

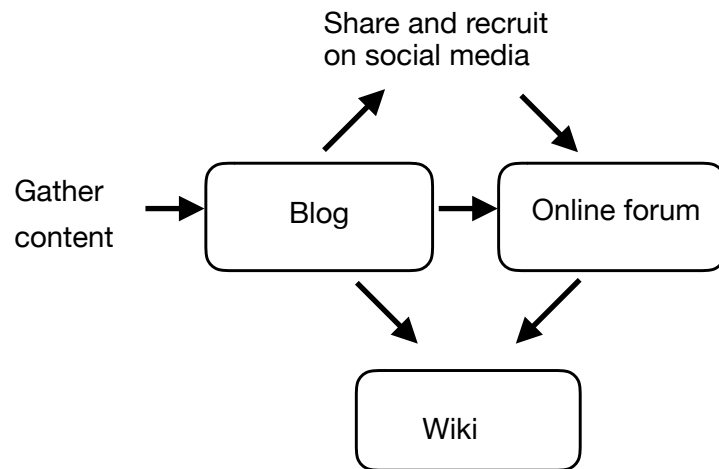
Activities

Meetups and co-design

- Informal meetups
- Workshops
- Video conferences



Collaboration platform online



Mapping and network building

- Mapping assets
- Mapping connections
- Building networks

Model

Narrative - is it

- Connecting Londoners
- Connecting Communities
- Hub for London



Community of Practice

- Data
- Networks
- Voice
- Organising

Network and community

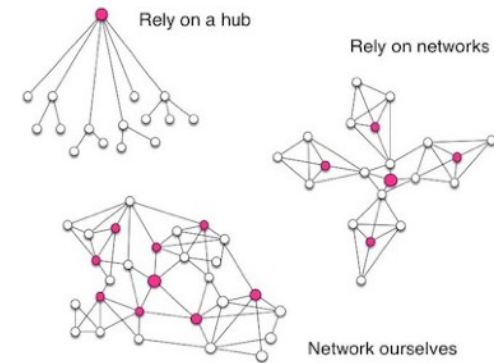
- Service providers
- Advisers
- Informal learners
- Service users



Starting up

- Recruit enthusiasts
- Develop the model
- Setup initial online platform
- Demo mapping
- Demo network comms
- Run a Living Lab simulation

System development



Outputs

- How to guides
- Training and support
- Comms platforms
- Datasets
- Maps



Developing

- Animate the online platform
- Run meet ups and video events
- Pilot mapping and comms
- Support network builders
- Develop guides
- Join up the networks

Scope and focus depends on resources and interests of members

Extending the Hub by developing a Community of Practice

A contribution from David Wilcox for discussion with Hub advisory group, Our Way Ahead and Connecting Londoners.

The diagram builds on proposals in the documents [Extending the Hub](#) and a [Community of Practice for networking London civil society](#). It is based on the one-year [Networked City](#) exploration by Connecting Londoners and Our Way Ahead. It is deliberately 'big picture' and will need to be reduced, focussed, and staged depending in commitment and resources.

In summary: what's needed is a community of people keen to learn how to build networks bottom-up and bottom-across in local communities and pan-London, together with support, service providers, and advisers. Activities would include meet-ups, an online platform, and on-the-ground activities to map and build networks.

These activities would complement and extend the work of the charitable company, the Hub for London, where networks and networking are to be one of three core functions - but where there will only be one member of staff specifically working on that. The aim is to help put into practice the recommendations of consultant [Steve Wyler's report](#) which said:

The Hub "should act as a convenor and enabler, rather than direct deliverer, in effect delivering change through networks and platforms, rather than through traditional organisational and membership delivery methods".

This note is about how to help develop those networks, and join them up in platforms.

Activities

- Meetups might be informal get-togethers, workshops, [Living Lab](#) games and simulations, and Zoom online events.
- The online collaboration platform will be a blog that feeds topics into an online forum, together with social media and a wiki. The forum will be home for a Community of Practice. Mapping and network building will be piloted with existing networks, and with people who wish to develop local or pan-London networks.

The model, brand and narrative

The model is one of a learning network and community. The approach, brand and narrative will depend on how closely it is associated with the Hub or other groups ... and how far the focus is on individuals and groups or infrastructure. For example:

Connecting Londoners

Our greatest social challenges lie in isolation and exclusion. Solutions depend on cooperation and collaboration. Citizens and small groups can build a better future using technology, network building and self-organising. Join our exploration, use our services, learn with us.

Connecting Communities

Local communities and citizens have the ideas, knowledge and skills that we need to address major social challenges. Mapping our assets, building networks and using new methods to connect will release that potential. Join our community of practice to provide support, share and learn.

Hub for London - or a new brand

We are developing a charitable company and networks to provide support for London civil society. Our priorities are the use of data, networks and networking, and increasing the voice and influence of groups and organisations. Become a member of the company, and also a member of our learning and development community.

The Community of Practice and its content

In practice we are likely to support activity at a number of different levels, as discussed in the paper on a CoP. At one level there may be a small group of people who have developed mutual trust to work together on ideas and projects. At another level there may be a wider informal network sharing content as and when.

We would aim to recruit individuals and social enterprises who offer services and who are also prepared to share some of their expertise, as well as people prepared to offer some pro bono support. It will take time to develop a model, communities and networks that offer appropriate benefits to the different interests and stakeholders. While we will aim for startup funding, sustainability will depend on a mix of mutual cooperation and sale of services. We will explore whether the core group wish to incorporate as a coop.

The content will depend on which narrative and brand to adopt, and on the interests of those who join the community.

Outputs from the community and network

The level of outputs will depend on how well resourced are the community and network. If we are well resourced they might include, for example:

- How to guides
- Training and support in mapping and network building
- Support in developing comms platforms
- Datasets and maps

If the community and network has limited resources, outputs will depend on sharing by service and support providers and the voluntary commitment of members.

Next steps

I'm offering these ideas to the advisory group for the Hub, and for subsequent discussion with Connecting Londoners and Our Way Ahead. On the other hand, the advisory group may decide that the model and these opportunities are a matter for the trustees and staff of the new company. In that case Connecting Londoners, perhaps with Our Way Ahead, may proceed with some initial demonstration of what's possible, and an interim funding bid. In those circumstances we can proceed by publishing the proposals and:

- creating the online collaboration space by adding a forum to the blogs and wiki that we have already, and recruiting from our networks
- organising further meetups
- building on the demonstration mapping that we have started, and adding some networked communications
- co-designing further developments.