

#loveyourcommunity

Fit for the future...

The
Active Wellbeing
Society



Share-Connect-Collaborate
Keynote Speaker: Karen Creavin

Strengthening communities... what and why?

- Strong communities are so important for Essex as they create a sense of belonging and purpose which dramatically improves overall health and wellbeing. The pandemic showed everyone in Essex the incredible acts of generosity, neighbourliness, and community spirit which sustain us in bad times and in good times.
- **There is no greater power than a community acting together on the issues they care about. ...** As individual citizens and neighbours, we must see our strength and passion as assets to build upon. **All organisations must strive to put citizens in the lead wherever possible.**
- We must put communities at the heart of policy making, increasing community power and community spirit that is genuinely citizen led from the grass-roots, in order to create healthy and vibrant local democracy.
- **Communities are best placed to understand their own cultures, their own needs and how they can help each other.**
- Physical activity and sport is a major part of the social fabric of communities since this is where thousands of people find enjoyment and purpose in their daily lives. Physical activity develops connection, inclusion and resilience. Acting on what you care about with your neighbours builds civic strength and pride.
- **Communities that promote and provide physical activity are our most powerful agents of change for the creation of an active Essex for everyone.**



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Wellbeing and continuum of sport

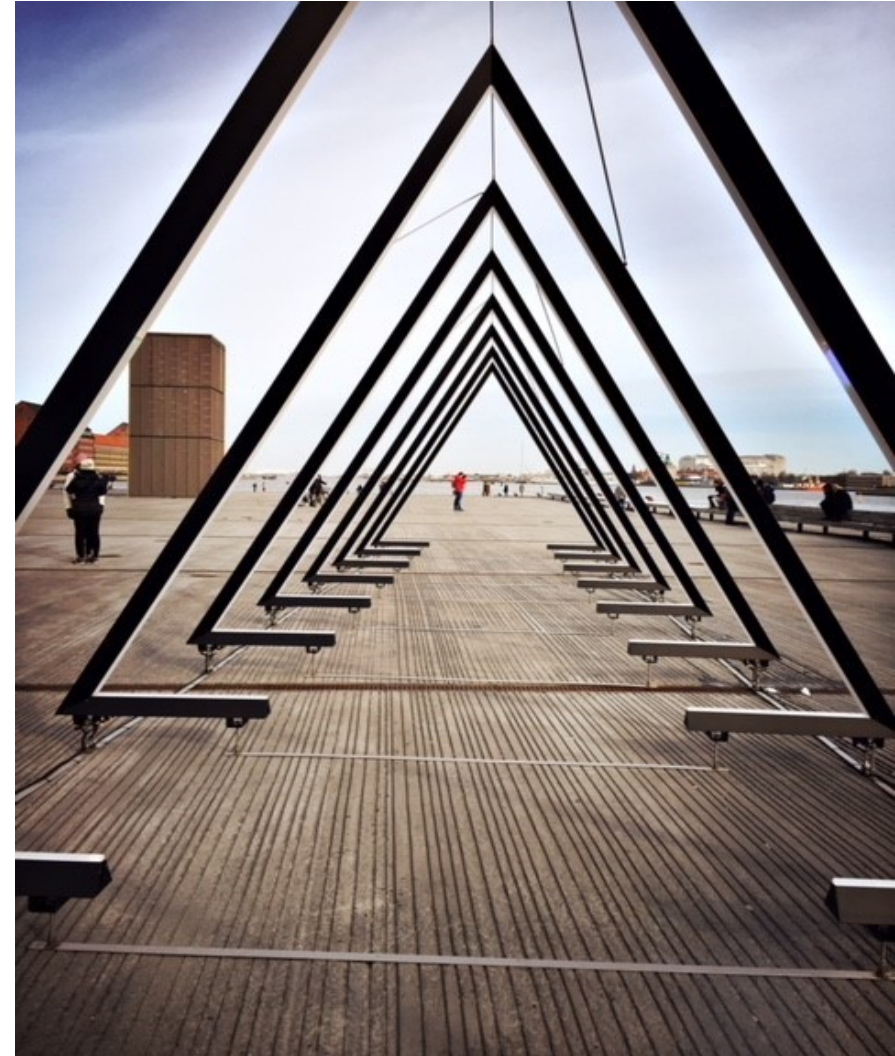
- Refined BCC's sport and physical activity policy and moved from sport, to physical activity, to wellbeing
- Couch at one end of the continuum, elite sport at the other... active citizen in the middle
- clear where BCC Sport and Physical Activity work was positioned...
- supporting those least likely to be active and those with the most barriers to engagement
- Importance of *doing with* the community and partners



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The importance of framing

- How you describe a problem is how people seek the solution
 - Merger of equals (*we will be joining forces with*)
 - Takeover (*we will be absorbing*)
- We need more people doing sport OR how do we remove the barriers that stop people being active



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From *SPORT* to *COMMUNITY* development

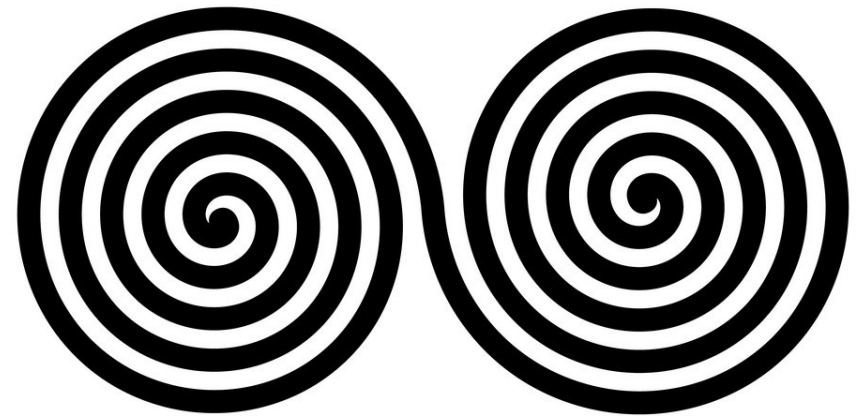
- *We had to stop doing things for the sake of sport, if we wanted the unusual suspects to be part of the journey....*
- *We had to lean into need where it was...*
- *We had to understand that community development begins in the everyday lives of local people.*



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Strategy- TAWS/CWGs/LDP 2016 onwards

- At the time we were setting up TAWS, we were developing the rationale for:
 - CWGs bid- legacy for those who were the unusual suspects
 - Local Delivery Pilot (active communities)- would develop active citizens who would be more physically active
 - The active wellbeing society- coop and CBS that would deliver the transformation for the city



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What did we do in Birmingham?

- Removed cost as a barrier- *deprivation*
- People like me- *challenge of who it is for*
- Reimagined the use of the physical infrastructure- *using place to meet need*
- Prototyped new responses-
 - *Big Birmingham Bikes*
 - *Active Parks*
 - *Active Streets*
 - *Big Chats*
 - *Immersive visits*

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2018

Our vision: Healthy, happy people living active and connected lives

- Established out the Birmingham City Council Wellbeing service (formerly it's Sport and Leisure Service)
- Established as a mutual, member led cooperative
- **Assets locked for community benefit**
- Members are staff and citizens
- Value accounting
- Creating a social movement around 'active citizenship'



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Early days of TAWS

- Initial TUPE and contract
- Health and other new areas of delivery
- Associates, bringing in people with new ideas
- Winning new work in new ways...
- Importance of data, insight, and strong funding focus
- Democratic thread- Community Benefit Society & Cooperative- **citizens are members**. Deep Democracy- hearing all the views
- Our legitimacy is in our ability to collaborate. Our reputation in our relationships with the community and others
- **Volunteers, members, staff**- all part of the TAWS family

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Community development

- *In a process of action and reflection, community development grows through a diversity of local projects that address issues faced by people in community.*
- *It is not about imposing products or services top down*
- *Work with the needs of the community, engage them where they want to be met*
- *Start somewhere, follow it everywhere....*



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co-design:

- *'a social conversation in which everybody is allowed to bring ideas and take action'* (Friere)
- *Make it hyper local*
- *Using democratic processes- rounds; deep democracy; active listening; sensing from the field;*
- *Start where the energy is... identify and remove the barriers... enable and empower.... Create a movement*



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Asset based community development

- What is of value that can be built on?
 - Interventions- **Big Birmingham Bikes** etc
 - - Community level assets- parks/ streets/ shared civic spaces
 - People- skills and knowledge
- What is a problem that can be flipped?
 - Air quality and pollution - **Gloucester services**/ active streets
 - Anti social behaviour in parks etc



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Practical things we are doing differently....

- Wrap around activities that resonate in people's day to day lives – food etc.
- Design in cohesion and community development content
- Train our workforce in community development
- Provoke and orchestrate opportunities for communities to come together for conversations that provoke change
- Be more thoughtful and do active listening
- Learn from others, innovate and prototype
- Deliberately develop communities with their collaboration



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What did we find on the ground

- People couldn't be active if we didn't work with them to sort out **other issues**
- **Trust needed building** and progress goes at the speed that trust can be established
- People responded well to sharing- **receive something to give something**
- Needed to be prepared to **start where they were at**
- Find a line of sight to PA but **not start there**
- Be in service and create opportunities
- **Get out of the way once you understand the issues**

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Our Values

Open Mind:

Innovative
Influential
Entrepreneurial/
Opportunity Aware
Grounded
Networked
Thought Leaders

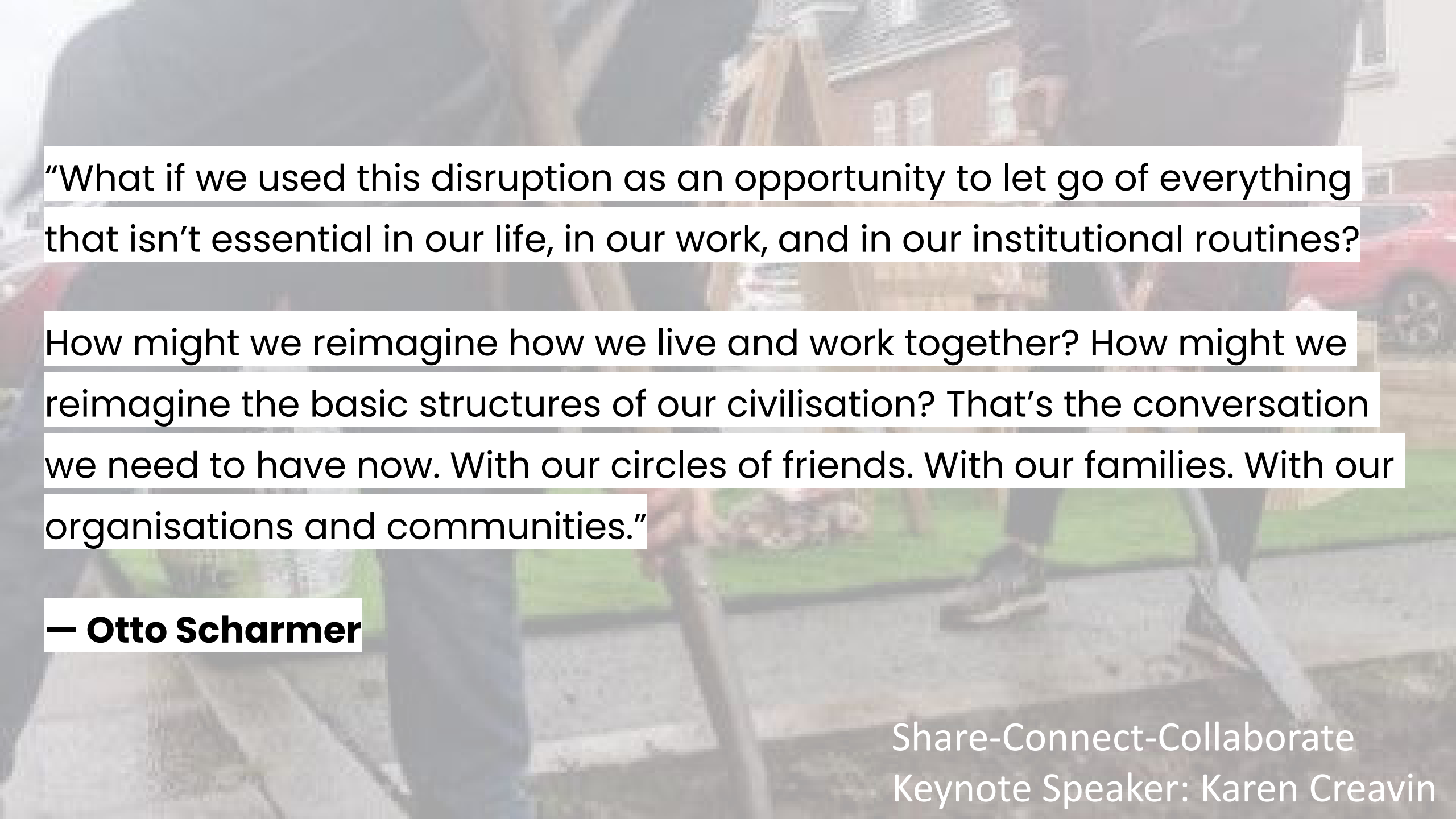
Open Heart:

Collaborative
Demonstrating
Integrity
Inclusive
Honest
Passionate About
Making a Difference

Open Will:

Activist/ Curious/
Courageous
Empathic
Sustainable
Evidenced
Solution-Oriented
Co-Creation and
Production.

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“What if we used this disruption as an opportunity to let go of everything that isn’t essential in our life, in our work, and in our institutional routines?

How might we reimagine how we live and work together? How might we reimagine the basic structures of our civilisation? That’s the conversation we need to have now. With our circles of friends. With our families. With our organisations and communities.”

— Otto Scharmer

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