

Big Local profile

- What is a Big Local profile? 2
- Why do we need a profile? 2
- How do we create a profile? 2
- What is included in the profile? 2
 - Where are we now? 3
 - Where do we want to be? 4
- Prompts 4
- How do we get help with creating our profile? 5
- What to do when we have created our Big Local profile? 5



What is a Big Local profile?

A Big Local profile will provide an insightful overview of your Big Local area. The most important current details about your area ('where are we now') and information collected during the community visioning stage ('where do we want to be') should be included. The profile will highlight current strengths and challenges. The profile will illustrate the many community visions and will describe what it will look and feel like for the local area to be an even better place to live. It should be produced by local people and organisations from the area and be a useful resource for residents, and anybody working in the area.

Why do we need a profile?

The profile will be an important planning and annual review resource. The profile presents a 'starting point' to plan from and a guide to look back and assess change. The profile will be used as a resource to help you make decisions about Big Local.

How do we create a profile?

We have provided a core list of topics you may wish to include in the profile and you may choose to add further 'specific' categories to the profile to reflect your local area. You should use a format and style that best suits you. The profile can be presented in a number of different ways, including: a written report, a computer presentation, selection of photographs, a video or similar or a combination of all of these. You could use maps to present this information. You could use The profile can refer to other materials if they already exist.

The profile should aim to capture what local people say directly, and involve them in producing it. For example, local schools could produce a history of the area via paintings/drawings/models, or you could record an oral history or survey residents on the use of local services. It is important to listen and talk to the range of different communities within your local area.

The profile should focus on collecting and presenting information about how local people view the area. Statistics can be important but should be included as evidence to back up the key points made, rather than form the bulk of the profile. The profile may show consensus around issues, but it may also highlight issues where there is some disagreement that needs to be further discussed.

We encourage you to create a simple, straight forward, easy to access profile that can be used as a helpful reference for your local area.

When should we create the Big Local profile?

For many local areas, you have likely already started this work. It is best to do it at a time that makes sense for your local area. We encourage you to create the profile so that it is a helpful resource as you develop your partnership and as you prepare for your community visioning. It will help ensure that your partnership and visioning work reflects the different communities within your local area.

What is included in the profile?

Where are we now?

We have listed several core categories and discussion questions for your local area to consider. Your area may well have several other categories which you feel are vital to include. Remember that this information should reflect both what local people like and dislike about their local area. Don't forget to also highlight current strengths from which to build from.

- People – who lives here? How has the population been changing? Are there any social groups (e.g. families with children, students, pensioners) who are particularly likely to live in the area? What other groups are there, for example nationality, faith, ethnicity groups, gender or disability?
- Natural and built environment – what does the local area look like? What parks and other public spaces exist in the area? What are they like? Do people use them? Are there concerns about flooding, pollution or lack of land for food growing? How do people feel about the condition of their local area?
- Community cohesion – Do different and diverse community groups work together? How? How does the local area support cohesion across its community?
- Housing –What's the housing like? Who owns it? Are they energy efficient?
- Jobs – where do people work? What are the employment opportunities? Do people have a choice of a range of jobs?
- Local business - what businesses or industry is there locally? Are there any small business owners? Shopping – where do people shop? What shops are the most popular? Banking – what banking / money facilities are in the area? How do people get money if they need it unexpectedly?
- Play – what leisure and recreation facilities are in the local area? Who uses them?
- Services – what support services are provided in the local area? Who runs them and who are they for? These could include youth and homework clubs, luncheon clubs, community gardening projects, and so on. Local facilities – what schools, surgeries,

places of worship, community centres, libraries and other such buildings exist in the area? How easy are these to access? Can you describe the state of the facilities?

- Transport – what transportation options or issues are present? How is the area connected to other local centres, both by road and public transport? How do most people get around in your local area? Do most people own cars or do they use public transport? Organisations, partnerships and networks – which voluntary and community groups or partnerships / associations operate in the area? These could include tenants groups and residents associations, neighbourhood watch groups, girl guides and scouts and so on. How long have each of these groups been established?
- Local government – who are they and what role do they play?
- History – what would a local resident say is the ‘history’ of the local area?
- Safety – how safe does your local area feel? Does it feel safe for everyone in your community?
- Health – what health services are available? Is there access to healthy food? What opportunities are there to exercise? Are there specific health concerns?

You might include specific additional data that is unique and important to your local area.

Where do we want to be?

Simply list the specific visions collected during your local area’s community visioning work in this section of your profile. Or, if you have collected community visions through film, drawings, photos or other forms, it would be great to include that information here, too. You don’t need to worry about agreeing a shared vision at this point or about linking the detail presented in the ‘where are we now’ section of the profile with the range of visions illustrated in this section. Please refer to the Big Local community visioning guide for more information.

Prompts

Collecting this information won’t always be easy. To bring this information to life and to get people thinking both about what they like and dislike about your local area, you may wish to use some of the following prompts:

- What do people say they like about the area?
- What makes the area special and different?

- What public spaces, buildings, services, businesses and other organisations are important?
- What partnerships and networks are already interested and involved in improving the area?
- What do people say has had a negative impact on the area? Why do people leave the area?
- How have changes in the wider economy affected the area? What may future changes mean?
- How do local people think they can work better together?
- What do other plans and strategies highlight as areas of concern?

How do we get help with creating our profile?

Your Big Local representative is available to provide support by advising you as you design and produce your profile. They can help:

- Signpost to sources of information
- Advise on community research techniques
- Advise on the best way to collate and present the information so that it is helpful in the future.

You may decide that you would like to use some Getting People Involved funding to commission a specialist individual or organisation to produce your profile. This person or organisation should ensure that the process for creating the profile matches with the details above. They should ensure the process is inclusive and involves local people. However you choose to go about creating the profile, you should identify how you can involve local people so that they learn skills and gain experience.

What to do when we have created our Big Local profile?

Sharing the Big Local profile is important. Creating the profile should be an inclusive, open process. We encourage you to make the document a useful, working document which will help your local area. Please remember to share your final Big Local profile with your Big Local representative.

This document will be developed over time with input from the people using this material. If you have thoughts on how this document can be made more useful for you, particularly if you live in one of the Big Local areas, please let us know. You can talk to anyone working on Big Local or email: biglocal@cdf.org.uk.