

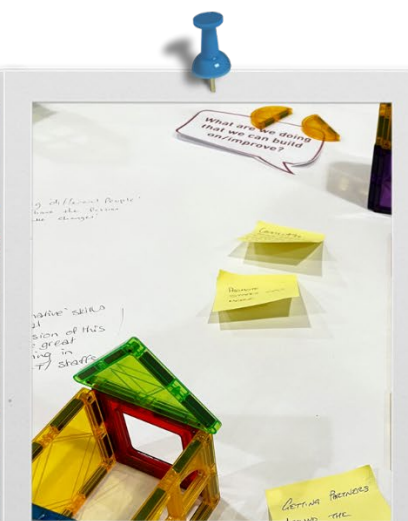


STAFFS CAN

3rd October 2023



Staffs CAN
03/10/23



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What we focused on at Staffs CAN

What is the Connected Communities Evaluation Report

Review of the activities and information in the report

Who in Staffordshire needs to be involved in

Recommendations for 2024



Staffs CAN Review

What we did

8 people came to this Staffs CAN with a mix of community members, and representatives from across the community.

Staffs CAN reviewed information contained in the draft version of the Connected Communities Evaluation Report for 2023. They offered advice on what should be included or edited in this version but also made recommendations for future evaluation reports moving forward too.

What is the Connected Communities Evaluation?

In the last 18 months, Staffordshire University has piloted the Connected Communities Evaluation to create an evaluation report.

The purpose of the Connected Communities Evaluation is to understand our collective impact as an engaged civic university.

The Connected Communities Evaluation Report outlines and evaluates some of the community activities that have been delivered by staff from across the University.

This includes activities such as:

- Community engagement activities, like Staffs CAN.
- Public Engagement in Research activities, like Public Lectures.
- And Collaborative projects with community partners, such as Discover Digital.

The evaluation does not cover business engagement or outreach activities designed for student recruitment as these are evaluated elsewhere.

How did Staffs CAN look at the information and make recommendations?

Staffs CAN was asked to engage in a **SLIPDOT** analysis, where they looked at the activities that have fed into this report to identify the:

- **S**trengths- Areas where the University is doing well in terms of community engagement.
- **A**reas of **L**ower **I**ntensity- Areas of community engagement that are not highly developed at the university.
- **A**reas for **P**otential **D**evelopment- Areas of community engagement that the university could realistically improve in the future.
- **O**pportunities- Where there is potential support for community engagement activities both at the University and in the Community.
- **T**hreats- Where there isn't support for activities at the University and in the Community.



What did people say?

We asked the people that came to Staffs CAN about the community research activities that were included in the Connected Communities Evaluation Report.

There were six different kinds of impact that Staffs CAN were looking at when making observations and recommendations. These were:

- Societal Impacts
- Financial Impacts
- Health and Wellbeing Impacts
- Environmental Impacts
- Cultural Impacts
- Policy Impacts



Societal



Financial



Health &
Wellbeing

Types of Impact



Environmental



Cultural



Policy

Societal Impact:



Strengths in this section included:

- Activities brought people together who otherwise wouldn't have.
- Built networks which has increased awareness of community services.
- Allowed Lived Experience perspectives to be heard.

Areas to develop included:

- More needs to be done to reach out to a wider range of communities.
- Communication from the university with Staffordshire communities needs to be improved.
- Increased number of students engaging with local community groups and organisations
- Signpost university facilities that are available for community use e.g., Nature Reserve.

Financial Impact:



Strengths in this section included:

- Impact is made through upskilling and education opportunities but more information about this and potential opportunities needs to be shared further.

Areas to develop included:

- More information is needed about the financial impact that the University makes in Staffordshire.
- Opportunity for the University to support charities and community organisations to demonstrate their impact to assist in access to funding.

Health and Wellbeing Impact:



Strengths in this section included:

- The volume of projects that support health and wellbeing.

Areas to develop included:

- More should be done to publicise the work and the opportunity to get involved.
- Extend this work to 'harder to reach groups', including individuals with a disability or individuals who are unable to leave the house.

Environmental Impact:



Strengths in this section included:

- Staffordshire University has set some challenging targets to help reduce its environmental impact
- Staffordshire University is championing sustainability through research and innovation.

Areas to develop included:

- The group agreed that, while a lot of good work was happening, this is not reflected through this report.

Cultural Impact:



Strengths in this section included:

- The Cultural events that have been held have been a success

Areas to develop included:

- Publicity has been an issue. There is a low awareness of the larger cultural activities that the University has put on.

Policy Impact:



Strengths in this section included:

- Staffs CAN felt that University staff and University partners could bring about lasting societal change.

Areas to develop included:

- There is not enough publicity around this kind of work
- Staffs CAN should be involved where appropriate with these kinds of activities e.g., attending and publicising.

Recommendations for 2024 report

With the information that people at Staffs CAN looked at, recommendations about the next report were outlined to build on the 2023 version. These recommendations included:

- Incorporate an 'Easy Read' or audio version of the report to make the report more accessible.
- Link the evaluation report to the overall progress that is being made to university targets
- Produce a more equal spread of activities from across all the different impact priorities.
- Involve Staffs CAN from an earlier stage in the process to advise on the evaluation report.
- More detailed breakdown of each project, including statistics on all projects and activities undertaken by the university.

Recommendations for CAN moving forward

Following on from the conversation about recommendations related to the evaluation report Staffs CAN spoke about some things that they think could be implemented over the course of future Staffs CAN's. These things were mainly around building membership and representation from communities across Staffordshire as well as adding a campaign arm to the CAN that would be based around the Cost-of-Living Crisis. These recommendations include:

- Prioritise cost of living work. Host a cost-of-living event that is supported by people that currently go to Staffs CAN
- Stands at community events that promotes Staffs CAN
- Flyers: "What to expect at CAN" that partners of Staffs CAN can share with their communities.
- More information from Staffordshire University activities between Staffs CAN gatherings.
- Develop a Staffs CAN directory – An opt in email list of people that go to Staffs CAN so that they can network and build relationships away from the meetings as well as highlight opportunities that they have or would like to get involved with.
- Develop Hybrid CAN events- So people can meet in person and online at the same time.
- Staffs CAN to support the development of a Calendar of community and university events which is available to the public.
- Encourage more community members to attend Staffs CAN that are not linked to organisations.

What next for the Connected Communities Evaluation Report?

With the consultation feedback from Staffs CAN this information has been used to inform the final edits on the report. The report will be available at the start of 2024. For a copy, please contact connectedcommunities@staffs.ac.uk