

# **Co-producing the Goods: How Can Swansea's Strategic Partnerships Improve the Way they Work with the Public?**

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For the Better Swansea Partnership

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## Introduction

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### Background

1. This report follows a recommendation made to the Better Swansea Partnership by the Partnership Evaluation Panel that they should:

*Undertake additional work to review the engagement of citizens in delivering partnership objectives*

2. This recommendation was accepted and has led to this report being produced in consultation with the Policy Task Group and a range of stakeholders via the Better Swansea Communities of Practice site<sup>1</sup>.

### Why This Matters?

3. In the current era of financial austerity, new ways of working with the public are essential. An immediate concern is agreeing the priorities for current cuts and future development with the public and with service users. In the medium term it will be important to make the most of the expertise of the public in co-commissioning, co-design, co-delivery and co-assessment of public services.

### Purpose of this Report

4. The purpose of this report is to look at how co-production can be developed and sustained by Swansea's strategic partnerships. Specifically it aims to provide:
  - A summary explanation of co-production and its potential benefits
  - An initial picture of existing and potential co-production activity in Swansea
  - Practical ways in which local strategic partnerships can develop and sustain co-production

### Evidence Considered

5. A number of different sources have been considered. First and foremost the report draws on lessons from research and from practice. These lessons can be found summarised in 'Innovation in Public Engagement and Co-production of Services' a 2008 policy paper by Tony Bovaird (INLOGOV) and James Downe (Government Research, Cardiff Business School).

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<sup>1</sup> An online platform supported by the LGA – it can be found at [www.communities.idea.gov.uk](http://www.communities.idea.gov.uk).

6. The views of local stakeholders have been captured through a workshop held on 30th June 2011 in Swansea Civic Centre. The workshop aimed to; raise awareness of coproduction; map current partnership coproduction activity in Swansea; and identify potential areas of development. The report from the workshop can be found at appendix 1.

## Findings

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### What is Co-production?

7. Co-production is a term that describes something we are already doing a lot of – getting the public more involved in services.

The term ‘co-production’ was coined originally at the University of Indiana in the 1970s when Professor Elinor Ostrom was asked to explain to the Chicago police why the crime rate went up when the police came off the beat and into patrol cars. She used the term as a way of explaining why the police need the community as much as the community need the police.

*(new economics foundation, 2008: Co-production: A Manifesto for growing the core economy)*

8. The New Economics Foundation and NESTA describe it this way:

Co-production is a new vision for public services which offers a better way to respond to the challenges we face - based on recognising the resources that citizens already have, and delivering services with rather than for service users, their families and their neighbours. Early evidence suggests that this is an effective way to deliver better outcomes, often for less money.

A simple definition of co-production is given by Governance International<sup>2</sup>:

The public sector and citizens making better use of each other's assets and resources to achieve better outcomes and improved efficiency.

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<sup>2</sup> [www.govint.org](http://www.govint.org)

9. Co-production becomes clearer as a concept when we break it down into specific activities for example:

Co-commissioning of services, which embraces:

- Co-planning of policy – e.g. deliberative participation, Planning for Real, Open Space
- Co-prioritisation of services – e.g. individual budgets, Community Chests, participatory budgeting
- Co-financing of services – e.g. fundraising, charges, agreement to tax increases
- Co-design of services – e.g. user consultation, Service Design Labs, Customer Journey

Co-delivery of services, which embraces:

- Co-managing services – e.g. leisure centre trusts, community management of public assets, school governors
- Co-performing of services – e.g. peer support groups (such as expert patients) , Nurse-Family Partnerships, meals-on-wheels, Neighbourhood Watch
- Co-assessment (including co-monitoring and co-evaluation) of services – e.g. tenant inspectors, user on-line ratings, participatory village appraisals.

### **What are the Benefits and Costs?**

10. Many existing examples (see the presentation given to the workshop at appendix 1) demonstrate that coproduction can generate a number of important benefits:

- It harnesses the expertise of service users and other citizens, who understand what outcomes are most important to them and how these outcomes can be achieved, so that public spending is far more effective
- It mobilises service users and citizens to work with public services to establish key priorities in public budgets and to improve service design, so that public services are more relevant to needs
- It can harness the energy and motivation of service users and other citizens to help in the actual delivery of services, thus cutting costs
- It can provide direct and powerful feedback from service users and citizens to improve review processes

11. Of course, co-production will also have limitations:

- Not everyone will want to co-produce
- Not everyone will be able to co-produce

- Some stakeholders' views may be less relevant than those of others – this is a directly political decision and must influence the way in which co-production is implemented
12. Coproduction will not necessarily lead to savings:
- Co-production itself is likely to have some costs – e.g. in engaging with people, and in supporting them in the activities which they contribute to public services
  - Co-production may reveal that some current public sector services are under-funded in the eyes of their users and other citizens, in that some increases in resources could lead to disproportionately large increases in outcomes
13. Taking into account all of these issues, it seems likely that the benefits will outweigh the costs if Swansea partnerships pay more attention to the potential of co-production. The four main reasons for thinking that Swansea could benefit greatly from more co-production are:
- Understanding of the potential of co-production at strategic partnership level is still very undeveloped – indeed, there is still significant debate about its definition and how it might be further developed
  - There is already a substantial level of co-production in Swansea but it has been largely unplanned and unsystematically co-ordinated (outside of social care)
  - Responsibility for developing co-production has not yet been accepted by most statutory services (apart from social care) or by most third sector organisations
  - Practitioners and public alike do not have the knowledge and skills that would give them the confidence to initiate and participate in co-production initiatives
14. In the next sections, we expand on these points to demonstrate the significant level of co-production that already exists, the potential for co-ordinating it more effectively and extending it to new areas of public services, and the implications for the developmental role that Swansea partnerships could play in exploiting this potential further.

## **A Consistent Approach**

15. As there has not yet been a strategic debate about the nature and possibilities of co-production it is unsurprising that there are different understandings of what it is and how it should be approached.
16. As a first step the most meaningful definition of co-production for Swansea should be adopted and promoted. There are many definitions available each of which emphasises a slightly different aspect. For Swansea's theme partnerships, the most important focus is likely to be getting the most out of the respective resources and contributions which can be made available by citizens on the one hand, and by the public sector on the other hand, so that the co-production definition from Governance International is especially relevant.
17. Beyond a simple definition it is important that there is a shared understanding of the potential benefits, costs and limitations of co-production across the theme partnerships. It is therefore important that some time is set aside for members of each partnership to familiarise themselves with the main concepts and to raise any questions or concerns at an early stage.

### **Recommendations**

It is important that everyone works to the same definition therefore

- (R1) A shared definition should be adopted by the Better Swansea Partnership
- (R2) Each theme partnership should consider a general report outlining the main concepts of co-production at the earliest opportunity

## **Building on Current Activity**

18. There is already a substantial level of co-production in Swansea. Prior to the workshop, a quick survey found 10 examples across a range of service areas (table 1), whilst at the workshop a further eight examples were identified (table 2). This list will be far from definitive and there are doubtless many other examples to be found.

*Table 1: Examples of Co-production initiatives in Swansea*

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Partnership</b>	<b>Planning</b>	<b>Delivery</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<a href="#"><u>Bridging the Gap</u></a>	Hospital Discharge	Health Challenge Swansea	Professionals	Codelivery	Mary Pitson
<a href="#"><u>Swansea Citizens Alliance</u></a>	Adult Social Care	Health Challenge Swansea	Coplaning	Professionals	Mariann Hewitt
<a href="#"><u>All Together Now</u></a>	Adult Social Care	Health Challenge Swansea	Coplaning	Professionals	Nick Andrews
<a href="#"><u>Expert Patients Programme</u></a>	Long Term Health Condition Management	Health Challenge Swansea	Professionals	User / community	Donna Davies
e-Learning Workshops	Lifelong Learning	Swansea Learning Partnership	Professionals	Codelivery	Andrew Latimer
<a href="#"><u>PACT Meetings</u></a>	Community Safety	Safer Swansea	Coplaning	Professionals	PC Ann Dineen
<a href="#"><u>Community Green Mapping</u></a>	Auditing Local Resources and Assets	Swansea Environmental Forum	Professionals	Codelivery	Delyth Higgins
<a href="#"><u>Penlan Safer Routes</u></a>	Transport Plan	Swansea Environmental Forum	Coplaning	Professionals	Anthony Richards
<a href="#"><u>Morrison Playscheme</u></a>	Child Care	Children & Young People Partnership	Coplaning	Codelivery	Anthony Richards
<a href="#"><u>Topic House</u></a>	Older People - Luncheon Club	Health Challenge Swansea	Coplaning	Codelivery	Anthony Richards

*Table 2: Co-production examples from the co-production workshop*

Mentor Allan - supports carers / people with a disability to have active opportunities
Support group for parents of children with autism
Network 50+
My Home Life pilots in care homes
Direct payments peer support group
Community centre volunteer management committees
Friends of parks
Friends of hospitals

19. This initial survey also suggests that:
- The highest level of activity is in the area of health, social care and wellbeing
  - The lowest level of activity is the area of economic regeneration
  - Many co-production initiatives do not have direct links to the strategic partnerships that cover their areas of service
20. There are advantages for both partnerships and co-production initiatives if links can be further developed between the two. For partnerships, initiatives may provide new solutions to existing challenges, whilst initiatives can benefit from the high level support and endorsement that partnerships can provide. Partnerships can also bring a greater degree of coordination and hence a better use of resources where a number of initiatives are seeking to achieve similar outcomes. Finally, partnerships can help to grow and roll out successful initiatives far faster than might otherwise be the case. For these reasons it makes sense for partnerships to pro-actively research what co-production activity is already taking place in their areas of service.

#### **Recommendations**

- (R3) Each theme partnership should review what coproduction is taking place in its area and how each of these activities might be better supported
- (R4) Each theme partnership should identify where a range of existing co-production activities are contributing to similar outcomes and reconfigure these activities to help them reinforce each other's impact and to reduce waste of inputs (both from public agencies and citizens)
- (R5) Each theme partnership should identify where existing activities of statutory agencies could make more use of existing co-production activities in other services or in other geographic areas

#### **Leadership**

21. Beyond activity by individual theme partnerships, the greatest benefits will be gained if decision makers such as senior councillors and lead officers, are able to support co-production strategically. First and foremost this means formally signing-up both in partnerships and in organisational settings. This sign up, however, will need a clear case to be made of the benefits. At the current time the ways in co-production might help achieve efficiencies and savings will need to be clearly stated as part of any argument.

22. There are a number of practical measures that can follow from decision makers signing up to ensure that it is more than a symbolic step. It can mean:
- Ensuring that any strategic decisions about developing co-production build from and reflect relevant organisational strategies and policies, such as for consultation and engagement, for example
  - Ensuring that the commitment to co-production is recognised in any relevant strategies and policies
  - Creating a supportive environment by recognising and promoting good practice through communications and publicity
  - Recognising responsibility for developing co-production in specific job descriptions, political portfolios and terms of reference
  - Leading activity designed to support co-production e.g. workshops and training
  - Identifying cross partnership areas of development
  - Identifying good practice elsewhere that might be adopted locally
  - Agreeing areas where co-production is unlikely to be a cost-effective approach to service provision
23. For co-production to be embedded, leadership buy in from managers will also be needed. It is at this level that individual projects will be initiated and supported. Managers will be particularly interested to know how co-production might help to sustain services in the face of public sector spending reductions.

#### **Recommendations**

- (R6) Partner agencies should formally agree to support and embed co-production, through their own decision making structures both in principle and through practical measures
- (R7) Partner agencies should arrange presentations to be made to relevant managers to raise awareness and encourage buy-in

#### **Supporting the Frontline**

24. An effective strategy to support co-production in Swansea needs to be bottom up at the same time as top down. The best way for the Better Swansea Partnership to do this is to target training and support activity at areas where co-production might fruitfully be developed.
25. Working with the theme partnerships, the Better Swansea Partnership should therefore identify priority areas for training and support. In the spirit of co-production, all workshops and training sessions should feature some contributions from service users and volunteers who are involved in successful co-production activities which are similar to (but not necessarily identical with) those being considered in the workshop or training session.

26. Support will also be needed for service users and communities to mobilise their contributions and to help them make the most of the opportunities for co-production. These sessions should also make full use of existing service users and communities who are making a success of co-production. They should be designed around the 'training the trainers' model, so that they can be rolled out by the participants, who can take the messages back to their groups and communities and mobilise further interest and co-production activity.
27. These, along with other initiatives, are examples of the practical ways that the Better Swansea Partnership could sponsor to help the bottom up development of the co-production agenda locally:
- Offer co-production training and support to service users / communities
  - Offer co-production training and support to professionals / managers
  - Ensure that all training and support embodies the concept of co-production by making use of the contributions of service users and communities who are already using co-production successfully
  - Agree set of experiments for including co-production more centrally in the commissioning process
  - Agree set of experiments for including co-production more centrally in the contracts with providers
  - Explore neighbourhood pooling of budgets (with community participation) in order to open up new opportunities for co-production by community groups
28. If these initiatives are considered to be worthwhile, the Better Swansea Partnership will need to decide how they will be supported and managed. This could be done through a partnership project, through one partner taking the lead or work taking place in one theme partnership in the first instance.

#### **Recommendations**

- (R8) The Better Swansea Partnership should agree a strategy for targeting frontline initiatives at areas where co-production might most fruitfully be developed.
- (R9) The Better Swansea Partnership should agree how any strategy for targeting frontline co-production initiatives should be supported and managed.

## Conclusion

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29. Co-production is central to the future of public services. The good news is that we now realize we have been doing a lot of it already in recent years. The bad news is that we now realize we were not doing it well because we weren't taking it seriously.
30. Co-production can help us to get much more out of the resources and assets which we have in Swansea, not only as a set of public and third sector agencies but also as a set of resourceful communities. We can improve our outcomes significantly and, at the same time, reduce the public sector costs of achieving these outcomes.
31. For this to happen, the Swansea partnerships need to play a major leadership role in promoting, guiding and coordinating the co-production efforts of service users, citizens and all partners. The recommendations in this report should help to ensure that Swansea becomes a leading exponent of user and community co-production of public services, not only in Wales but more widely in the UK and Europe.

## Recommendations

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- (R1) A shared definition should be adopted by the Better Swansea Partnership
- (R2) Each theme partnership should consider a general report outlining the main concepts of co-production at the earliest opportunity
- (R3) Each theme partnership should review what coproduction is taking place in its area and how each of these activities might be better supported
- (R4) Each theme partnership should identify where a range of existing co-production activities are contributing to similar outcomes and reconfigure these activities to help them reinforce each other's impact and to reduce waste of inputs (both from public agencies and citizens)
- (R5) Each theme partnership should identify where existing activities of statutory agencies could make more use of existing co-production activities in other services or in other geographic areas
- (R6) Partner agencies should formally agree to support and embed co-production, through their own decision making structures both in principle and through practical measures

- (R7) Partner agencies should arrange presentations to be made to relevant managers to raise awareness and encourage buy-in
- (R8) The Better Swansea Partnership should agree a strategy for targeting frontline initiatives at areas where co-production might most fruitfully be developed.
- (R9) The Better Swansea Partnership should agree how any strategy for targeting frontline co-production initiatives should be supported and managed.

# Swansea Coproduction Workshop - Feedback Report -



Better Swansea Partnership  
June 2011



## **1. Introduction**

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The workshop was held on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2011 in Swansea Civic Centre

The aims of the workshop were:

- To raise awareness of coproduction
- To map current partnership coproduction activity in Swansea
- To identify potential areas of development

### **Participants**

Ali Bond – Swansea Council for Voluntary Services

Caroline Carter – Community Regeneration

Cllr Alan Robinson – Cabinet Member (Community Regeneration)

Donna Davies – Expert Patients

Euros Owen – Access to Services

Heather Hughes – Social Services

Iwan Davies - Culture & Tourism

Jane Tonks – Social Services

Karen Grunhut – Social Inclusion Unit

Lee Morgan - Housing

Marianne Hewitt – Social Services

Matt Clifton – Culture & Tourism

Nick Andrews – Social Services (Older People)

Nicole Trotman - Strategic Programmes Office

Nina Williams – Swansea Public Health

Philip McDonnell – PM Developments

Sharon Miller – ABM Health Trust

Sue Reed – Community Buildings

Vicky Thomas – Strategic Programmes Office

### 3. Groupwork: Mapping Coproduction in Swansea

#### Q1. What Has Worked Well?

Examples	Why?
1. Mentro Allan – set up to support carers / people with a disability to have active opportunities	Grant support set up support officers – 3yr time limited – now set up as a self help group
2. Support group for parents of children with autism (Is this group influencing service delivery and communications?)	Just using commitment of individuals
3. Work on Network 50+ + implementation of OPS + funding. Development and delivery of equality and diversity scheme and action plan	Part coproduction - involvement → further work
4. My Home Life pilots in care homes	Based on praising + celebrating the good in staff, residents and carers
5. “All Together Now” Locality working <u>pilot</u> in Mumbles (2009)	Relationships put before policies + procedures. Patch working.
6. All carers support in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> sector	Good joint working and some £s handed over
7. 50+ pilot on delivery of prevention messages	Part coproduction → basis for further development
8. Day opportunities	“Unprofessionalising” Day services having fun not delivering services
9. Direct payments peer support group + DP user involvement in training	Strong voice in recent review issues
10. Community centres ‘run’ by elected committee of volunteers	+ 30 years professional input + support. Financial resources
11. Expert Patients	Supported with staff and resources
12. Friends of parks	Supported with staff and resources
13. Friends of hospitals	Supported with staff and resources
14. Supporting delivery across the city	Supported with staff and resources

#### Q2. What Has NOT Worked Well?

Examples	Why?
1. Community groups finishing when ext. funding ends – food co-ops in some places	Resilience + sustainability not build into hand over process → insurance, h&s → ongoing costs
2. Over dominance – pressure	Others disengage

groups	
3. Cultural sensitivity	Importance of a range of citizens / groups / communities etc are involved
4. No common goals – shared visions	Self interest
5. Top down - forced	Not suitable to local
6. Responding to grants / funds	Reactively not based down(?)
7. Time banking in Gorseinon	Lost funding; no coordinator; over ambitious
8. St Thomas School – Community Element / Library	Lack of agreement of the principle of community use
9. Learning from “Altogether Now” and spreading the approach	Not everyone ‘got it. Fear of losing control? Too ‘fluffy’? (Hearts and flowers) – Prime focus on budget management
10. Developing a genuinely common agenda with other stakeholders	Not enough emphasis on this

### Q3. Where Could Existing Coproduction be Extended?

Service Area	How?
1. Culture & Tourism	Volunteer group set up to manage tennis centre – could be extended to other areas
2. Community Regen	Local residents associations – self help in the local community – hands on approach
3. Social Services	Citizen’s alliance – idea generation + critical friend → potential providers tenant participation panel (disability) - look / evaluate services
4. Social Services & Health	More support for carers / more expert patient provision (EPP Cymru) Education progs for people) /
5. Transforming Care Home Culture	My Home Life
6. Local Area Coordination	Joining up with localities in health and other public bodies
7. Network 50+ Older People’s Work on Equality and Diversity Scheme + Action Plan	Expand Networks
8. Social Services Work With Bangladeshi Community	Expand work areas
9. Peer Mentoring	
10. Peer review of existing strategies plans	
11. Information Provision	Review publications / social media
12. Shared decision making on	Cuts / grants allocations

resources	
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#### Q4. Where Could Coproduction Be Tried for the First Time?

Service Area	How?
15. Parks / Leisure centres / community centre management	Already doing it! 411 volunteers in community centres 1,000+ clubs supported across Culture and Tourism
16. Commissioning Plans – Social Services	
17. Change Fund – possible element within fund	
18. Alternative models of service delivery – locality working	
19. Outcome focussed homecare in social services	Cluster working in locality
20. Extended 'peer mentoring' (Jarrow?) e.g. substance misuse	
21. Community Transport (This would be REALLY, REALLY helpful)	One community transport manager ✓✓
22. I.T. / Silver surfers / Skype etc with other vulnerable people (e.g. Cwmbwla)	

#### Feedback points from groups

- Community based social care – a good area to expand
- Funding led schemes don't work so well
- Need to have shared, not conflicting, objectives if schemes are going to work
- Clear, shared definition is required
- Adult social services – develop community / locality targeted approach
- Link healthy cities work with social care agenda
- Need to clarify geographies e.g. community / locality (best size for engagement about 5,000)

## **4. Group work 2: Developing Coproduction in Swansea**

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### **Q1. What Action Should We Recommend?**

- Action - continue discussing to clarify
- Communities need skills, knowledge to properly engage with professionals to make decision on equal footing. Need to explore how to do this.
- Engage properly
- Dialogue about how to shift some resource from providing mainstream services to supporting local people to co-produce at stakeholder or neighbourhood level.
- Explore participatory budgeting
- CMT / Member discussion on personal budgets (could lead to less spend on social services & more on leisure centres)
- Individual budgets (all Supporting People, health, social services)
- Locally accepted definition of co production and its relationship with engagement needed.
- Strategy / tactics
- Transfer of services
- Buy in – LSB, CMT, Members – that status quo cant remain
- Linking and pulling together the different locality neighbourhood areas and management e.g. community activity networks (leisure centres), communities of interest (language, BME), Communities First, adult social services, child and family social services, health localities, co-location (health, social services)
- Leave alone when working well e.g. St Thomas Community Group
- Work together better

### **Q2. What are the Barriers?**

- Willingness of managers to open their budget up for discussion / change – protection, professionalism (eg, direct payments being grouped then has an impact on level of service provision)
- Recognition that its hard
- Legislative e.g. salt for icy roads (extreme) health and safety
- CRB checks
- Silo planning – engagement with community
- Understanding of language community/locality. What is meant?
- Self interest/self preservation
- Clarifying co-production – is it services or community?
- Lack of trust in communities/stakeholders making decision
- Centralisation of power.../fear of losing power
- Reluctance to shift resources to support this approach
- Professional protectionism

## **5. Summary Points**

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1. Clarify / agree a locally accepted definition of coproduction (need also to clarify what community / locality level we want to work at)
2. Get buy in from decision makers / councillors (this may need the case to be made from an 'efficiencies' perspective without losing sight of the outcomes)
3. Get buy in from managers (this may need the case to be made from a 'sustainability' perspective without losing sites of the outcomes)
4. Work out how to offer training and support to service users / communities
5. Work out how to offer training and support to professionals / managers
6. Explore neighbourhood pooling of budgets (with community participation?)

**Dave Mckenna  
July 2011**

# Thanks for your co-production!

## Stay in touch ... and test the Governance International Co-Production Toolkit!

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