal to be responsive to the dynamics in front of them.

The event had a powerful impact on participants. For one church member, she was there because “I create projects to bring people together and this fits with that.” For an international student from Southend City College, attending was about getting better connected, “I get bored at home, staying alone I wanted to get out and meet new people.” For a woman from the mosque, she wanted to let others understand her faith, “I want them to know who we are, I cover myself and I want to meet people and explain so they understand who I am.” The result, for Pauline, a community Leader in Southend, “it was immense, absolutely immense, such a buzz... at the beginning people were a little bit unsure, uncertain, but then we got talking and it bridged – perhaps what was like an unseen barrier or divide – and it was so powerful” (Z).

As powerful as this experience was, its greatest contribution was that it was not one-off. In the months that followed this event, the relationships and trust that were created have become the foundations for building an alliance in Southend. At the same time, for the Organisers, having done these relational experiments in the process of building an alliance made that alliance easier to build. For one of the Organisers “it’s allowed people to be part of something before they become members,” which has enabled people to see and touch what organising can be as they build a sustainable alliance.

For participants the relational experiments were also a potent response to community division. “It’s responding to violence in a really proactive way, going upstream and tackling this at the root” (A). Building this web of relationships was seen as a way of inoculating against future division by “being intentional about meeting people who are different to us, respecting our differences and recognising our similarities and deciding to stand with each other on issues that matter because we recognise that you are part of this community too” (B).



CHAPTER 3

INSIGHTS FROM WEAVING TRUSTS AROUND THE COUNTRY



location of Weaving Trusts

MILTON KEYNES

A decade of Weaving Trusts

5 STEPS TO SOCIAL CHANGE: Steps 1 to 4

GOAL: Using Weaving Trusts to build connections between institutions and leaders even without Organisers

KEY INSIGHT: The versatility of the Weaving Trust tool



Milton Keynes is a 'new town' community created in 1974 about 50 miles north-west of London. The city was planned with the goal of creating urban solutions that could avoid some of the challenges of congestion that plague places like London. For residents today, there is a mocking self-awareness that Milton Keynes is all about "roundabouts and concrete cows" (the cows being an infamous sculpture in the city). The lived experience of Milton Keynes, despite the idealism of its planners, has made it a difficult place to organise, "it's so geographically distributed and it doesn't have a functioning [public] transport system" it also "doesn't have a set of established soft money funding institutions that can be easily tapped into" (P).

As a consequence, Citizens UK has had some challenges organising Milton Keynes. While there has been a passionate commitment by residents, the city has struggled to find sufficient resources to fund full-time local organisers. For many years Milton Keynes Citizens (Citizens MK) operated with only a part-time organiser. But as discussed in Chapter One, Milton Keynes is also where the Weaving Trust as a relational experiment was born, and where the concept has been used the longest. Notably the fact that Weaving Trusts have thrived as a supplementary organising tool for connecting communities, even with limited paid organising staff,

is perhaps an indication of how readily they can be used by institutional leaders to create relationships across diversity. In interviews with Leaders, we identified several significant Weaving Trust stories.

In 2019, a few years after the EU referendum, Citizens MK organised a Weaving Trust for **Pro-Brexit** and **Remain** voters. "We brought them together and at a national level it was pretty feisty at the time, it was potentially difficult" (Q). The purpose of the event was to create a space for people to listen to each other. People registered for the event by inviting someone they knew who voted differently at the referendum. At one level, the space had a self-selecting quality "obviously the people who came and took part were already quite committed to understanding the other side" (Q). People registered as pairs, committing to bring a person that voted differently to them. At the event remain voters were in one circle and leave voters were in another, allowing the voters to face each other. People then rotated having a series of conversations about their current thoughts and feelings about living in Milton Keynes. Through the rounds of structured conversations, "what ended up happening was that people were more aware afterwards of each other's interests, and more disposed to listen to those interests because they can see each other as human beings" (Q). The space helped create empathy in a national debate that had little.



What Leaders in Milton Keynes came to realise is that for individuals, the Weaving Trust “gives you a stepping stone, it’s a safe way of engaging people. If you are a church and a lot of your people have vaguely heard about Citizens [UK] but they are not actually involved, then a Weaving Trust can be a safe and simple way of beginning to engage” (P). A decade of experience has made clear that Weaving Trusts are a flexible form of relational experiment.

▶▶ I don’t think there’s one way of doing a Weaving Trust, it’s a recipe that people can make their own in slightly different ways in different contexts for different purposes (P).

They can be flexible. They can broker relationships between organisations in small contexts, between just a couple of groups, or in a bigger context, like when 50 organisations celebrated 50 years of Milton Keynes. The focus can change through the questions you use, “there are the classic ones of what would make things better around here, but we had one that focused on equality” (P).

The intentionality of the Weaving Trust is, in part, activated by the questions that are presented by the facilitator to structure discussion.

▶▶ It is no different from having a break during a meeting and having a cup of tea and a chat with someone you don’t know... except when you are given a particular focus question, even if you know someone, the conversations will be different because I’ve not sat down and talked with you about that before (P).

Weaving Trusts, through guided questions and open space for discussion, allow people to find a focus for a conversation with someone new. They give people the opportunity “to hear where people are coming from, which is key” (P).

Milton Keynes has also experimented with inviting people to share their reflections after a meeting. Local Leader Alan Bainbridge developed a QR code that can direct you to a website where you can “put in phrases, points and observations” that arose out of the discussion (P). It allows for a stream of reflections to be projected on a screen so the whole room can “in an instant” take in some of what has been collectively experienced.

Citizens MK shows how relational experiments can, long term, be integrated into a place-based community organising plan, even with limited staff organiser support. Citizens MK’s experience also makes clear how versatile and creatively useful the practice can be – able to be used to explore common ground across very different constituencies, or to find connection in a place even when the national political context is polarised. For Citizens MK the key was the clarity of the question, the timing of the process and the role of the facilitator. Ultimately, Milton Keynes makes clear that the tool has extreme versatility, as long as it is deployed with a focus on intentionality, relationality and community power.

In 2016, Citizens MK held a Weaving Trust in **Woodhill Prison**. This unusual opportunity came through faith connections from Citizens MK’s partners. The event was open to prison inmates who wanted to join, who “would have heard about it through the chaplaincy service, plus some chaplains and a prison officer or two” (P). A dozen members from Citizens MK went to the prison. For those from Milton Keynes the experience was transformational, “it was the most intense Weaving Trust that I have ever been in and I don’t use this word lightly.... I came out saying something holy happened” (P).

For Citizens MK, the Weaving Trust tool has become integrated into how they organise, and as a consequence they hold these events all the time. As one Leader remarked off-handed when interviewed, “oh yes, I was at one yesterday” (P). In that case, the context was that the Chapter had several new members join “and we were looking for ways to integrate them into the alliance, so we said we’ll have a series of Weaving Trusts” (P). The event itself only had 14 people, the timing had been difficult as it was the same week as a local accountability assembly, but it happened anyway and was used to generate a more relational space to connect members from new Citizens UK organisations like the YMCA to more established groups like the Quakers.

CAMBRIDGE

Building bridges across divides in a city of extremes

5 STEPS TO SOCIAL CHANGE: Step 1

GOAL: Using Weaving Trusts to help build a Citizens Chapter

WHAT IS THIS ABOUT: Dedicated Weaving Trust events hosted by different institutions

KEY INSIGHT: Weaving Trusts ‘show’ the power of organising across difference



Cambridge is a non-metropolitan city of approximately 150,000 people, “dominated by one of the leading universities in the world” (Tim Hall, Academic in Residence). But even though it hosts an international organisation it also has a country-town feel. In the city many residents experience a “town and gown divide,” seeing the city as a “place of extremes” across wealth and deprivation (L). These stark contrasts can lead to distrust, with some people feeling that Cambridge isn’t their city. With the University taking up half of the city centre, it can create a “leafy bubble” that can leave those separate from it feeling like they “sit on the edge” (J, O).

As of late 2023 a group of organisations coordinated by Lead Organiser Tim Hall, were almost two years into a four-year process to try and found a Cambridge Chapter of Citizens UK. The motivation to create a Chapter came in part from the divisions cast in the local context. As one Leader expressed it, the hope was that Citizens UK could be a “vehicle that is going to welcome everybody as equals” (L), and “break down some barriers perceived or real” (Charlotte Smith, Leader).

The sponsoring committee decided to use the practice of relational experiments as an open-ended opportunity to see what might come from hosting events that intentionally experimented with fostering relationships. The team resisted narrowing the relational experiments to a defined or fixed purpose. Even so, there was a practical utility to running Weaving Trust events while they tried to form a Chapter:

▶▶ If you’re building a Chapter you want to act but you can’t act until you’ve got power... so I’ve got Leaders sitting around the table tapping their fingers saying well we’ve got to do something. So here is a way of acting (J).

At a pre-founding Assembly in November 2023, the sponsoring committee invited their members and other organisations in Cambridge that were interested in exploring organising, to join a series of relational experiments in 2024. The goal was to “increase interest in organising across Cambridge, encourage new members and deepen the interest of those already interested” (Tim Hall).

To prepare for the year of Weaving Trusts, the Cambridge team met with Citizens Essex Organisers to get ideas for agendas and formats based on their experience in Southend. They also used online resources such as Citizens UK 'Learning Thursday' sessions about the Organising Across Difference project and the Teachable tools. Instead of running a training for leaders in how to run a Weaving Trust, they recognised that "it was much easier to show people what it was through doing it" (Julia Carr, Leader). To organise the first event their intention was to grow their local network relationally, with publicity for the events generated by word of mouth. They planned an agenda that would begin with a short teaching about one-to-one meetings and the importance of self-interest. The team created a handout that featured a drawing of "what looked like a gingerbread man" – the community organising 'stickman' – that identified different aspects of people's self-interest (see image below) (Charlotte Smith). The sheet was used as a guide for the conversations, with the host inviting people to focus on different aspects of self-interest across the six different conversations they had over the course of the night.

Key relationships – which people shaped me?

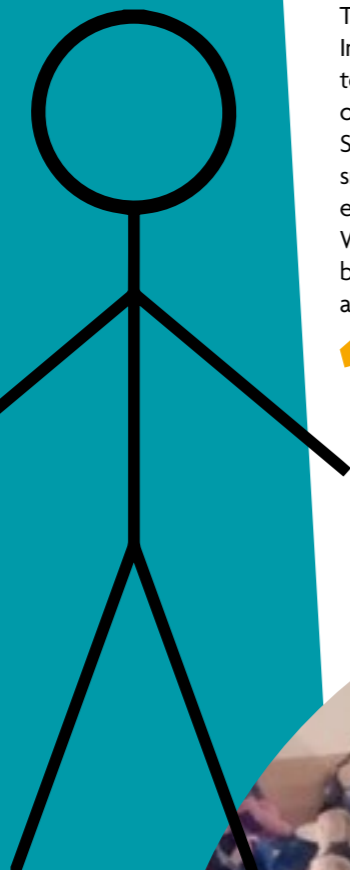
Key experiences – what are the defining moments?

Key institutions

Ambitions – what am I striving for?

Self-interest – family, job, vocation, learning, legacy. What makes you angry. Why?

Time, energy, and money – how do I spend them?



The first Weaving Trust event held in January 2024 involved 40 people at Anglia Ruskin University, on "the coldest day of the year" (Tim Hall). It was a two-hour event that began with a teaching about one-to-one meetings. The room was set up in two circles so people could rotate like a carousel. They began with two sets of six minute conversations, then after a break they had four more six minute conversations. What was evident was the powerful way in which the format intentionally created an environment for connection:

❏ I went up onto the balcony to take some photos of a couple of rounds of the talking and I looked down over and they were still quite close together [an elderly couple who were initially too afraid to speak to others separately], but they were standing back to back and talking to different people. As I looked around every person there was talking to somebody that presumably they didn't know before, with the biggest smile on their faces. And it just really hit me at how powerful this Weaving Trust thing was. We'd gone from people, two in particular who were really, really wary, to actually having conversations with people, to where they were smiling and obviously feeling at ease. It was... a really powerful moment (Julia Carr).

The second Weaving Trust was hosted by the Woolf Institute in March, an interfaith institute with strong links to Cambridge University. They had offered to host based on their positive experience at the first event, echoing the Southend experience where organisational involvement snowballed based on the experience of a relational experiment. There were several strengths in how the Woolf Institute hosted the event. Not only was the venue beautiful, and they provided logistics like refreshments, but as one Leader noted:

❏ There's got to be somebody at the door who's literally saying, Oh, I'm so glad you're here. Where are you from? What's your name? Do you know anybody here? Would you like to sit with them? Do you want to sit by yourself? The refreshments are over there (Rae Snape, Leader).



Like the first Weaving Trust, many people arrived not knowing what to expect. For some the lack of a clear agenda created "some trepidation." One Leader said that "not knowing the agenda makes me nervous" (M). But others thought that the set-up and training provided sufficient structure to help the group navigate a meaningful conversation that "didn't go down the rabbit hole of someone else's job" but instead "produced really useful conversation that helped them understand the community quite a lot better" (Julia Carr). Several participants commented that they saw the greatest value coming from a focus on relationships rather than a more instrumental purpose:

❏ It was about being present in the moment and building those relationships and not necessarily feeling like you have got to do anything with it. But that's, I think, a hard ask for people because there's always something transactional going on everywhere (Julia Carr).

Both the Weaving Trust events were intentionally created as pathways for the leadership development of the participants. Tim, as the Organiser, built evaluation into each Weaving Trust action which meant that later events were able to build on Leaders' insights drawn from earlier events. This process not only strengthened Cambridge's relational practice, but had the combined effect of increasing the Leaders' ownership over the activities of the emerging Citizens UK Alliance. Evaluation led the group to extend some of the conversations to eight minutes, as several Leaders thought they needed a little more time. The focus on leadership development also meant that more and more Leaders became involved in co-chairing and delivering the training at later Weaving Trusts, allowing them to scale leader and organisational involvement in the work over time. The process of expanding ownership, at times, meant that some Leaders were not completely sure of their role, one wondered "who was the coordinator", but it was widely recognised that the "citizens need to lead Citizens [UK]" and that's what the Weaving Trust events were all about (Rae Snape).

Participants also agreed that the Weaving Trust tool was useful at creating new connections. One noted, "what was coming across was the richness of the engagement, the fact was it was only six minutes in length and we are sitting down with someone we've never met before and suddenly we are talking about one limb of the stick person and really engaging with each other" (Tim Hall).



Not only that, Weaving Trusts offered a powerful way to introduce a large number of people to relational meetings. Many participants had not yet had the opportunity to do Citizens UK training, but came to the Weaving Trust as their entrée into organising. "I think it's the start of a journey, certainly for me as an individual but I think also as an organisation" (Julia Carr). For one Leader, combining on-the-ground Weaving Trust opportunities with the online Teachable training tool made it easy to explore how she might translate the practice and use it in her own organisation (Julia Carr).

The experience of Cambridge, like in Southend, shows that Weaving Trusts can be helpful when founding a Citizens UK Chapter or Alliance. While the process is still unfolding, and we are yet to see if Weaving Trusts lead to more organisations joining the Alliance or if they create lasting feelings of connection amongst the broad-based network or across the city, there are positive signs. Weaving Trusts were helpful at "showing" what community organising was all about: "the Weaving Trust event gives a better understanding of what we're trying to do and how" (Julia Carr). Moreover, as a prefigurative experiment it practically modelled the broader vision of Citizens UK building connection and relationships across difference – demonstrating that creating a common good in politics was possible.

BRIGHTON

Weaving Trusts as a new way to consult and create community-led policy solutions

5 STEPS TO SOCIAL CHANGE: Steps 3 to 4

GOAL: Weaving Trust as a 'structure test' for policy ideas at an Accountability Assembly

WHERE HELD: 300 person Assembly

FOCUS: Housing policy



Brighton & Hove is a seaside region in East Sussex in the south-east of the UK. The city has about 300,000 residents (as of 2021). Brighton has a reputation for being progressive, the UK's 'unofficial gay capital' with 10% of the population identifying as LGBTQIA+, and a relatively young population. Brighton's political party representatives are in keeping with this narrative, with the region represented by Labour and Green councillors and the country's only Green Party Member of Parliament. But despite the retort that "Brighton is so nice", it has some serious challenges (F). There is significant inequality and major housing issues, including having the [third highest rate of homelessness in England](#). Culturally the city "is incredibly white", with 85% of residents identifying as white in the [2021 census](#) (F).

Brighton & Hove Citizens (BHC) is one of Citizen UK's newest Chapters, founded in 2018 originally with eight and now 22 member institutions from across faiths, schools and community associations. While it has been successful in running an agenda on mental health, living wages and housing, it has been institutionally "weak", with its organisational goal to "recruit more members to strengthen its base" and "deepen our work in the faith institutions" (Seb Chapleau, Lead Organiser).

Initially, BHC intended to use the Weaving Trust tool as part of its plan to deepen the engagement of faith institutions by using it "to build relationships internally and between members" (Seb Chapleau). But over the course of the year there was a shift in focus to explore how they could use a relational experiment to build relationships and generate greater participation in their housing work. The idea was "to use the process to get people talking about not just their differences in terms of backgrounds and institutions, but their commonalities in terms of their aspirations and hopes for housing" (Seb Chapleau).

BHC was trying to adapt a housing intervention that Citizens UK had experimented with in London, which was to develop a set of Good Development Standards led by the community and finalised through a collaboration with Brighton & Hove City Council. These 'Good Development Standards' aimed to put responsibilities on developers when it came to new housing projects. For months they had been running small house meetings exploring what residents would like developers to be responsible for – in particular considering if they should be required to create spaces for people to meet and gather when building large tower blocks.



The idea was to use the Weaving Trust method of one-to-one conversations in the context of an Accountability Assembly of 300 people. In practice what that meant was that in the middle part of the assembly, as the agenda turned to the political issues of the night, Leaders from the BHC housing team outlined what they had developed so far, then explained that they wanted these ideas to be tested and further developed by everyone in the room. They asked for people to turn to someone they did not know in the room (or huddle in a small group) and have a seven minute conversation to "talk about this draft plan, about your experience and the kind of ideas we are exploring about having housing developments that strengthen rather than weaken community cohesion" (Seb Chapleau). People were instructed to have a conversation and take some notes, responding to three questions:

1. What would a good housing development include to tackle issues of affordability?
2. What would a good housing development include to help reduce social isolation and strengthen communities?
3. What would a good housing development include to help those key workers our city needs?

Apart from producing "lots of bits of paper with people's notes on them", in those ten minutes the process created space for new ideas and an "opportunity for people to be involved in creating this charter." One of the powerful outcomes was that when people started sharing "they reported finding similar ideas or even the same ideas even

though they were coming from people from different backgrounds" (F). Leaders remarked on it as a "positive experience", noting that while they had previously done short one-to-one conversations at assemblies, that this was different to anything they had done before because it had a focus around an issue. The focus on the issue created a powerful dynamic of sameness and difference by anchoring it around people's similar experience in the city and not people's identity.

In the language of Jane McAlevey, one of the Organisers called this a kind of 'structure test' (McAlevey, 2016). The concept of a 'structure test' is a process where a team "takes a moment to 'test the water' and see if we are on the right track, get some feedback from the larger room, is this something that we as an alliance should be focusing on, get that democratic feedback from the room" (Seb Chapleau). Connecting back to the larger membership base is important, "sometimes we are in a bubble where we think we know, the campaign team is getting on with it and they're not really testing the idea, they're not getting that feedback loop from the wider membership" (Seb Chapleau).

The BHC experience shows how versatile relational experiments can be. They not only allow people to explore their differences but provide opportunities for people to make connections across sameness. Used in this way, the relational experiment is also able to provide space for mass participation in the development of policy, enabling a more open-ended process of engagement with communities that goes beyond industry or government consultation.

WEST YORKSHIRE

Leeds Citizens & Bradford Citizens

Old and new relational experiments to strengthen relationships while building power

5 STEPS TO SOCIAL CHANGE:

Step 2

WHO: Schools, and whole Chapter

WHAT: Adapting Delegates Assembly with Weaving Trust activities

LESSON: What we learn when a plan for a Weaving Trust does not come to fruition



It is worth learning from the experience of a Weaving Trust not happening. These activities do take time and resources, and Organisers and Leaders already have extensive demands on their time. Here, the Organiser identified that these activities are easiest when they integrate into the already happening activities in a Chapter, and are more demanding (and therefore more difficult) if they are additional to core organising tasks. Even so, while the dedicated school activity needed more time to emerge, Bradford school leaders did participate in broader relational experiments at Citizens Together and the Convention of the North.

The idea of **Citizens Together** goes back to 2015. Lead Organiser Graham Brownlee explained how it emerged out of leaders' experiences of wanting a public assembly that was different. "We love doing assemblies... but we feel we're being scripted and it's silencing our voice" (H). In 2024, the Citizens Together event "picked up on something we had done before" and was run with an even stronger focus on relational experimentation" (H). Citizens Together was a delegates assembly held a month before accountability assemblies, where time was built into the agenda for short one-to-one and group conversations so people could build relationships and connect across diversity. Citizens Together created a listening space that some leaders initially described as "chaotic." To manage that intensity, Organisers created several different spaces for listening, some buzzing but others quiet, to create room for neurodiversity. The result was space and time for intentional conversations that allowed people to connect with a wide range of relationships inside the broad-based organisation. It allowed for deeper, unscripted connections, "where we still want something to happen out of it, but we also want the process to matter as well as the end point" (H).

The **Convention of the North** is an annual gathering of political, business, community and academic leaders from across the North of England convened by mayors in the north of England. In 2024 it was held in Leeds, and West Yorkshire Citizens had negotiated with the Mayor for young people to participate in the space, alongside northern leaders and policy makers. Lead Organiser Graham Brownlee worked with fellow Organiser Phil Sage and school leaders to provide a means for young people to meet policy makers, politicians and other decision-makers based on the principles of relationship building that combined house meetings, relational experiments and negotiations. Young people from across the north were invited. Many of them had a relationship with a Citizens UK Chapter, although there was a mix of experience with some having been to training and others not. A preparatory meeting was held on zoom, and then, when they arrived at the convention, "they basically did endless house meetings for two days." The mix of ages created opportunities for leadership development, "I watched older ones encouraging the younger ones to speak, going no it's alright, you can tell me I know, I'm a sixth former." The effect on the young people was that "you saw people behaving differently and having a lot more confidence or agency or voice than they have ever done before, and we saw young people from different schools working together" (H). The event also had an impact on the staff. The event "looked entirely chaotic from the outside", but it revealed that "it's possible to do this", and create a space where young people can "present and get to know each other and work as a team" (I).

The West Yorkshire Citizens experience reminds us that the relational experiment is highly adaptable and can be integrated into more familiar organising events, like delegates assemblies or house meetings. Indeed, in the context of existing broad-based alliances, relational experiments are likely to be easier to use if they are connected to actions or events that are part of the five stages of social change rather than being seen as something additional.

West Yorkshire Citizens is a regional network of several distinct but geographically proximate Citizens UK Chapters, including Leeds Citizens and Bradford Citizens. Leeds is the biggest city in Yorkshire, but "it is a two-tier city" (H). It's the finance centre and has a large student population (one in ten of the 800,000 people are students), but "you also have homeless people on the streets as soon as you come out of the station". Leeds is close to Bradford, but the two cities have very distinct identities, "Bradford is not Greater Leeds.... It has a character that is proud and personal"(I). Bradford has significant populations from different ethnic backgrounds and there is a track record of strong inter-community relationships, particularly following the 2001 riots.

West Yorkshire Citizens staged two relational experiments, one a modified delegates assembly called Citizens Together in January 2024 and the second a dedicated space focused on the participation of young people at the Convention of the North in February 2024. Bradford Citizens had also planned to organise a series of Weaving Trusts in local schools, but these were not held. Staffing changes and logistical complexities meant they could not take place during the time of this study. The plan was, and still remains, to use a Weaving Trust to "discover whether people felt like they belonged in school or not and why, and what differences there were for different people" (I). The plan was to involve 20-30 people between Years 7 to 11 across six schools. When it comes to making the experiment happen, it is a reminder of the long time frames and multiple pressures that schools experience that can work as barriers for their participation. As the local Organiser explains, their role "is just trying to make it as easy as possible for them to engage."



CHAPTER 4

SCALING THE APPROACH THROUGH ONLINE TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

Online Weaving Trusts and the Teachable training tool as resources for scaling relational experiments

The Southend pilot revealed that Citizens UK Chapters could benefit from using the Weaving Trust tool. Weaving Trusts, and relational experiments more broadly, were a practice that any institutions and even emerging leaders with little experience in community organising could easily use, and with a small amount of guidance in the art of one-to-one meetings, an agenda and a skilled facilitator, relational experiments could be run in and across institutions.

However, testing relational experiments across the country also made it clear that to be successful, these experiments required some scaffolding. While a Weaving Trust, or any relational experiment, had a simplicity of form, we found that several elements contributed to their success. Some considerations were logistical, such as how a room was assembled and how time was managed. Other elements were more conceptual, relating to how the Weaving Trust was framed by the co-chairs or facilitators, the kinds of questions that were posed to the group, as well as the kind of power analysis that sat behind the turnout strategies that brought people to the Weaving Trust event. The Southend team created a series of resources such as sample agendas and online RSVP tools to help them convene multiple Weaving Trusts over a six month period, however, for the approach to scale more broadly across Citizens UK, more support would be required.

In November, the coordinating team decided that it would be useful to develop a teaching tool that leaders could use to guide them in creating their own Weaving Trust. The aim was to produce a series of videos, written materials and planning resources that take leaders step-by-step through a Weaving Trust organising process, from initial idea to hosting the event to evaluation. The online materials would be detailed and designed to be usable by any leader, as well as structured to offer a 25-hour course so it could be used by graduates of 3- or 6-day training as part of their Birmingham Newman University Certificate in Community Leadership. It is worth clarifying that the training resources represented 25 hours of content, which is part of the requirement for that Certificate. But the materials are also appropriate for a broader audience where anyone can use the course and “dip in and out” of the content to help them plan their own Weaving Trust.

The training was launched in January 2024 as a self-directed learning module available to anyone who registered through the Citizens UK website: <https://www.citizensuk.org/leadership-training/organising-together-across-difference/>

WHAT IS IN THE TEACHABLE ONLINE COURSE?

The course is divided into five sections and is focused on how to hold a Weaving Trust.

The first two sections provide an orientation. Using multiple mediums – video and written materials – the idea of a Weaving Trust is introduced as a tool that people in institutions can use to create stronger relationships across difference. The materials emphasise how a relational experiment is distinct from a one-off event like a candlelit vigil, as it aims to build new and stronger relationships in the context of strategy to organise community power. The course introduces the idea of ‘Sameness and Difference’ as a paradox of public life that reflects how a strong public arena holds in tension a recognition and respect for how we are all different alongside how we also have things in common.

Weaving Trusts are offered as a particular strategy that builds on the practices of community organising to create an experience where we can sit and explore sameness and difference in our institutions, communities and cities.

The teaching tool encourages participants to work with others. Trainees are encouraged to find a buddy and to create a team to plan the Weaving Trust. The training builds on organising tools like power analysis to help participants to be intentional in how they plan to turnout people to the event. The Teachable site includes a variety of practical materials, including agendas from other Weaving Trusts as well as prompts for planning. It has a video from a Learning Thursday event where Amanda ran a Weaving Trust training, and it has clips from a Weaving Trust event that was held online. The Teachable training also includes checklists for logistics, rehearsals and draft agendas for debrief and evaluations.

Organising Together Across Difference in my Institution: How to Build a Weaving Trust



Section 1: Introducing Organising Together across Difference: 4 / 8

Pre-Course Survey - Organising across Difference

Start Lesson

INITIAL RESPONSES TO THE ONLINE TRAINING TOOLS

It is early days for these online tools, and their utility will most likely be felt over years rather than months. Even so we have discussed the training tool in a workshop with Organisers, and interviewed eight attendees of an online Weaving Trust training to gain initial reflections.

ORGANISER REFLECTIONS

Across workshops and interviews with ten Organisers, there was broad consensus that the online tools were a helpful and important resource for spreading the Weaving Trusts as well as intensifying the capacity for Citizens UK Chapters to organise across difference. Across the project, several Organisers noted that creating moments for intensive face-to-face relationships between leaders can be a challenge. For one Organiser the relational experiments could allow the “relational work” to not be lost amongst the “focused work” of organising (Seb Chapleau). Having an “easy to use tool for leaders” was appealing as it could make relational work easier. For Juliet Kilpin from Citizens Essex, a bank of resources was “exactly what we needed” for spreading the practice to places beyond Southend. She had found that after the October Assembly in Southend that there was interest in Weaving Trusts in other Essex alliances but turning that interest into an event required significant support. The online tools were useful because they could provide support to interested leaders and make Weaving Trusts less reliant on Organiser support.

Moreover, the prospect that leaders could be supported to run Weaving Trusts had the potential to open and deepen engagement with broad-based organising that at times felt organiser dependent. “Creating an easy tool is great, it’s good for organisers but it’s huge for leaders so they can just run with it” (Fiona Meldrum, Senior Organiser).

The group identified that spreading relational experiments would need to meet the challenge of getting this new idea to rise above the noise of an already demanding organising practice. Spreading a new practice would need to overcome the pressure that comes from Citizens UK’s demanding ambition and busy Organisers. It can be hard to communicate effectively to let Chapters and Organisers know that the resource is available and useful, so they might encourage and support leaders to use it. But it was recognised that if Weaving Trusts became something that leaders were able to “pick up and run with” – then that could be a means for expanding participation in community organising as well as deepening the way in which organising is able to support powerful engagements across difference.

REFLECTIONS FROM ONLINE TRAINING PARTICIPANTS

Across the project there was a recognition that people felt more comfortable to “do” a Weaving Trust if they had been in one before. To help create an experience that could inspire action, we held an Online Weaving Trust in April 2024. Like we had seen with physical events, the process of weaving trust online took people on a journey:

Initially, I felt a little bit daunted by the thought of having a one to one on screen. It’s like, Oh, gosh! I’m stuck. But actually it worked really well, because it was quite nicely guided because it wasn’t that you just got put in a room with no guidance on what to talk about. So it was quite nicely structured (K).

One Leader observed the importance of the setup and framing as well:

There was a line in the set up... that in a challenging situation you could say, ‘thank you for sharing something more about who you are as a person’, to acknowledge that you’ve heard it, even if you aren’t aligning with that view. So yeah, I think there were some really, really helpful things there (X).

People also noted the importance of seeing a fishbowl of a one-to-one. A fishbowl is a teaching tool where a one-to-one meeting is modelled in front of a group so people can see how one might work: “the fishbowl was cool ... seeing it done and how you give something of yourself too” (X).

Part of the usability and potential scalability of the Weaving Trust is that it is being taught and trialled in the context of a community organising network. For all of the eight online training participants that we interviewed, they reflected that doing the process helped them understand it, and made them more inclined to do one. Partly this was because the Weaving Trust resembled other organising practices. It was similar to, but a deepening of something they were already doing: “it’s not that dissimilar to what we are already doing” (Tom Underwood, Leader), or “it felt like a natural extension” (Fiona Meldrum) and “it wasn’t hard to get my head around it” (Roz Burch, Leader).

ONLINE TRAINING BUILDING OFF LOCAL WEAVING TRUSTS

For one Leader, her interest in attending and using the online tools arose because her local Citizens UK Chapter was using Weaving Trusts already. “I knew the Weaving Trust stuff is happening so I was like I’ll go online and see what it is like” (K). The experience was not only useful for creating a context for her local organising, but that it was potentially translatable into other contexts, “I think there’s lots of applications for it” (K).

ONLINE TRAINING FEEDING INSTITUTIONAL WORK

Another Leader used the Weaving Trust training as an opportunity to expand and get ideas for work she was doing already in her institution. As one Leader we interviewed noted, their church was “doing work on difference already”, with the training providing an opportunity to “dip the toe in” and see new and other ways of working across difference.

FROM ONLINE TRAINING TO RUNNING A WEAVING TRUST

Finally, in the month following the training two Leaders came together to organise a Weaving Trust in Bristol. Two Church of England Vicars, both Area Deans, attended the online training, partly interested by the experience of “diverse but segregated” that they see in their own city, where there are not just cultural differences but also disparities in terms of income, health and educational outcomes in different parts of the city. They decided to hold a Weaving Trust at a Synod meeting of their Deanery, a standing meeting of about 35 people that happens once a quarter. The Deanery covers a large area of the city and is across many of the segregations.

The planning process for the Weaving Trust was simple and took about three hours. It included a planning meeting as well as time spent preparing an agenda, some prompt questions, and slides. Turnout was made easier because the Weaving Trust was being held at an already scheduled meeting (but it still required dedicated calls and invitations). That meeting space was chosen because it was where people came together “but didn’t necessarily know each other” (R).

They ran the Weaving Trust in three phases, structured using three overarching questions. For each question people had one-to-ones, both sharing their response to the questions with each other. Right at the start people were numbered off, “one, two, three, four” with each number congregating in a corner and the one-to-ones were between people of different numbers.

The questions were:

- Firstly, they gave everybody a map and asked people to identify where they live and to describe something good and something they would like to change about that place.
- Second, they were asked to talk about their church and how it connects with its community and how their wider community connects with the church.
- Third, they were asked to share what connections their church has with other churches and to identify a challenge they face in creating or growing wider connections.

The event created a real buzz, getting people talking “about the institution and their local communities in new ways that were positive and also specific” (S). It also made clear that leaders, especially those that are already familiar with community organising, are able and willing to take the idea of a Weaving Trust and run with it, using online materials and without any support from a local organiser.

Overall, the creation of online materials to help leaders plan and run relational experiments offered a practical means for scaling the work documented in this report. It is, however, likely that for this work to continue to spread it will need to be supplemented by ongoing organiser support and encouragement, the teaching and discussion of these ideas at 3- and 6-day Citizens UK training, and the creation of opportunities for people to experience Weaving Trusts at Learning Thursdays and other Citizens UK spaces. As any organiser is aware, no practice or strategy is spontaneous, and this work will require dedicated and ongoing face-to-face support for it to spread. But thanks to this project, the infrastructure is now in place to scale these relational experiments more easily in a busy and decentralised organising environment.

CHAPTER 5 FINDINGS



WHAT WE FOUND ABOUT THE VALUE OF RELATIONAL EXPERIMENTS

Across the spectrum of participants in this study, the evidence is that relational experiments offer a personal as well as political impact, producing experiences that deepen people's connection with others and in doing so change their feelings of connection with their community.

For some the benefit was intrinsic, "it's good for human health to have enjoyable conversations with people, especially when before that moment you would have walked past each other on the street, now you've brought them together in a way that they're compelled to interact" (Q). For others the significance of the experience was based on specific experiences of connecting across difference, especially when it enabled them to meet someone they would not normally interact with:

“I had a chat with a 22 year old man from a Muslim community in Birmingham. He'd never chatted to a middle aged Welsh woman before, and I'd never chatted to a young Muslim man. We wouldn't have met. Really, I can't imagine another situation where we would have met. I can't even remember what we talked about. It was that connection. That was what was important (T).

“There was a young woman who came up to me, and she was like, I just spoke to this old man, and it made me realize I had so many assumptions about him before I spoke to him. But I was completely wrong, you know.... You can feel guilty of assuming... the stereotypes work both ways. And actually she'd had this great conversation. She was like, he's fantastic (A).

The impact of those connections was not simply contained to the room, as the Southend case study revealed. There, finding a connection across difference changed how participants saw their city. In the case of one participant, a Weaving Trust in a mosque created a new connection to the mosque that she passed every day for work, which, until the relational experiment, had felt distant.

The source of these deep experiences was a product of how the relational experiments were conducted – with their focus on intentionality, relationality and power. As one Leader described:

“It is so highly interactive, it's structured... you can listen to one person at a time, and then that gives a hunger for more information, more relationships. It's quite different from other learning activities because of its structure. It's much more democratic because everybody is speaking and listening for most of the time (Q).

Another expressed how the process of meeting people who were different changed how they saw people in the community:

“To see somebody else in the street and rather than think of something that they saw on the news or on social media, they think 'oh I met somebody like that once and this was the conversation that we had with each other'. I think it helps all of us break down assumptions (A).

Indeed it is possible that these relational experiments can create new public friendships. For one Leader in Southend, a series of shorter exchanges at two relational experiment events led to the discovery of common interest and more lasting connection. This Leader described that arising out of a connection created at a Weaving Trust, “our whole family are now friends with him [the person that he met]” (C).

The elements of intention, relationship and power distinguished the kinds of encounters people had in the relational experiment from group activities they had experienced elsewhere. For instance, one Organiser made the contrast between a relational experiment and her experience of a candlelit vigil:

“[At the vigil] we marched together, we listened to some music. Together we were silent, we held lanterns together. We listened to speeches. But I came away from that having not met anybody... so there's nothing else that I can do to build on that (B).

A Leader contrasted a relational experiment to a conference:

“...which is just listening. We held a conference the other day and we tried to be a bit interactive with a couple of workshops. But you tend to just fall into the trap of one or two people standing at the front saying their thing and like 50 people listening to it. It has its value, but the experiential learning at a Weaving Trust is what makes it really great (C).

Moreover, Leaders and Organisers consistently made the point that the transformative experience of attending a relational experiment was not the event on its own, but how it was part of a longer process of relationship building in a Citizens UK Chapter. Relational experiments were part of a longer process of 'relationships preceding power.'

It is so highly interactive, it's structured... you can listen to one person at a time, and then that gives a hunger for more information, more relationships. It's quite different from other learning activities because of its structure.

WHAT WE LEARNT ABOUT RUNNING RELATIONAL EXPERIMENTS

In analysing the experiences of 37 Organisers and Leaders in relational experiments we were able to tease out a series of insights about best practice when it comes to relational experiments:

PURPOSE

Relational experiments are versatile and can be used to focus very openly on relationship creation or for a more specific exploration of issues. You can do them while sitting or walking, hold them outside or inside, and have them be large or small. The key is to clearly identify that purpose and have that purpose guide the planning. The purpose can be reflected in the questions that are asked (e.g. focused on an issue, experience or place) – or the purpose can be more broadly about relationships.

SIZE AND TURNOUT

Most of the participants identified that relational experiments work best if there is a reasonable attendance – of at least 30-40 participants – to help create an energy and diversity in the one-to-ones. That said, as one Leader working with more vulnerable communities identified, a smaller group can create a less intimidating space for participation. For all the groups, an explicit turnout strategy was necessary that not only focused on the numbers of people attending but equally focused on the diversity of participation.

WHERE THE EVENT IS HELD

Typically, organisations hosted relational experiments, meaning that the event was an opportunity for others to learn about an organisation and its culture by entering that space. This was much more valuable than hosting a relational experiment in a 'neutral' space.

When thinking about the space, also think about how the space is open to neurodiversity – eg. quiet rooms or alternatives to face-to-face talking (eg. walking, drawing).

FRAMING THE SESSION AND CREATING THE SPACE

It is important to 'set the scene' and help people warm up before jumping into questions. While some people might find the process easy, others will find the prospect of talking with strangers more difficult. Many observers identified that there can be a 'chaotic' quality to the relational experiment, making it even more important for the event to begin with some explanation or framework up front. This can extend to explaining the purpose of the interaction, while being sure to keep the space open for people to find a bigger or greater purpose together.

Part of the framing can include guided language to help participants find boundaries around difference. The lesson from Southend is that presenting phrases like "thanks for sharing more about you" can provide people with words to turn to if they start to find connecting across difference difficult.

EXPERIENCED FACILITATOR

Relational experiments work best when there is someone experienced facilitating the one-to-ones. The organisational host does not need to play this role and can instead welcome the group and then hand over to someone else. The best facilitators have been a part of a Weaving Trust before, and you do not need to be an Organiser to be a facilitator. Experience helps when it comes to managing the unexpected – "like people moving in or out of the circle, arriving late, or running off during the event" (Q).

TIMING

The Organisers will need to make decisions about how long the one-to-one conversations should be. Some groups chose six minutes, some chose eight minutes, some shifted from shorter to longer conversations over the event. The most important thing is to keep to time and to move conversations forward. That is the job of the facilitator. "People will be enjoying their current conversation" – so the facilitator will need to combine both friendliness and strictness to keep things moving.

WHAT IS THE PLACE OF RELATIONAL EXPERIMENTS IN CITIZENS UK'S COMMUNITY ORGANISING

In the words of one Southend community Leader, "Weaving Trusts are a massive piece of the community organising jigsaw. I think it should be a mandatory experience" (Z).

Relational experiments are useful because they build on the community organising traditions and practices already used by Citizens UK. Leaders consistently reported that Weaving Trusts felt like they fitted in with what they already knew. At the same time, they noted that these relational experiments offered an opportunity to "go deeper" in how they connected with others, and it was a tool that they could see themselves using and adapting even without the help of an Organiser.

Across the six Chapters that tried relational experiments, Organisers reported that they were most successful when they used the tool as part of their already existing

organising programme, rather than as something separate and additional. Indeed, when explaining the reasons for changing or not proceeding with relational experiments, the most frequent reason was because the relational experiment became unaligned with the Chapter's plans to deliver on the 5 Steps to Social Change.

As one Organiser put it, "we are taught a method where you do listening then a delegates assembly then an accountability assembly", but "it's not a formula" and what the Weaving Trust showed is, "you can bring in some of the elements of Weaving Trust into a delegates assembly, or a listening exercise." "Organisers need to know when to stick with things and when to adapt" (AA).

A Senior Organiser hoped that Citizens UK could build a narrative about how the Weaving Trust practically builds into the 5 Steps to Social Change. For instance, "when you are building a new Chapter you need to weave trust across the city" which creates the expectation that Weaving Trusts would be used as a strategy in step one of the cycle (Fiona Meldrum).

When it came to the 5 Steps to Social Change, we found that a Weaving Trust could be useful at several points:

- **Step One Organise:** In Cambridge and Southend, Weaving Trusts were used to create trust and demonstrate the potential of broad-based organising. They were also a way to give people the experience of relational meetings in advance of training opportunities.
- **Step Two Listening:** In West Yorkshire, relational experiments were integrated into delegates assemblies and a youth gathering to increase relationship building in the process of exploring listening and agenda-building. In Milton Keynes, Weaving Trusts were regularly used to build relationships across difference.
- **Step Three Plan & Act:** In Brighton & Hove, relational experiments were used in the context of an accountability assembly to do a "structure test" for an emerging agenda on housing, providing space for a larger group of leaders to use a relational experiment to contribute ideas and feedback to an emerging housing charter.

Not only were relational experiments able to be integrated by Organisers, but several Leaders identified that they could use the relational experiment to improve their own practice. For instance, Leaders used Weaving Trusts to transform a Synod meeting, and others identified the tools that could be used to add a new dynamic to AGMs.

WHAT OPPORTUNITIES DO RELATIONAL EXPERIMENTS OFFER ORGANISING?

When it comes to organising, our initial findings are that relational experiments offer:

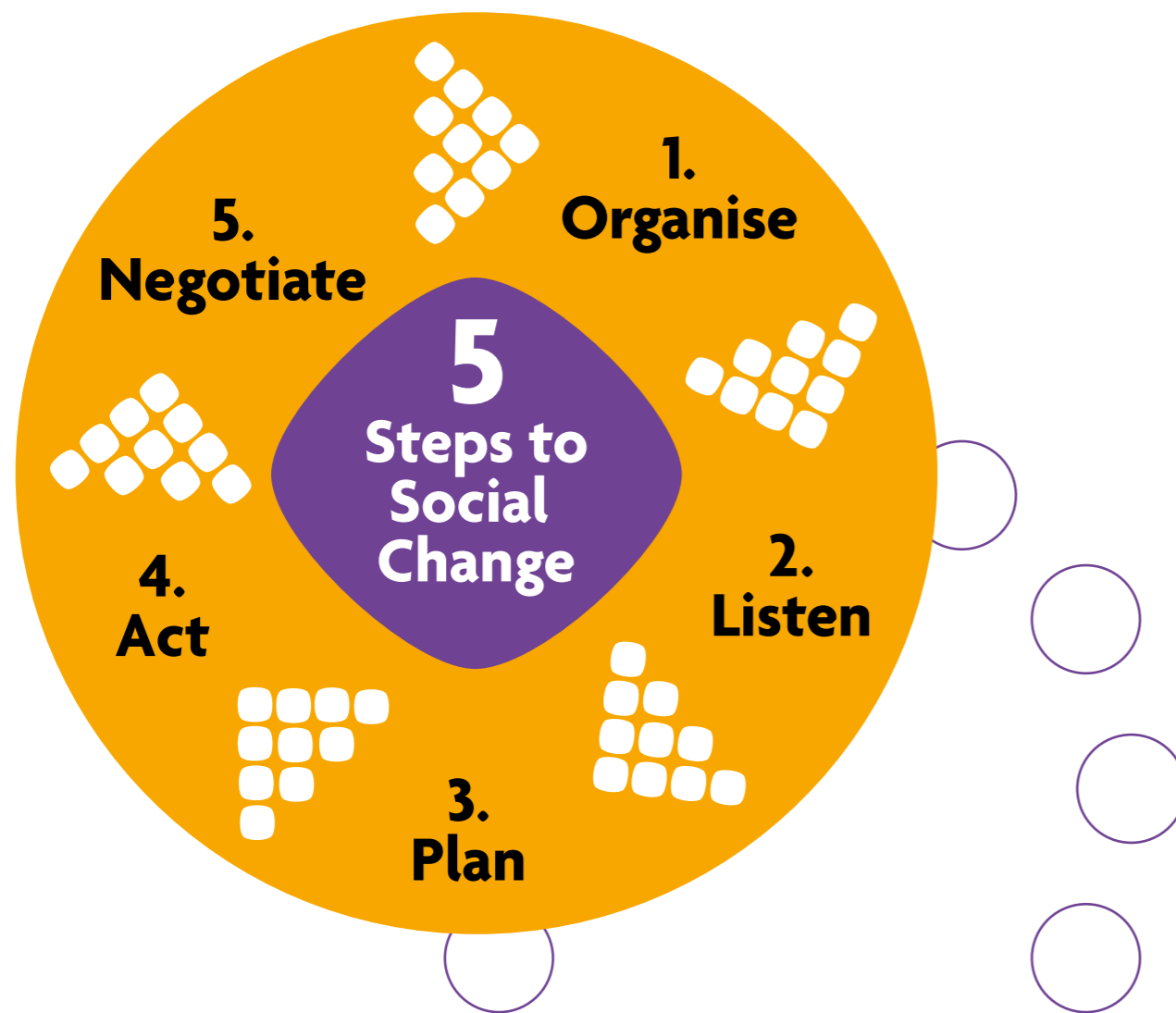
- Opportunities for leaders to organise
- Support for founding new chapters and alliances
- A way of working that responds to the needs and builds on the traditions of many of our partner organisations.

Relational experiments are an organising tool that can be run by **leaders** without Organiser support. With the use of the Teachable training tool, and other online applications, there are sufficient resources for interested leaders to explore, plan and even watch an online relational experiment before doing one themselves. In the month following the online Weaving Trust event in April, we interviewed eight participants. All said that they felt they could run a Weaving Trust and two had run one.

This speaks to the scalability of the tool that could provide a powerful resource for organising across difference. One of the long-held criticisms of organising is that as a practice it is often hard to scale and spread, as it is often dependent on a team of professional organisers and key leaders (Fisher and DeFilippis, 2015). Citizens UK, with its nationally coordinated network has already shown an ability to defy the exclusively local character of organising more common in places like the US. To add to this, the relational experiment offers a practical tool that may support leaders to scale and spread organising. While the power of relational experiments is that they are most impactful when they are carried out by leaders that are in broad-based organisations, they can potentially offer leaders a tool for expanding participation in those networks.

Indeed, Citizens UK is encouraging all graduates of its 6-day and 3-day training programmes to complete the Weaving Trust training module as part of qualifying for a Certificate in Community Leadership. It will be useful to see if and how this opportunity leads to an expansion of relational experiments and what support, if any, is required to help leaders to be successful.

Relational experiments are potentially a helpful tool for Organisers and leaders **working to establish a new alliance**. In Southend, Organisers argued that running a series of Weaving Trusts provided opportunities for potential members to experience and explore what broad-based organising was before making a commitment to join a Chapter. In a similar way in Cambridge, two years into a four year organising plan, the sponsoring committee decided to use a series of Weaving Trusts to expand their outreach and relationships across a larger array of communities in the city. In both cases, the relational experiments worked to prefigure the potential of a broad-based alliance, providing people with a concrete experience of connection that can be hard to explain to leaders in words alone.



Relational experiments also resonate with and connect to some of the **deeper traditions and interests of our partner organisations**. We found that higher education institutions and faith traditions resonated deeply with relational experiments, an initial finding that would be useful to explore further in any future research. For higher education partners, the potential of relational experiments related to the broader discussion around new forms of community engagement by universities. Research staff at both Newcastle and Cambridge Universities identified that as universities are exploring strategies to be more accountable to communities, experiments like these could help service a broader public purpose for those institutions. For faith partners, several clergy identified that the relational experiment resonated with deeper relational spiritual practice. For some this relationality had a practical edge, fondly reminding people of a more vibrant church community life in the past. For others, it invoked a theological connection between story and faith. One Leader shared a quote from Dietrich Bonhoeffer:

“The first service one owes to others in a community involves listening to them. Just as our love for God begins with listening to God’s Word, the beginning of love for others is learning to listen to them. God’s love for us is shown by the fact that God not only gives God’s Word, but also lends us God’s ear (Bonhoeffer, 1993).”

WHAT LIMITATIONS DID WE ENCOUNTER?

The project also revealed several limitations and challenges when it comes to relational experiments.

Who is in the room: The experience and the impact of a relational experiment is shaped by who is in the room. While broad-based alliances are in a strong place to recruit a diverse group of participants, there will always be a self-selecting quality to the experiment. The people likely to enter the room will be people already predisposed to building relationships, and people with more antagonistic views are unlikely to participate.

Even so, the kind of people that are open to participating in a relational experiment are likely to be the kinds of people that have the potential to play a larger role in building power and connection across the community. While the relational experiment may not be a vehicle for changing the minds of everyone in a community, it may offer a gateway for new community leaders to find ways to organise across difference.

The challenge of who is in the room underscores the importance of an organising approach to relational experiments, in contrast to a mobilising approach to turnout. Several of the Chapters intentionally used word of mouth and organisational relationships to invite people to the experiment. They also relied on networks of leaders that had been assembled with diversity and power analysis in mind.

Impact: This project focused on testing and trialling relational experiments as a tool for community connection. Building an evidence-base around its long term impact on community cohesion will need to be explored more deeply in future research. From this sample, it is evident that relational experiments have the potential for creating impact at several scales: personal, institutional, local alliance and the community. Moreover, these sites of change are interrelated, where for instance an inspiring personal experience leads a person to engage their institutions in a local alliance that has an impact on the city and beyond.

What we can see from the interviews is that relational experiments offered participants powerful experiences of connection, often introducing them to people in their neighbourhood who they would never have met otherwise. This experience encouraged people to want to become more involved in working across difference, in their institution and in alliances, as well as providing new perspectives on the people and places in where they live.

If this sample is representative, and relational experiments prove to be scalable and regularly used by leaders as well as Organisers, then our research suggests that relational experiments can make a powerful contribution to how community organising is able to facilitate our ability to organise together across difference.

SAMENESS AND DIFFERENCE

Finally, alongside the development and testing of relational experiments, this project explored a new organising language to talk about difference. The idea of sameness and difference was inspired by the dynamic way in which organising teaches the principles of public life. One of the long-standing strengths of community organising teaching is how it explores public life as a space of tension, naming dialectics like ‘public’ and ‘private’ or ‘power with’ and ‘power over’. The purpose of these tensions is to show the complexity and nuance of public life as a backdrop that informs how community organising seeks to make change.

While the idea of sameness and difference is new, these ideas are long standing in how we talk about the people in democracy. Democratic societies frequently talk about how we are all equal – the same – with equal rights and freedoms. Yet in practice, social movements have challenged the idea of equality, arguing that it has not recognised differences like gender, race, sexual identity, or ability. The concept of equity is used to show that some people will need to be treated differently in order to have the chance to achieve the same outcome.

When it comes to community organising, sameness and difference gives us a language that helps us recognise how identity and difference play a role in shaping us as leaders, while arguing how our differences can co-exist with our capacity to find sameness and common ground. In this approach, difference is what makes us who we are but difference doesn’t need to prevent us from finding things in common.

Across several Senior Guild workshops, this project has given Citizens UK the opportunity to interrogate the idea of Sameness and Difference. Slowly a body of writing is emerging that explores these ideas, and how they can be used to deepen how community organising engages with identity. This work is ongoing. The aim is that this conceptual work can support Citizens UK more fully centre the work of organising across difference in its purpose and its training.

CONCLUSION

We are living in times where there are limited opportunities to build meaningful connections with people who are different. Today the dominance of digital communication, geographic differentiation and a creeping retreat from public space conspire to make it difficult to talk to strangers. On top of this our political culture feeds on division, the algorithms that drive social media clicks and the political debates that frame national elections, are designed to push us apart and not bring us together.

This report has outlined the findings of an 18-month project that has explored how Citizens UK might strengthen its community organising practice to deepen how it organises across difference and push back against the tide of polarisation. Working with several teams of Organisers, the project sought to define, pilot and test a new organising tool to intensify community organising's ability to cultivate connection and relationships across difference. That said, the relational experiment, in fact, was not entirely new, but a practice that has built on a decade of Weaving Trusts initiated by Citizens MK. In this project the core elements of the relational experiment were identified, a series of relational experiments were piloted in Southend, and then Chapters, Organisers and Leaders were supported to use relational experiments as they engaged in the '5 Steps to Social Change'.

The result was a catalogue of stories and experiences – case studies – of communities using relational experiments. There were a wide range of experiences – from Organisers using relational experiments to form alliances, to Leaders using relational experiments to transform church meetings, to alliances using relational experiments to co-create housing policy. In analysing the stories and through interviews with the participants, we were able to not only ascertain key practices that contributed to successful relational experiments, but identify some indicative findings about how these actions had a powerful effect on participants, institutions, broad-based alliances and potentially the places in which they were held.

For Community Organisers, relational experiments are a prefigurative form of people power (Tattersall and Iveson, 2024). Relational experiments create a space where for two hours participants can experience the kind of democracy that 'should be.' Moreover, these relational experiments have the potential to act as a flywheel, giving people a transformative experience of connection, and then spinning them back out into their communities as potential agents of change. The change that comes from a relational experiment might be small, for instance it could be a change in perception that leads someone to see another person or place differently. But, when the experience is connected to the power and purpose of a broad-based community organisation, it has the potential to also lead people to participate in the transformation of their community.

For Citizens UK, this project both recognises their role in organising across difference and encourages them to more explicitly centre that work in how they talk about their purpose. The project not only identifies how tools like relational experiments can strengthen how Citizens UK organises across difference, but it has also identified the concept of 'Sameness and Difference' as a conceptual tool that can help Organisers and Leaders explore how public life is simultaneously defined by how we are all different, and how our ability to find sameness enables us work for the common good.

This project opens a door to a much bigger piece of work on organising across difference. Supporting and scaling relational experimentation across the Chapters of Citizens UK and our communities is a momentous task. This project has created critical resources and infrastructure by analysing the experiences of six Chapters and building an online teaching resource for Weaving Trusts. The challenge is if and how this work can be supported and expanded by Citizens UK, its partner institutions and leaders, and by those who support them.

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WEAVING TRUST 'HOW TO' GUIDE

Check out Citizens UK's module designed for individuals to strengthen their capacity to work across difference. You can find the Organising Together Across Difference in my Institution: How to Build a Weaving Trust course available for free at <https://citizens-uk.teachable.com/p/organising-together-across-difference>

PLANNING YOUR WEAVING TRUST

Five steps:

1. **Purpose:** assess the context and decide on your purpose
2. **People:** work out the people you want to invite and the roles they might play
3. **Agenda and logistics**
4. **Do it**
5. **Evaluate**

Purpose: Why do you want to hold a Weaving Trust?

What reaction are you seeking from this action:

- What part of the 5 steps of social change are you in?
- What differences are you seeking to bridge?
- What connections are you seeking to elevate?
- How is this helping you build power in your place?

Discussing your broader purpose helps link the Weaving Trust to your plan to build power for the common good.

The People

Two parts to this: who participates in the action and who organises the action.

Participants:

- How many people do you want to come along?
- Where from?

You need to invite twice as many people as you want in the room.

Team and Roles for the action:

- Who will be in your core team to organise it (ratio - 1:4 for small actions, 1:10 for large)
- Plan for Turnout (relational invites not just broadcast)
- Plan for who runs the event, roles eg:
 - o Co-chairs
 - o Who runs the training
 - o 2 people to demonstrate the 1-2-1 meeting
 - o Logistics team for set up and take down of event
 - o Other roles? (eg a testimony about relationships, a presentation about the broader context of the institution/Chapter/cycle of action)

Agenda and Logistics

- Date, time and venue (Weaving Trust will take 2 hours)
- Roles: consider co-chairs/facilitator, training, fishbowl meetings
- Question prompts: a series of 1-2-1 meetings (say 4-6, 6-8 mins each) with a few prompts for questions
- Framing: and any other context/presentations you want to include
- Room set-up: have the right number of chairs (not too many), you want the room to feel full and exciting. Make sure there is plenty of space for people to move around and change conversational partners, consider providing a quiet space

Do it! (final considerations)

- Run a rehearsal and write a script
- Logistics for the day (signage, audio, help for set up, food/drinks, debrief)
- Set up space
- Photos

Evaluate

- What worked
- What would you change for next time

CHECKLIST FOR A WEAVING TRUST

- Make an invite (Action Network or digital tool like Eventbrite)
- Turnout using phone calls and relationships
- Invite 30-50% more than you want in the room
- Confirm RSVPs:
 - Confirmation email RSVP list 3 days before
 - Phone call key people (if not everyone) as reminder
- Food or drinks at the event
- Let the Citizens UK Organiser know the event is happening
- Book a rehearsal time
- Fill all the roles: co-chairs, fishbowl relational meetings, trainer
- Think about a Call to Action: what people will do when they leave
- Tell key leaders involved in the Weaving Trust that you will do a short debrief after the event (so they know to stick around)
- Book a time for an evaluation a few days/week later
- Think about how you will set up the room
- Signage for event
- Take photos at the event (and ask permission via co-chairs!)
- Do the debrief (acknowledge all speakers/hosts/logistics people)
- Do the evaluation

SAMPLE AGENDA FOR WEAVING TRUST

Adapted from a Weaving Trust held at a mosque in Southend. With thanks to Citizens Essex.

- 7.15 Arrival & Welcome
- 7.30 Prayers (optional)
-
- 7.40 Introduction:
 - Welcome to the Mosque (3 mins)
 - What is a Weaving Trust? (7 mins)
- 7.55 Teaching 1-2-1s:
 - Why have 1-2-1s? (5 mins)
 - Top tips (5 mins)
 - 1-2-1 goldfish bowl (5 mins)
- 8.10 Weaving Trust Cycle #1: you and your institution
 - 2x 3 mins with talking points
 - * Why did you come along to the Weaving Trust? Share why the idea resonated with you.
 - * Why did you first get involved in your organisation? Share a story about your journey.
- 8.18 Weaving Trust Cycle #2: you and where you live
 - 2x 6 mins with talking points:
 - * What place in or around Southend do you feel most connected to and why? Share a story about when that became important to you?
 - * We can all think about how the world should be but we work together in the world as it is now. So what is one thing you would like to change for where you live and why?
- 8.33 Reflections
- 8.40 Weaving Trust Cycle #3: organising across difference
 - 1x 10 mins with talking points
 - * Today we are creating new connections with people in Southend – why does this matter to you? Share a story where a connection with someone or a group that is different to you impacted you, and how?
- 8.50 Reflections & Learning
- 9.10 Next steps
- 9.15 Finish and Evaluation



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