

The PATHWAYS Project

To create the infrastructure to support the transfer of knowledge and resources between people working within, and moving towards, small and diverse farming.



PROPOSAL

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JERSEY // AN INNOVATIVE ISLAND

Recently there has been a revitalisation of the local food system movement. This has proven to be engaging for growers, as well as an important source of healthy and environmentally positive food. This is evident from the recent growth in the sale of organic food through new marketplaces, as well as being documented at policy level on the global setting. How is this shift emerging within our local agricultural community?

Through government support Jersey has diversified from 'The Big 4' over the last 5 years. Investments into tea plantations, medical cannabis and hemp farming all aim to have a large share of these new international markets. Alongside this, Jersey's long-established international dairy programme is supported by Jersey Overseas Aid, and has become a strong ambassador for the island.

Jersey Royals are also a major part of the agricultural landscape. Institutionally, the central farming organisation RJH supports growing networks and 'cultivates' education groups that distinguish between 'industrial farming' and hobbyists, alongside focusing on children.

Genuine Jersey is a providence programme which is supported by the government, and works with a host of local producers.

The BIG Picture//

There has also been a growth in "care farms". Care farms are farms that have been set up with a holistic approach to community and provide forms of health and social care, as well as nature-based services. Jersey is also well known for its "hedge-veg", and since COVID there has been a blossoming engagement within the hedge-veg market space. This is the roadside marketplace for home grown and hobbyist growers as well as 'farmgate' markets.

Jersey is a vibrant community full of growing diversity, governmental marketing support and political engagement. However, decisions for the progression of agriculture in the island are predominately made by a small group of people and shaped by large scale market opportunities.

More recently, decisions are increasingly being shaped by climate strategies which involve land management institutions focused on conservation and carbon targets.

There is a substantial engagement with Jersey's rural economy and countryside, cultivating a strong community connection. It is important to note that a blend of policy, entrepreneurial spirit, international ambassadorship, financial opportunity and commitment to preservation of agricultural land has protected the local rural economy. This has resulted in Jersey's strong agricultural position on the global map. SCOOP is therefore joining an innovative and deep-rooted community who are seeking ways to enhance and support local agriculture

SCOOP supports small farmers //

SMALL FARMERS //

There is a difference between small-scale and industrial farming. Small-scale farming is centred round optimum ecological systems, individual livelihoods, cropland and income diversity and a "local first" approach which we describe as a local food system. A local food system (LSF) of small farmers is a collaborative network that integrates sustainable food production, processing, distribution, consumption, and waste management in order to enhance the environmental, economic, and social health of a particular area (FAO 2018).

WHY ARE SMALL FARMERS IMPORTANT //

LFSs tend to focus on climate positive agriculture and seed sovereignty, whilst also having health and economic benefits (FAO 2018). In a recent study by the New Economics Foundation (NEF), the Social Return on Investment (SROI) for a small organic farm to table marketplace, shows a greater cost benefit ratio than industrial farming, charities and frontline services (ORFC 2021).

It is important to recognise that small-scale LFSs across the world were relied upon during the COVID pandemic, where globalised industrial food systems suffered from high COVID infection rates in processing plants, breakages in seed supply chains and restrictions in the movement of farm workers (BBC 2020). LFSs offer accessible leverage points to address land-use and the transition towards sustainable agriculture.

LFSs supported by small-scale farming practices are considered to be a pathway towards inclusive global development. Shorter supply chains reduce waste (currently $\frac{1}{3}$ of all food is wasted). Small farmer practices also reduce chemical use, soil compaction and improve water management, all of which are factors that contribute towards living within the Planetary Boundaries. Reduced carbon emissions are also linked with reduction in tractor use, seed saving, food miles, and composting and fertiliser schemes.

SMALL FARMER REALITY //

In the developed world small farmers are near extinction. In the local Jersey context, since the 1990's there has been a drop in dairy farmers from 283 to 13. It is noted by many that this shows a lack of resilience within the industry. Over a similar time period the local potato business has shifted to the UK mainland. The average age of a small-scale farmer in the UK is 65 years old, whilst only 3% of farmers are under 35. The problems with this are twofold; there are less people moving into farming which creates a greater concentration of power, leading to an overall weaker food system, as well as a potential knowledge loss between generations. Finding a solution to support smallholders is less than simple. Studies show that smallholders suffer from a multitude of problems; a lack of designated infrastructure, lack of financing and loans, lack of suitable education, social safety nets due to being landless, marketplace barriers, and policy designed to support large-scale export programmes. However, it is also clear that Jersey is not lacking interest or energy in support of the local small-scale farmer.

risks & opportunities //

RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES //

SCOOP has spotted risks, gaps and opportunities in the local agricultural ecosystem. It is difficult to move into agriculture as the barriers are off-putting and a generation of smallholder growers will potentially miss the opportunity to share their local knowledge. There is an absence of formal education programmes and suitable infrastructure for small, diverse, nature-based farming practices designed for the local market. There is a lack of understanding of the scope of different ways in which land can be managed in order to produce food whilst also reaching conservation and carbon targets. The LEAF audit as set out in the ISLAND plan only currently works for the large export-based farmers, and leaves large areas of cropland diversity farms and growing spaces predominantly unmanaged. SCOOP is best placed to develop the PATHWAYS programme as over the last 2 years it has grown a value-led marketplace with 300 members, 5 organic farmers and 35 local producers selling within a not-for-profit marketplace.

AIM //

The aim of the PATHWAYS programme is therefore to bring new people into farming with the support of a specifically designed programme which blends community facilities and educational networks. This creates opportunities to transfer knowledge across the generations. The programme also aligns with the Common Strategic Policy for the Island of Jersey by building a skilled and varied economy that upholds the heritage of the Island.

VALUES//

The values-led approach sets the parameters of farming practice, profit and community that are synonymous with ecological principles, local livelihoods and community-based prosperity. PATHWAYS is a plan for supporting local small-scale farmers by drawing upon international examples, local wisdom, value-led approaches and innovative land-use methods which will support new farmers into the industry and transition existing farmland into sustainable and locally-owned farming and food systems.

industry-wide SOLUTIONS//

Global transitions towards LFS and small-scale farming offers a long list of examples of successful programmes. They all share defining features:

- Marketplace (institutional / value-led markets)
- Education (integrated within the community)
- Defined values (such as agro-ecological / fair trade)
- Physical community (living spaces / Food-hubs and community)
- Support from governmental institutions / policy visions

For example, The Landworkers' Alliance are a UK-based organisation which supports and protects smallholders. They are a facet of La Via Campesina, who are an organisation of peasant small holders. They have set up 'Farm Start', which is a group of case studies that are focused on bringing people to smallholder farming, and takes the following approach:

- The 'Pathways to Markets' project in Dyfi Valley have a 2 pronged approach. 1) training new growers and 2) creating new markets. They work with 12 people through a horticultural programme across existing farms.
- 'Farm Start' in Lancashire offers a year long bursary to work a 40 hour week alongside a farmer.
- Locavore has set up a plot for very new farmers to use a 25m² plot of land to start to sell commercially. Through the programme the new farmers earn money and gain understanding of the commercial opportunities in growing.

Building upon these examples and inspiration, PATHWAYS will set out a plan for bringing new people into farming, landowners to new farmers and knowledge sharing across the community.

SCOOP PATHWAYS//

PATHWAYS will be split into three sections. This three-pronged approach is to create a degree of community autonomy over the project, as well as developing a goal-orientated programme. During the previous two years' of research for the PATHWAYS programme, the following factors were highlighted:

1. All farmers are different
2. All land has a specific land-use directive
3. All market opportunities are different
4. Farming is a sliding scale of practice
5. Everyone is at a different stage within the learning process, and each person has differing intentions.
6. All participants share similar values based in "ecological" principles.

The three-pronged approach is divided like this:

- SECTION 1: PEER-TO-PEER KNOWLEDGE SHARING
- SECTION 2: COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD
- SECTION 3: "FARMSTART" PROGRAMME - AN EDUCATION PROGRAMME FOCUSED ON PEOPLE LOOKING TO BUILD A BUSINESS IN AGRO-ECOLOGY

ORGANISATIONAL //

Knowledge transfer is deeply contextual, and it is important to look at the social and learning contexts from which knowledge exchanges arise. Within the SCOOP context, we must look at the relationship between producers, traders, agricultural institutions, management, and the SCOOP market. How can the PATHWAYS programme be designed in a way which creates an open knowledge culture which is based upon sharing principles?

Our understanding of organisational structures owes a lot to Frederick Laloux's *Reinventing Organizations*. Laloux proposes that organisations can be understood through various tiers, moving from impulsive to evolutionary. Within Laloux's evolutionary tier, organisations are understood as living organisms which practice self-management and strive towards wholeness. This is something we want to work towards at SCOOP. Organisations are founded upon peer relationships, resource efficiency, an open and creative work climate, holarchy networking, participatory co-creation, and social and ethical innovation. We have identified the following points from Laloux's concept of evolutionary organisation as being foundational for our PATHWAYS programme:

- Programme design is not linked to outcomes
- Community is formed organically
- Create a conduct of knowledge sharing
- Respect of others and the system
- Resource sharing and energy saving

Section ONE // knowledge sharing

INDIVIDUAL //

The success of the PATHWAYS programme is dependent on the SCOOP community committing to the principles of reciprocity and collaboration. It is necessary to consider individual challenges and opportunities for collaboration. A key consideration within this is the question of learning agility, which questions the efficacy of knowledge sharing techniques for different audiences. For example, would an online notice board actually suit older users (65+)? We want to create an inclusive community of practice - a space in which all participants in the knowledge-share can be equally involved. Individual considerations might include, but are not limited to:

- Technical ability
- Financial stability and flexibility
- Risk assessment
- Mobility and accessibility of the shop
- Historical farming tradition
- Cultural heritage and relationship to the land
- Worldviews and understandings

In order to create space for internal mobility and community learning, emphasis is often placed on ideas of exchange, reciprocity and trust. This aims to promote an evolutionary culture of learning. Examples of this include Campesino's importance of horizontal knowledge sharing, and the FAO's emphasis on "experiential learning" and community interaction.

knowledge sharing

BUILDING THE PROGRAMME //

Jersey is full of growers. The first process is to map the growers who are interested in sharing knowledge and learning about small farm techniques. It is important to build upon existing farming infrastructure and also support people currently working in agriculture. The stakeholder map will also enable us to see the interconnections between different individuals, and create a clearer vision of the opportunities for workforce and resource sharing in line with our collaborative and regenerative principles. The first part PATHWAYS programme highlighted an extensive community of people who are engaged within the small farming network. The mapping will ask the following questions:

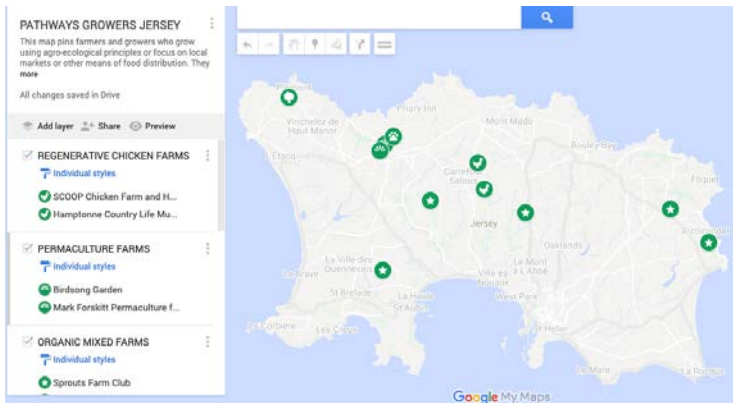
- Who are the farmers?
- What is expected of them // would they like to do open farm days?
- Are they interested in open gardens?
- Who would offer education possibilities? (see part 3 for more details)
- What type of space would promote retired farmers' engagement?

knowledge sharing

MAPPING GROWERS//

Through Google Maps we have designed an interactive map which pins growers and their growing information.

The map is available to the participants of PATHWAYS



GROWERS OPEN DAYS//

We will set up growers open days. This includes:

- Setting up a year planner for growers to create open days at times that suits them.
- Create a simple booking system.
- Send invitations through the PATHWAYS networks.

This feeds into PATHWAYS Section 3 - "FARMSTART" - as growers will be asked to allow members of the "FARMSTART" programme onto their farm.

PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING//

In order to build on the evolutionary process of PATHWAYS, people who take part in the farm visits will be asked to share what they learnt, and what they gave in return over the visit.

Other ideas to generate peer learning could be generated throughout the duration of the PATHWAYS programme.

This feeds into Section Two which provides a platform and marketplace for the needs and offerings connected to small farming.

Section TWO// community notice board

INTERGENERATIONAL COLLABORATION //

The emphasis on intergenerational knowledge sharing within the PATHWAYS programme puts limitations on the use of social media and online platforms. The message board acts as a capacity building mechanism, enabling peer-to-peer collaboration. It is designed to create space to facilitate connections, which will then be developed in-person, allowing for wider social learning and networking. It will be an informal notice place which will allow people to find land, and landowners to find workers. Ultimately the notice board aims to act as an accelerator for those beginning to enter the world of agroecological farming.

Alongside the connective purpose of the notice board, it will also act as a means to gather information about what the community needs and can give around agroecological growing. By providing space for people to express their interests, either as landowners or as growers, the notice board will act as an illuminative tool through which to show the interest webs which exist within Jersey's growing community. Alongside the noticeboard, infographics may also be a useful communication tool which are digestible by most audiences. Face-to-face learning and exchange is desirable, and when COVID restrictions permit this is what we aspire towards.

HOW DOES IT WORK? //

The initial launch of the project is decidedly low-tech. This is to ensure the greatest inclusivity and accessibility for islanders who are not confident or comfortable with working digitally. To begin with, the notice board will be a physical board pinned onto the wall near the SCOOP check-out. It will simply be divided into two columns; "Things needed" and "Things given". The board acts as a connective infrastructure, mapping the needs and resources of our community and creating an open space for knowledge sharing. Requirements for the physical notice board include:

- Cork board
- Pot of pens placed by the door
- Paper to write offers and requests on
- Pins
- Basic legal guidance of the laws surrounding land use. This guidance will be merely advisory, and SCOOP takes no responsibility for any legal issues resulting from the notice board.
- Basic "how to" guide which outlines some of the steps which might need to be considered when beginning farming. Eg. financial considerations / opportunities for sharing equipment etc.

WHAT ARE THE GUIDELINES? //

In order to ensure that the board achieves its collaborative purpose, it is necessary to outline some basic guidelines. These are:

- The board is intended for people whose livelihood is agriculture
- Intended for people working on small-scale, local food systems centred around agroecological / permaculture principles
- Workers' rights and fair pay
- Reciprocity and exchange

community notice board //

The community notice boards would be set up in the following locations across the island:

- SCOOP
- RHS
- Anneville
- Birdsong
- Sprouts Farm Club
- Hamptonne

A whatsapp group will be set up to coordinate the people overseeing the boards. When a notice is added to one board, it would also be posted to the whatsapp group to be replicated on the other boards. This will facilitate a cross-island network of PATHWAYS.

Things needed // Things given

Land use /
planning advice

Looking for
more land

Financial
advice

Diversification
and market
innovation
workshop

Farm
design
workbook!

Section THREE // PATHWAYS FARMSTART

PATHWAYS FARMSTART //

The PATHWAYS FARMSTART programme is designed for people who want to develop a small-scale farming operation in Jersey. FARMSTART is a series of curated lessons where members are expected to take part in community knowledge sharing, and offer services through the notice board. Each lesson is designed to encompass different facets of developing a small farm, and each member is welcome to come with different ideologies and unique positions. The subject matters have been drawn from discussions with people who are transitioning into agriculture. It is not specific to a type of farming practice, but it is defined by small farmers and the concept of a local food system as described above. Each participant will be invited to outline their design idea if it is in line with regenerative, permaculture or agroforestry principles, and this will shape the discussions of economics and land-use issues. Each lesson has been designed as a 2 hour programme, held at SCOOP over a period of 6 weeks.

- Local expert on the subject
- Presentation and material
- Working groups to build relationships.

"FARMSTART" LESSON GUIDE FARM DESIGN //

This will provide a means to design the farm, and will take the shape of a workbook which discusses:

- Farming style
- Expectations and outcomes
- Farming size

LEGAL AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION //

We recognise that one of the main challenges to setting up small-scale farming networks is the legal complexities over land-use rights. Therefore, we will set up access to the appropriate legal teams focused on land-use law and agricultural licenses. We will also include advice on financial planning, providing a basic "how to" guide of inherited wisdom for first-time farmers.

- John Vautier, land use expert, Jersey

EDUCATION PROGRAMMES //

As part of the PATHWAYS programme we hope to facilitate a wide educational exchange. Within this, we will create a formal education programme between old local farmers and the new generation, alongside fostering potential partnerships with international organisations.

- Part 1 - International networks of farmers
- Part 2 - Local experts who can teach what they want, but also explain about education flows within the island.

MARKET OPPORTUNITIES //

Understanding market opportunities is of foundational importance for new farmers. We will therefore create a programme which educates new farmers about different markets and their potential, exploring different avenues of income and potential partnerships through the food system.

- Better Food Traders (growing communities)
- India Hamilton
- John Garton (Genuine Jersey)
- Jersey Restaurant Association
- Caring Cooks

AUDIT TRAINING //

We will use SCOOP's connections to provide audit training which is specific to the local context.

- Ex CEO of Biodynamic Detemer USA

TECHNOLOGY //

Led by an expert in technology designed for small farmers, this lesson will aim to educate around the practical use of technology. How it records production, biodiversity and other natural capital. How it can be used as educational tool and broaden your farming community.

- Abby Rose, Farmerama

DIVERSIFICATION AND MARKET INNOVATION //

There are two elements to this course; exploring a local and an international case study of improving the economics of local farming systems. We will look at what different people have achieved, and assess the tools and ideas which they used. .

- Maria Benjamin
- Michael Overberry

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH //

Food safety is a key part of any sustainable food business, yet it's normally considered to be a barrier and red tape. This lesson seeks to bust those misconceptions and explore how to use food safety strategies as an advantageous part to your business.

- On-site food process which adapt the value chain and generates more income.
- Composting and connecting with food waste outlets, alongside risk assessments
- Jersey Environmental Health team

marketing and participation //

MARKETING //

The marketing process focuses on reaching people with a deep knowledge and understanding of the local community and ecosystem, and those who are eager to learn.

Phase one: identifying participants and find routes to these people:

- Use different local growing groups to establish who the users of the PATHWAYS project are.
- Approach new startups and Jersey businesses (eg. tea / cannabis)
- Contact long-term agriculturalists

Phase two: specific products and processes:

- Generate material specific to 1) each section of the PATHWAYS programme and 2) the targeted group.
- Cost analysis and budgeting.

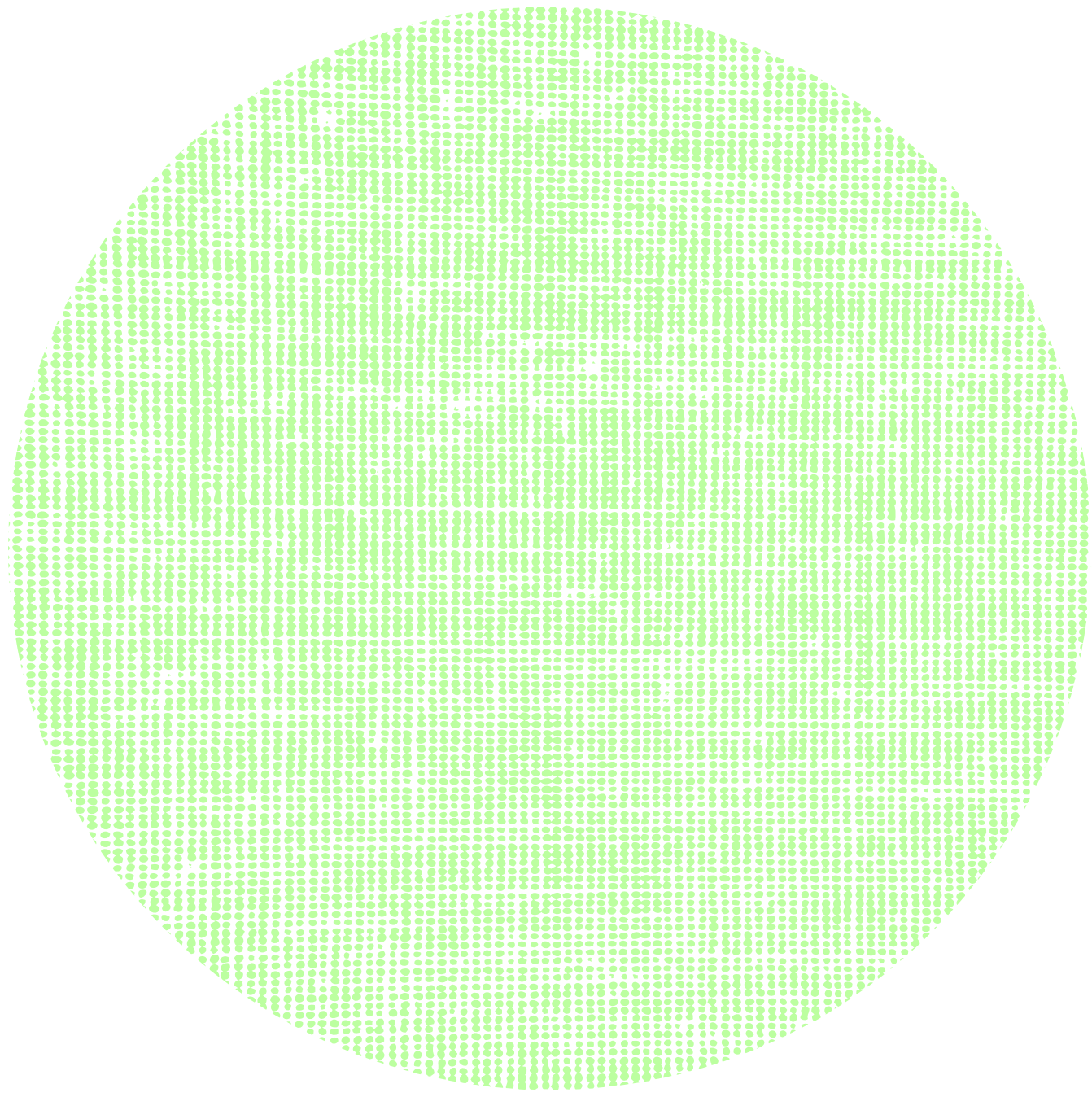
Phase three: reaching participants.

- Word of mouth
- Digital marketing and promotion (Facebook, Instagram)
- Physical notice boards across the island
- SCOOP's existing network and the SCOOP newsletter.
- Promotion in the JEP

PARTICIPATION //

These are the methods we will use to ensure the programme responds to the communities needs.

- Clear communication of the PATHWAYS values of peer-to-peer knowledge exchange.
- Accessibility of the community notice board
- Broad marketing which encompasses different sections of society
- Checking that participants are happy and comfortable with the format of communications through both formal (questionnaire) and informal (chats) feedback.
- Feedback from design and workshop sessions using a human-centred design thinking methodology (framing questions / gathering inspiration / generating ideas / testing & prototyping ideas / storytelling)
- Regularly taking suggestions for improvement and new project and collaboration ideas
- Importance of mutual respect and welcoming of all voices



SCOOP wholeheartedly believe in the people power of an educated & trusted population & that knowledge is abundant & regenerative.

