



Committee: Funding Committee of the City Bridge Foundation Board	Date: 2 December 2025
Subject: LocalMotion Update	Public
Report of: Sacha Rose, CBF Chief Funding Director	For Information
Report authors: Clara Espinosa, Programme and Partnerships Lead (Climate Justice)	

Summary

This report informs the Funding Committee of the progress to date of LocalMotion in the 2024-2031 phase of delivery. LocalMotion is a place-led funding collaboration, working to tackle the causes of deep-rooted structural injustices facing people in towns and cities across the UK by exploring place-based change and ceding power to communities.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Funding Committee of the City Bridge Foundation Board, in discharge of functions for the City Corporation as Trustee of City Bridge Foundation (charity reg. no. 1035628) and solely in the charity's best interests:

- i) Note the content of this report.**

Main Report

Overview

1. LocalMotion is the collective endeavour of five leading UK foundations – City Bridge Foundation (CBF), Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Lankelly Chase Foundation, Lloyds Bank Foundation of England and Wales, and Paul Hamlyn Foundation. It was inspired by a shared desire to support communities facing complex, deep-rooted social, environmental and economic challenges in towns and cities across the UK by exploring place-based change and ceding power to communities. The scale of this challenge is such that no one funder can make as broad and deep an impact independently. Additionally, each of the funders brings unique strengths beyond financial support, allowing for a “total assets” approach otherwise not possible.
2. The goal was to shift power, resources, and decision-making closer to local people. To work alongside six local places (Enfield, Lincoln, Oldham, Carmarthen, Torbay and Middlesbrough) to reimagine how communities, systems and funders could work together more equitably, more effectively, and more inclusively for everyone in a local authority area.
3. LocalMotion's goal is to reimagine how communities, systems and funders can work together - more equitably, more effectively, and more inclusively - for everyone. The work is built on the following four key principles:



- a. **Relationship building** – trust, care, and co-creation come first.
 - b. **Resource shifting** – communities and their stewards decide how funding is used through, and for, cross sector collaboration.
 - c. **Power sharing** – putting decision-making in community hands, fairly and inclusively and sharing two-way accountability with funders for delivery.
 - d. **Collective learning** – reflecting, adapting, and sharing what we learn.
4. In December 2023 and February 2024, the CBF Funding Committee and CBF Board awarded £5,000,000 towards the delivery of LocalMotion over seven years, 2024-2031, as a grant to Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. The CBF allocation is being utilised in Enfield (plus core support costs), ensuring London benefit.

Relationship Building

5. In 2024, LocalMotion entered its delivery phase after one year of relationship building and two years of establishing local cross-sector community networks, co-creating places local plans and funder decision making processes. The past two years have shown that deeper collaboration between funders and places can contribute to more lasting change in places, supporting the theory of change for this work. The most recent timeline can be found in Appendix 1.
6. Community research and reporting have been growing in strength - particularly in Enfield, Lincoln and Oldham. In tandem with Oldham Positive Action Network (OPAN) increasingly acting as local consultants on policy issues, Oldham has been building connections across local community research initiatives to share learning, expertise and opportunities. Lincoln's network of community researchers has strong ties into the community and act as a barometer of community views on local issues and LocalMotion work, with a new community newspaper emerging to keep a wider network of people connected to LocalMotion work. Enfield Dispatches¹ showcases LocalMotion people and initiatives to the local community - including generating a social investment proposal to expand their community reach. LocalMotion Enfield has recently launched a series of podcasts exploring themes of mental health, hidden disabilities and the experience of young black men growing up in Enfield.² More than simply evaluation, these approaches offer immediate feedback loops into the work.

Resources shifting

7. LocalMotion highlights the impact of government policy on the ground through local communities in a much more immediate way. It acts as a bridge between national policy and lived experience, showing how decisions made at a central level translate into real-world consequences for people and places. LocalMotion places are laying the wiring for more inter-connected systems of communities and institutions that can act collaboratively to create change. For example, LocalMotion Enfield launched its Enfield LX project which is a platform

¹ <https://localmotion.org.uk/stories/localmotion-enfield-focus-on-young-people-and-homelessness/>

² <https://www.buzzsprout.com/2254176/episodes/18096011>



that harnesses the voice of people with lived experience of mental health issues to respond to and drive systems change in mental health provision within Enfield. Members raise issues about service provision to influence local authority strategies and statutory services; this is a clear example of translating national and local policy into community-driven change. Additionally, as LocalMotion Enfield has grown in the breadth and depth of its reach, the London Borough of Enfield has become more willing to engage on policy issues such as care leavers experiences, housing and homelessness

8. A range of local youth led partnerships have arisen from Enfield's Community Hubs - *This is Us, Use Your Voice, Speak Up, Unmuted Youth Ambassadors, and Authentic by Heart* - partnering with schools, arts and youth organisations and the public sector around: critical thinking, debate, creative expression of their views on social issues including their experience of the care system and the local authority as a 'corporate parent', mutual support, decision making in schools and creating inclusive, safe spaces for LGBTQIA+ young people. This work has seen Enfield to leverage in £500,000 Arts Council funding for youth-based collaboration in Enfield in what has been traditionally considered an "arts desert" in London's arts and cultural scene.
9. LocalMotion acknowledges that if the answers were easy or obvious this work would not be needed. In exploring anti-racist practice with places LocalMotion strove to create a safe space for people to explore what it means to be anti-racist in today's world. The reflective practice and trauma informed approach to exploring racism and anti-racist practice through the themes of Power, Accountability, Connection and Trust opened up a range of Equity focused actions in LocalMotion's work. For example, Enfield is supporting a collaboration of 40 men around Black Men's mental health, a key issue in the borough where men struggle to access services due to stigma, cultural barriers, and systemic discrimination. The collaboration aims to shift conditions that hold inequality in place, rather than "fix" individuals. This is a peer-led model that focuses on building safe and inclusive spaces for dialogue and to co-produce solutions.

Power sharing

10. Reflecting LocalMotions's belief that everyone has a voice and a right to shape their future, the inclusion, and reach of experts by experience across the LocalMotion network continues to expand. Their confidence has grown around stewarding resources and actioning new ways of working. For example; Carmarthen's Citizen's Assembly includes the voices of immigrants, disabled people and people from global majority backgrounds. Enfield has an emerging disability network which is plugging a strategic gap in disability representation in the area. Lincoln and Oldham have an active network of experts by experience around poverty focusing on the issues that matter to them.
11. A key strength of LocalMotion has been funders' willingness for the work to be led by communities' priorities. This has allowed the work to transcend individual funder niches, holding instead the shared charitable purpose of tackling the root causes of social, environmental and economic injustices and drawing on funder



networks to support local place priorities. An example of collaboration is the relationship built between CBF and Enfield Climate Action Forum (EnCAF) which is part of LocalMotion Enfield's local coordination group.

12. Care experienced young people have been leading strategic engagement with the council in Enfield around their experiences and will shortly be meeting the Children's Minister Josh McAllister, who has promised reform on foster care, to share their experiences (via a meeting brokered by Lloyds Bank Foundation). This example has enabled people in local places to leverage funders' experience and networks.

Collective Learning

13. LocalMotion has invested in a learning infrastructure that supports people's capability to run impactful change processes. Three key elements of this approach are: Recognising that learning does not happen on a set schedule. LocalMotion collaboratively commissioned and co-designed a learning framework and toolkit to capture learning in real time. Another element is supporting each place's goal to create a network of local systems leaders, LocalMotion has supplemented its Learning Academy with a prototype Deep in Place and Practice (DiPP) offer. This supports each place's aspiration to grow leaders who not only create change but also grow new leaders through their work. Finally learning is happening locally, in place, through visits that immerse all of us in local activity.
14. There have been a series of local listening events which have included partnering with local activists, grass roots groups and other organisations such as EnfCaf (Enfield Climate Action Forum), Climate Hope in Lincoln, Imagine This (42 young people focused organisations) in Torbay and Oldham Positive Action Network. As well as creating new collaborations including Enfield's Professional Partnership Network of 50 young people focussed organisations who are doing deeper systems learning together. These collaborations reflect a real shift from organisations competing for resources in the traditional funding system to collaborating around solutions.
15. Homelessness is a particular focus in Enfield and Oldham, LocalMotion's two most ethnically diverse communities. For Oldham this includes welcoming sanctuary (asylum) seekers as well as tackling rough sleeping through looking at bringing empty homes back into use. For Enfield, the initial focus is on access to private rented housing as a way of tackling homelessness. For both Oldham and Enfield, plus Torbay, community led housing is being explored as a possible longer-term solution to their local housing crises. Through this work LocalMotion has witnessed council officers move from scepticism to a keenness to engage and support the development of this work.

What is CBF learning from LocalMotion?

16. **Empowering local voices:** LocalMotion creates equitable opportunities for community participation, ensuring voices from underrepresented groups are



heard. Initiatives like *Unmuted Mental Health Ambassadors* highlights its commitment to EDI and tackling local inequalities, aligning with CBF's Standing with Londoners strategy.

17. **Collaborative approach:** The partnership models a new style of collaboration between funders, communities, and organisations, moving away from traditional power dynamics. This shared accountability for systemic change reflects CBF's goal of transforming charitable giving into a more inclusive practice centred on being relational.
18. **Investing in people:** LocalMotion prioritises leadership development and cross-sector learning beyond project timelines. By creating space for reflection, it builds space for systemic change to happen. This learning has fed into CBF initiatives like the Anchor Programme and Propel.

Resourcing for 2026-2031

19. Grant agreements were signed with local places in June 2025, with the first of three tranches of grant payments made in 2024. Esmee Fairbairn Foundation operates as LocalMotion's National Fiscal Host. LocalMotion's Local Fiscal Hosts (who are responsible for ensuring local spend supports LocalMotion's charitable purpose) are:

- Carmarthen – [People Speak Up](#)
- Enfield – [Enfield LocalMotion CIO \(incorporated in March 2025\)](#)
- Lincoln – [Lincolnshire Community Foundation](#)
- Middlesbrough – [Middlesbrough Voluntary Development Agency](#)
- Oldham – [Action Together](#)
- Torbay – [Torbay Communities](#)

20. LocalMotion Enfield aimed to invest in growing good ideas through co-creation and learning, informed by seminars on systemic approaches and breaking traditional cycles. Initially, its fiscal host focused on time-limited grant programmes, which the group felt did not challenge dominant practices or reach marginalised communities. In response, LocalMotion Enfield prioritised giving communities, alongside charities and local authorities, space to explore and test ideas. As confidence grew, it recognised that their fiscal host could not support systemic change and decided to establish themselves as an independent local fiscal host. This decision also addressed practical frustrations, such as LocalMotion resources being counted as part of the host's own funds, limiting its ability to raise money for its work. Despite these challenges, the group maintains a positive relationship with the previous host, sharing a commitment to community development.
21. The financial year 2024-2025 saw national spend of £237,587 and local spend from June 2024-June 2025 of £1,633,746 across the six places. Places are experimenting with interest accrued on their grant payments including potential micro-financing of community projects. The next tranche of local grant



CITY BRIDGE
FOUNDATION

payments will be in 2020/21. National resources anticipate national resourcing to transition from resourcing staff to resourcing a shared secretariat in summer 2021.

Conclusion

22. LocalMotion demonstrates that meaningful systems change is possible when power and resources are shifted closer to communities. Over the past two years, the initiative has moved beyond planning into active delivery, embedding learning frameworks, co-designing projects, and fostering governance models that prioritise collective accountability. By embracing iterative, place-led strategies and valuing lived experience, LocalMotion has begun to dismantle traditional power dynamics and create spaces where communities lead the way.
23. As LocalMotion enters the next phase, the challenge and opportunity lie in deepening collaboration and ensuring that learning informs both local practice and funders' internal strategies. CBF must continue to act as a convenor, embed LocalMotion learnings into its own strategy and amplify stories from places like Enfield to inspire broader change.

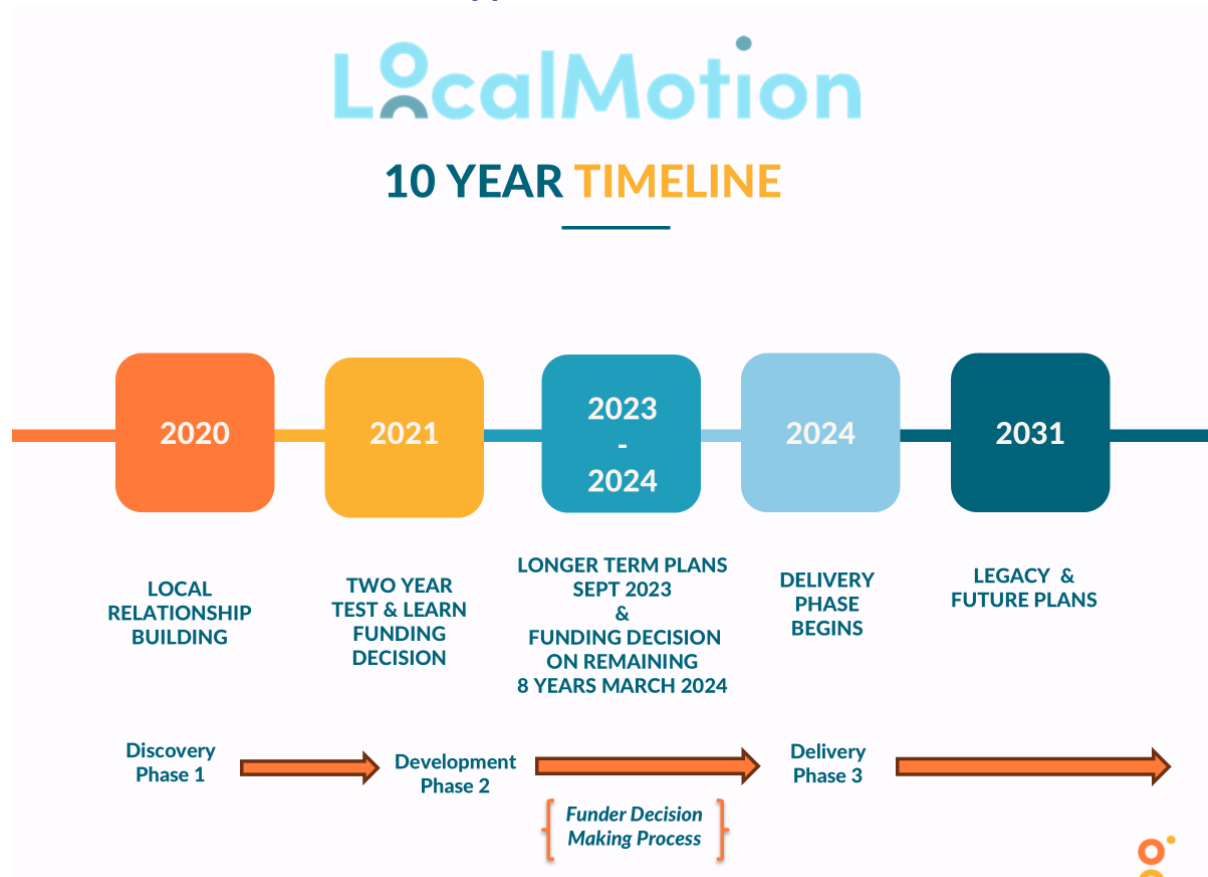
Clara Espinosa

Programme and Partnership Lead

E: clara.espinosa@citybridgefoundation.org.uk



Appendix 1 - Timeline



Appendix 2 - Local Priorities

Place	Local Vision	Local priorities	Work Streams
Torbay "We have what we need if we share what we have."	A connected Torbay	Strengthening families Food inequality (and circular economy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Strengthening familiesFood inequality and circular economyPeoples Parkfield community Asset
Oldham "I feel at home here, welcomed here, I am Oldham"	Embracing a buzzing Oldham and making a real difference, by connecting people and opportunities for lifelong change.	Tackling the root causes of poverty Creating a local economy that works for all Strengthen community pride and belonging	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lived Experience AdvisersHousing (Rough sleeping support & Sanctuary Seeker Support)Truth of the YouthEmployment PathwaysCommunity Reporting and Research



Lincoln “I am being listened to. I have a voice.”	Connecting people to inspire a flourishing future	Tackling Poverty Young People Climate Hope ‘Pro-inclusion’ city for everyone	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community-led prosperity (poverty to prosperity)• Community-led aspiration (celebrating culture and creativity)• Community-led sustainability (climate and social justice)• Community-led amplification (Raising Young Voices)• Community-led impact and evaluation (including community reporting)
Middlesbrough “I see opportunities to do things differently, together”	A thriving, growing and resourceful Middlesbrough	EDI Tackling poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rebalancing power and tackling poverty and wellbeing through an equality, diversity, and inclusion lens• A local economy that creates local wealth• Golden thread of innovation, fairness, and vibrancy
Enfield “Nothing that is for us happens without us.”	Working together to make Enfield a place where no-one is left behind or unheard	Listening to the voice of community Empowering Young People Social Isolation and Mental Health Tackling poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community listening and Reporting• Empowering young people: This is us, Speak Up, Use your voice, Authentic by heart• Co-creating collaboration• Lived experience work on mental health and disability• Housing and Homelessness



Carmarthen/ Caerfyrddin “I feel connected and able to shape how things are done.”	Happiest and most prosperous town in Wales	Culture, climate, community, diversity and creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set up Local Citizens Assembly• A new community hub has been established• New coordination group members have been recruited
--	---	--	--

Appendix 3 - The LocalMotion Learning Framework

This toolkit is rooted in the belief that learning drives change – not just for individuals but across whole systems. It draws on two core ideas:

Learning happens through doing: Grounded in real activity, learning is most powerful when it emerges from shared experiences, reflection and iteration. This is the basis for embodied learning, which starts from what’s actually happening on the ground.

Learning happens through relationships: Change is co-created through interaction, not just through individuals acting alone. This is based on the concept of symmathesy (see Section 2.3 for further details), which highlights:

- Mutual learning – all parts of a system influence and learn from each other.
- Relational – it’s about the interactions, not just the parts.
- Context and history matter – each interaction is shaped by the environment, dynamics, and lived experience.
- Change is constant – living systems are always adapting.
- Emergence – we must pay attention to what is subtle, unexpected or unfolding through relationships.

These principles are embedded in the toolkit’s learning activities and support LocalMotion’s belief that connections create change, and deeper relationships lead to deeper change.