THRIVING FAMILIES

Concept | **Ethnography** | **Co-design** | **Design** | **Prototype**
Plan | Understand | Create | Refine | Test

The Thriving Families project

Thriving Families is an ambitious multi-partner programme to create innovative, integrated services that significantly improve outcomes for families.

It aims to:

1. Secure better outcomes for families in Derbyshire. We want to make sure that every type of family is supported, but especially those with multiple, complex needs.

2. Reduce the need for crisis interventions, by focusing on preventive services which work with families to build their long-term stability and networks of support.

3. Reduce the cost of providing services for high-risk families: not by reducing budgets or forcing cuts to services, but by co-designing different services that use resources in new ways to produce better outcomes.

Thriving Families is a project run by Derbyshire County Council which is looking at new ways to support families. We think there are a lot of families in Derbyshire who lack formal or informal support, with whom council services could be more effectively engaged. Most of the spending on families is reactive: it tries to lessen the effect of particular problems, rather than prevent the problems arising in the first place.

We need better ways to identify who needs help, and to understand the barriers for families who want to ask for help. Families often rely on intensive support from their friends, extended family and community. We want to strengthen and support these networks where they exist, and help create them where they don't.

GENERATING NEW PERSPECTIVES

We followed processes developed using the Innovation Unit's and Nesta's Radical Efficiency Framework. Thriving Families in its initial phase was about using a number of tools to gather multiple sources of information that can help inform partners' understanding of families in the locality. This has involved the collection of new data and the revisiting of existing information that is readily available.

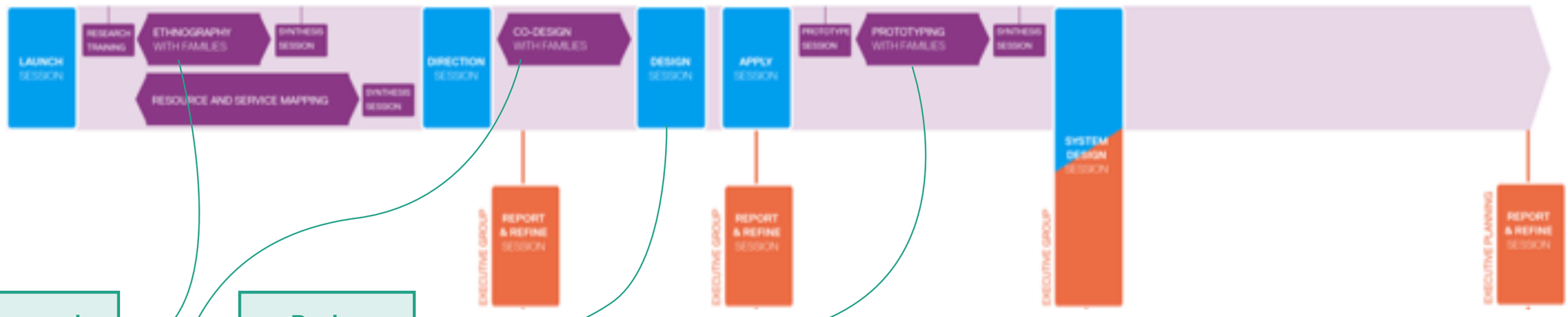
GENERATING NEW SOLUTIONS

Thriving Families built into the process the mechanism for using the vast amount of rich data during the research phase, to generate ideas for possible new solutions. This has involved using co-design and prototyping to quickly test new ways of working and ultimately develop options for partners to consider in terms of whole system change.

PARTNERS IN COLLABORATION

Derbyshire County Council – Improving life for local people · Innovation Unit · SaferDerbyshire · NHS Erewash CCG · Erewash Borough Council · Department for Work & Pensions · Erewash Voluntary Action · emh homes · Derventio Housing Trust · Community Concern Ground · Cotmanhay School · Action 4 Cotmanhay

PLAN - PROGRAMME DESIGN



Ethnography
Understand
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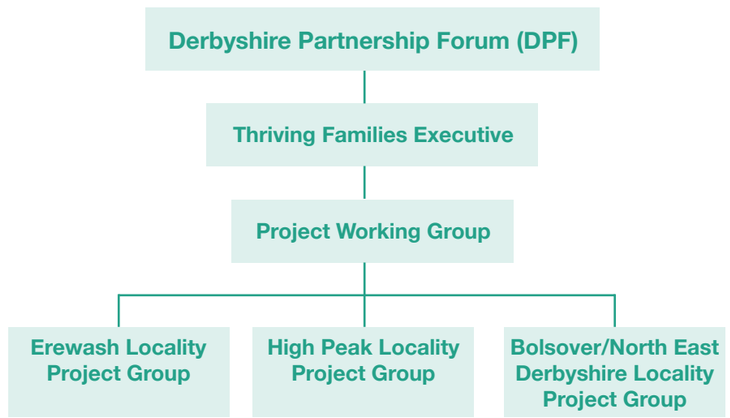
Executive Group Governance:



Pilots in Derbyshire:

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What is ethnography?
Research method that aims to learn about people and culture in a deep way through observation and conversation.

Why?
Uncover users' needs, behaviours and aspirations and identify new opportunities that they may not have recognised themselves.

How?
Spend time with people in their own contexts. Requires detailed research guide and ethical consideration.

Underpinning all Thriving Families work was the principle of maintaining a focus on 'family' and 'community'. Ethnographic research formed the basis of the Thriving Families work programme, to ensure the process was driven by real need.

TRAINING

16 Derbyshire County Council and Erewash staff were trained by Innovation Unit to do ethnographic research.

We developed a research handbook.

A buddy system to share expertise and build confidence among our workforce to work in this way.

FAMILY RECRUITMENT

Through local agencies we recruited families with complex needs. We chose different types of families, not just families with children, and we saw people who were coping and others who were finding things difficult. Some families we met were well connected to local services and/or had strong support networks around them whereas others lived very isolated lives.

Families were given a gift of a £100 shopping voucer for their time. They consented to the research and confidentiality was maintained throughout the process.

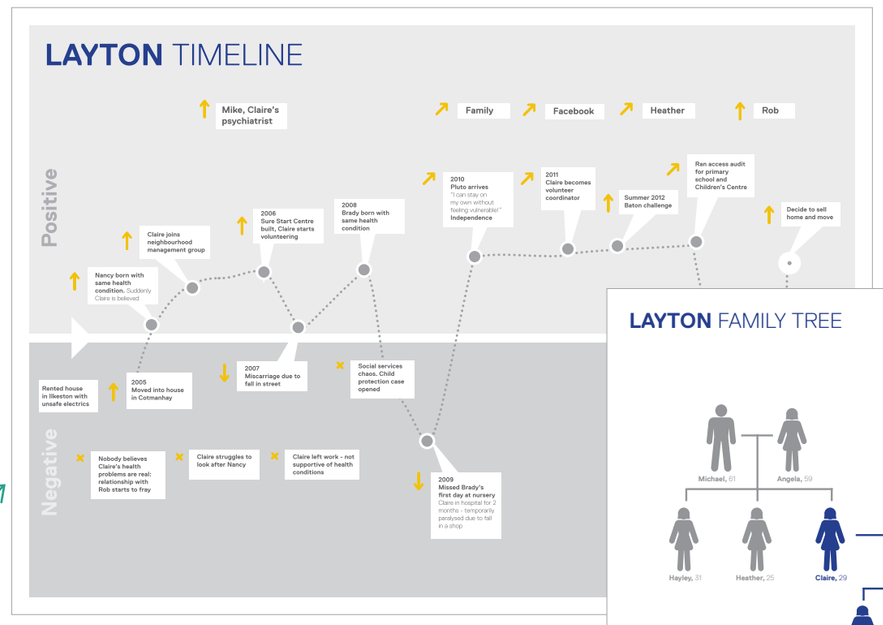
A DAY IN THE LIFE

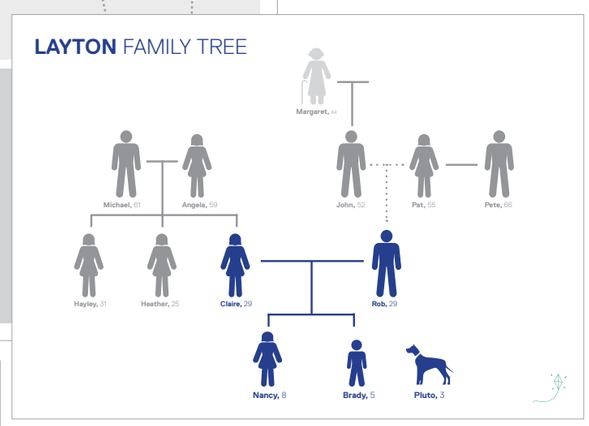
Researchers spent a full day with families, getting to know what their life was like, what challenges they face and their aspirations for the future. 12 families in each area were involved in the research.

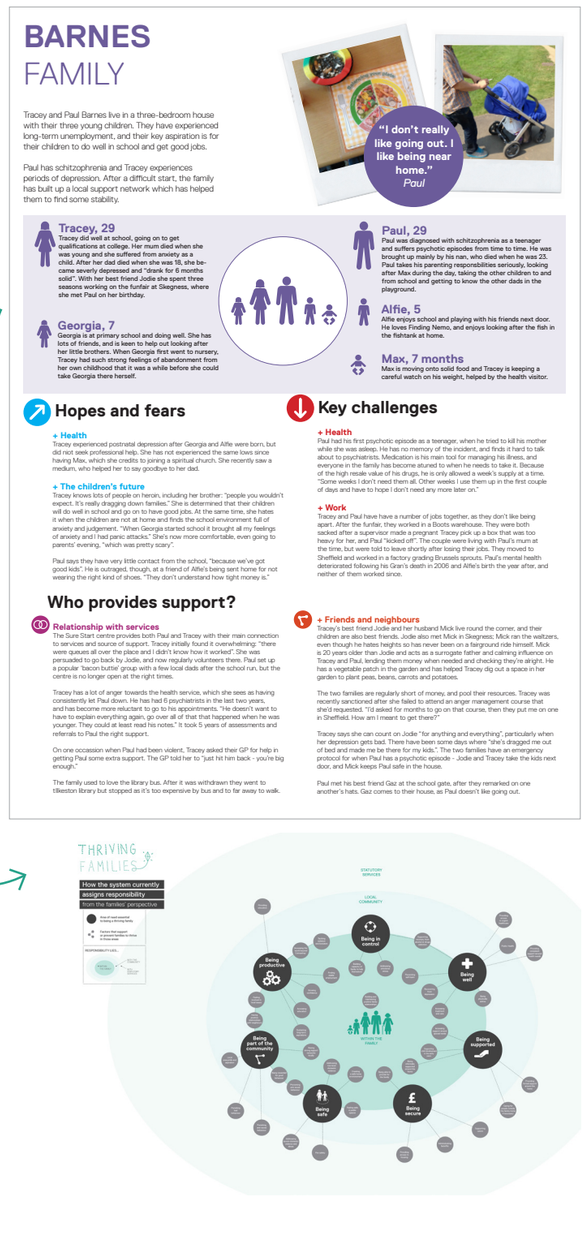
Going where families go and learning how families function in their community.

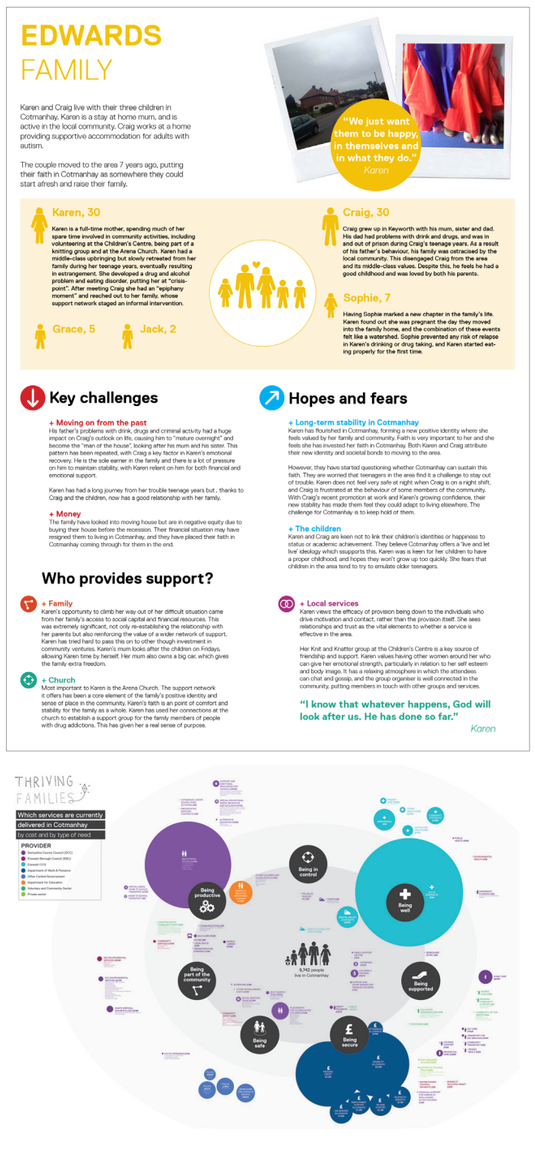
Noting down their significant moments.

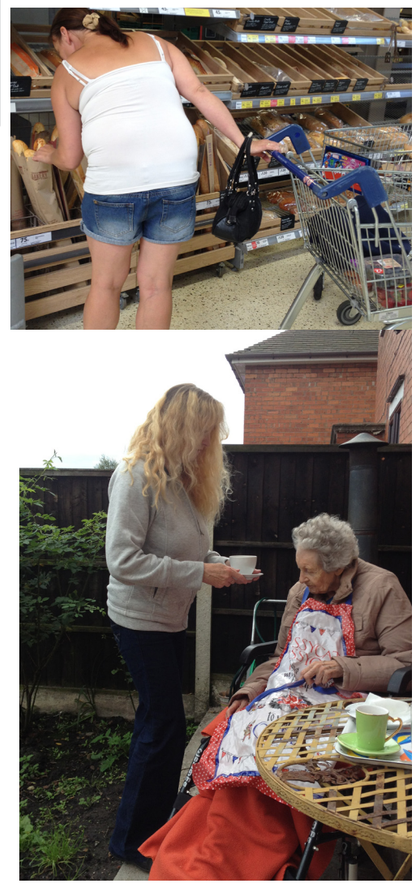
Finding out who helps them in times of trouble. What does their support network look like?











SHARING OUR LEARNING

Each family story written up and used as the basis of development work throughout the process of re-designing services for families in the Thriving Families programme.

RESOURCE MAPPING

We also mapped services in the area to get a sense of what provision is available to people locally. Over £36 million is spent by local agencies in Cotmanhay, mostly on high-end, reactive support.

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What is exploratory co-design?
A group session for your target group that explores what principles they would use to design something for themselves.

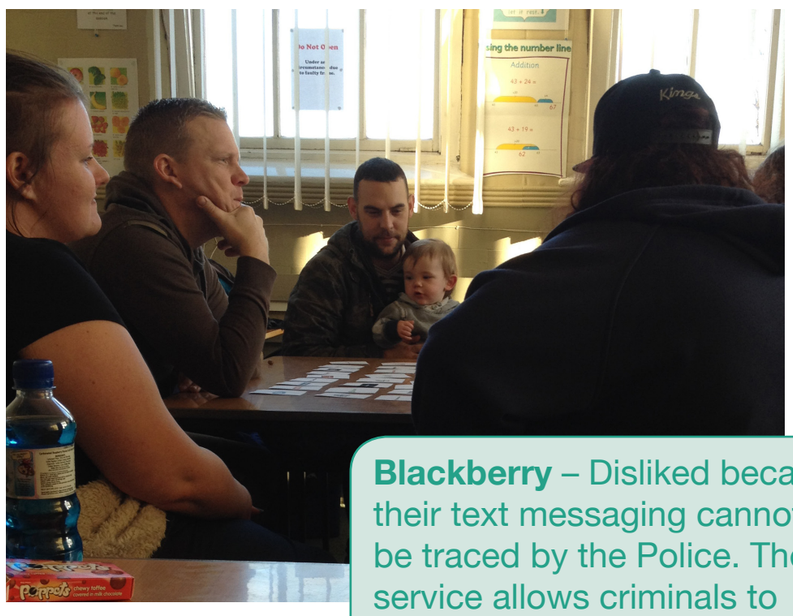
Why?
Find out what is really important to people about the services they use and the staff they interact with.

How?
This is a more active and designed-led version of a focus group. Use visual tools to structure the conversation and help people reflect their needs and wishes.

Following ethnographic research we spoke to families again about what they value in a good service. These were informal sessions, where we invited people to come and have a chat with us about the things that mattered most to them.

BRANDS

We asked people to look at a range of well-known brands and decide which they liked, and which they disliked. Groups of families described the reasons why some brands were favoured over others, and this gave us an insight into what elements of a service people valued.



M&S – Some people valued the traditional brand. It's expensive but you know that the quality is good. Others felt that you have to 'look' a certain way to shop there. One woman was followed by security guards.

MacDonalds – Generally disliked for marketing to children a poor quality, expensive product. They treat their staff badly and customer service is lacking.

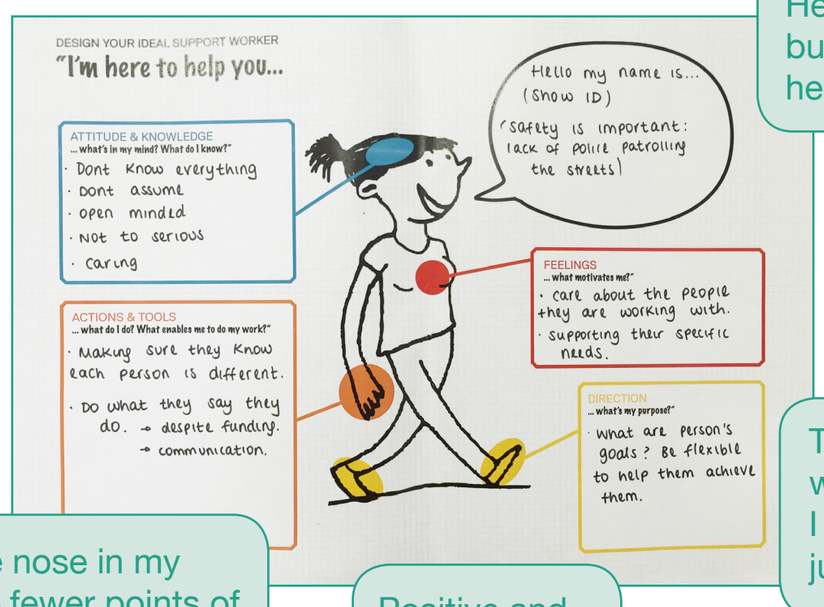
Post Office – Liked for its local presence in communities. Trusted and personal.

Blackberry – Disliked because their text messaging cannot be traced by the Police. Their service allows criminals to operate.

Iceland – Respectful of the honesty of the Chief Executive personally admitting the company's mistakes.

IDEAL SUPPORT WORKER

We also asked people to design their ideal support worker. What would they think, say and do? What would be their attitude, knowledge and motivation?



Helping families build capacity to help themselves

'One nose in my life' – fewer points of contact

Positive and open minded

They listen to what I say and I don't feel judged

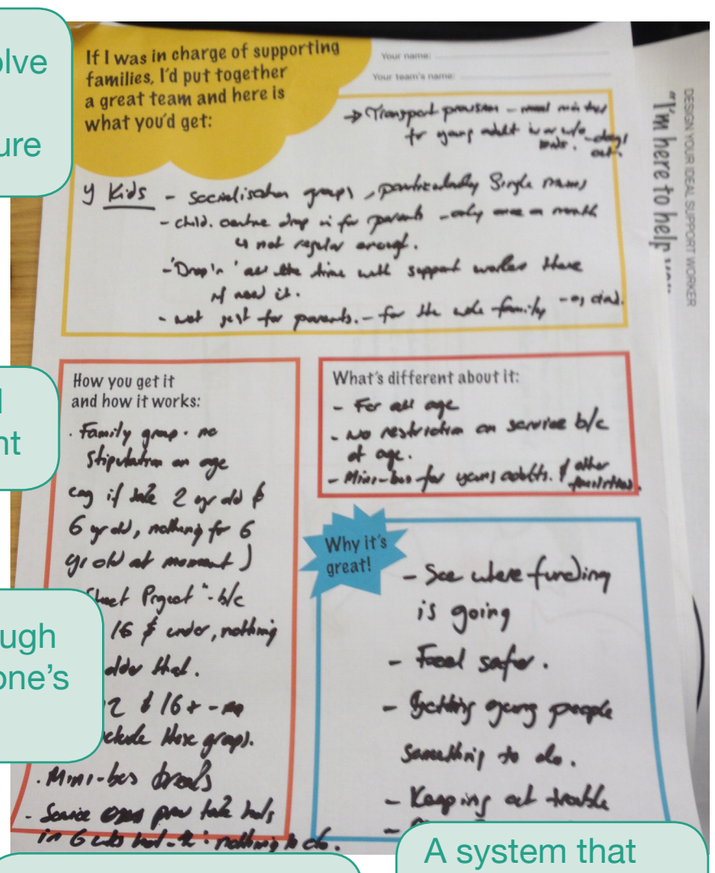
If they can't help me they direct me to someone who can

Taking time to understand root problems

FAMILY SUPPORT TEAM

People also thought about what a family support team would look like if they had the opportunity to design it themselves.

Helps people resolve their issues and relieves the pressure



Recognises that all families are different

Is flexible enough to meet everyone's needs

Connecting to the family: making families feel welcome

A system that rewards good, rather than bad, behavior

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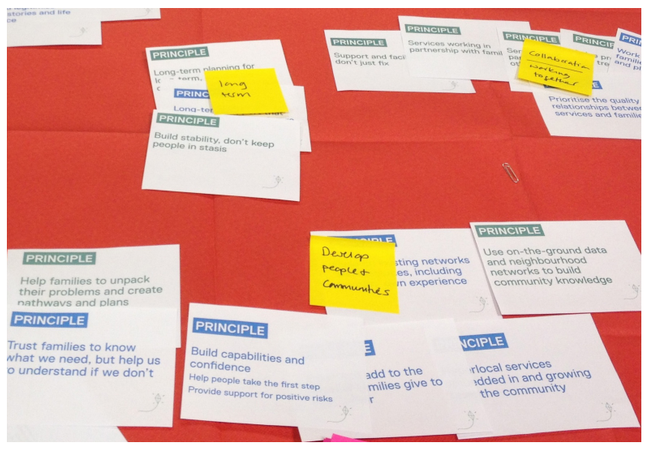
What is a design workshop?
Working with a group of potential users, staff and partners of your idea to design how it should work.

Why?
Co-design activities support everybody to be a designer. The process harnesses the valuable expertise people have about their own experiences.

How?
Invite a group of your target users/staff and partners to take part in shaping and designing your ideas using user jouirneys.

We took the family stories and co-design findings and created a set of principles to underpin the Thriving Families work. These were based on discussions with local people and with the agencies involved in Thriving Families development workshops.

Sharing co-design insights



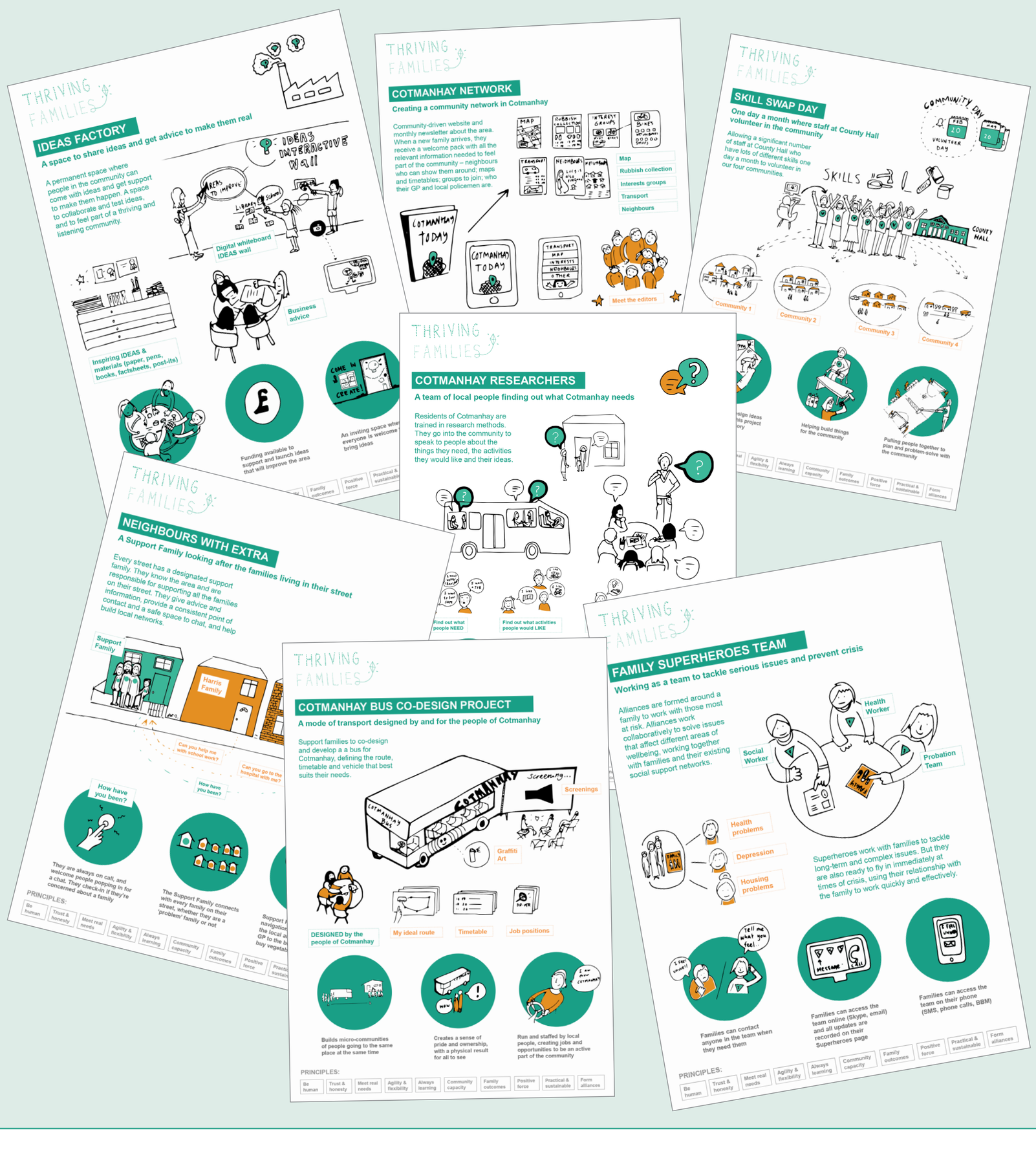
Discussing design principles

Drafting design principles

Through Thriving Families partner workshops many local agencies have been continually engaged to shape this work, ensuring that developments are appropriate for local circumstances.

EIGHT SERVICE IDEAS

We also delveloped eight service ideas to meet community needs identified through our research and development work.



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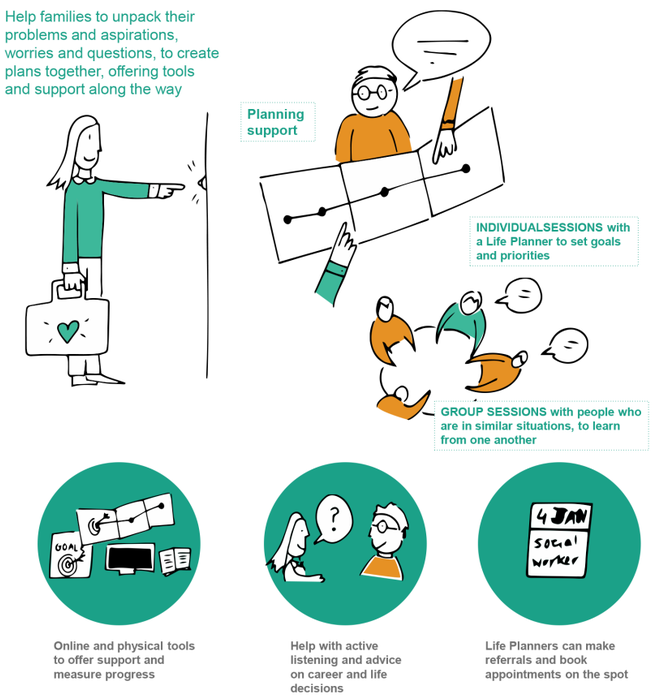
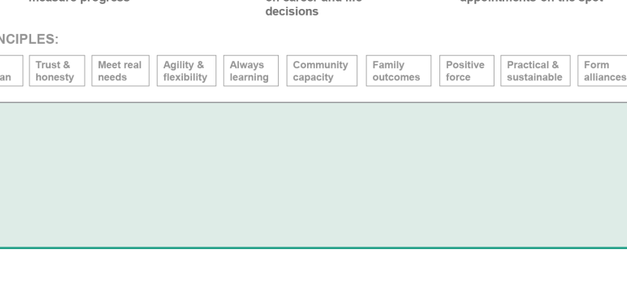
LIFE PLANNING

'Project management' with families to plan for the future and put them back in control

Help families to unpack their problems and aspirations, worries and questions, to create plans together, offering tools and support along the way





Online and physical tools to offer support and measure progress

Help with active listening and advice on career and life decisions

Life Planners can make referrals and book appointments on the spot

PRINCIPLES:

Be human | Trust & honesty | Meet real needs | Agility & flexibility | Always learning | Community capacity | Family outcomes | Positive force | Practical & sustainable | Form alliances

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What is prototyping?
Working with a group of potential users of your idea, staff and partners to test how it should work.

Why?
Helps to explore tricky situations quicly and cheaply. Can be used to define more detailed prototypes that come later.

How?
Use things like storyboards, cardboard and lego to create your scene, then walk different characters through the model to test diffferent situations.

We decided to use prototyping to generate new and better ideas. This was a way to help us understand and improve our service ideas before implementation. It would also allow us to engage a wide range of stakeholders to generate and validate ideas.

TRAINING

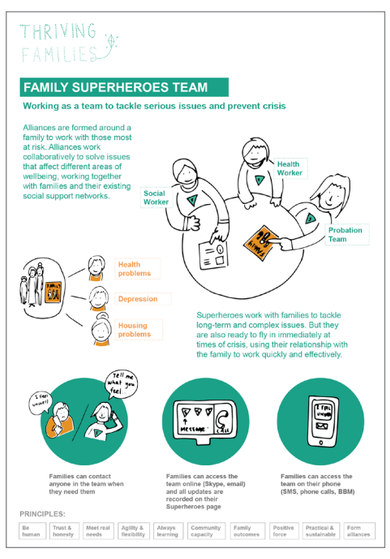
19 staff from Derbyshire County Council, Erewash Borough Council, Derbyshire Community Health Service and Erewash CCG were trained by the Innovation Unit to carry out prototyping.

Prototyping (rather than piloting) enables us to "fail earlier and often, to succeed sooner" mitigating risks through small scale tests, rather than designing them out.

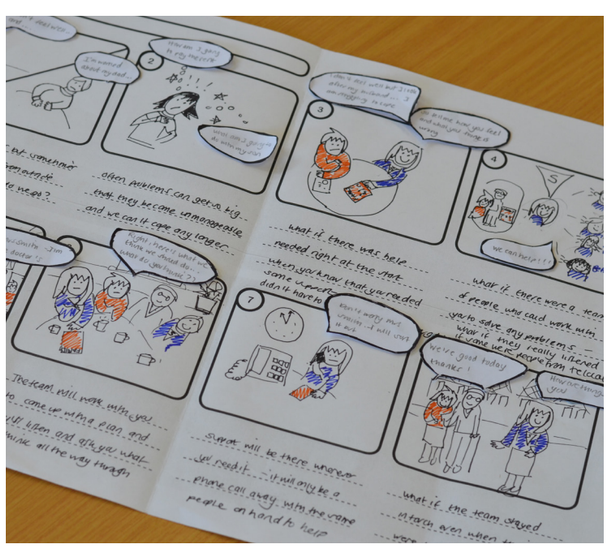
PROTOTYPING SESSIONS

We tested our eight service ideas with local people; in the Children's Centre, in the school, on a bus, at the local hospital, at the job centre and at the Adult Education Centre.

We spoke to over 40 families. We also prototyped our ideas with frontline staff, managers and senior officers from various organisations.

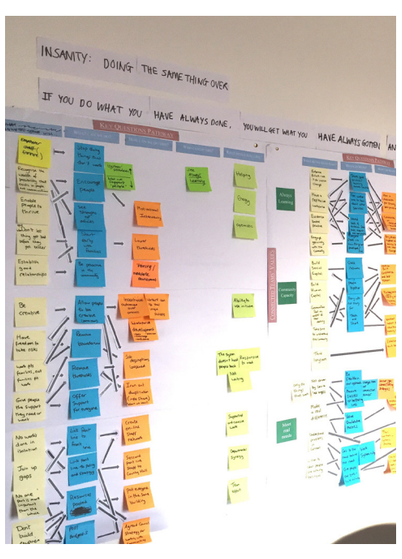


Service Idea



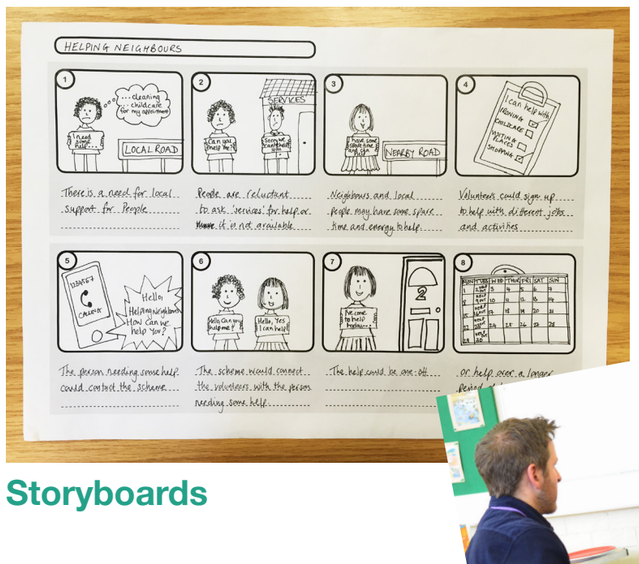
Prototyping method

Talking through the idea

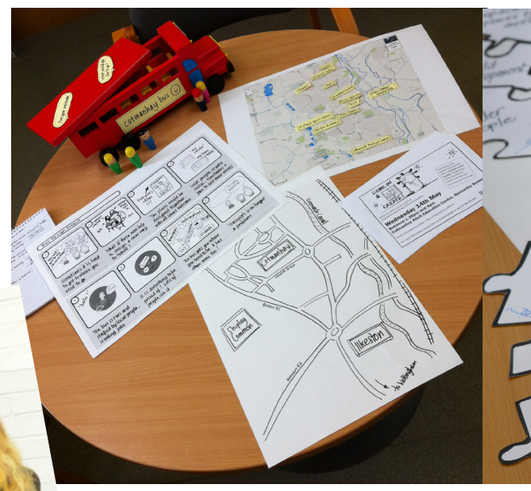


Better, more refined ideas

WE USED A VARIETY OF PROTOTYPING METHODS



Storyboards



Paper prototyping

Live test

Role play

We've never been asked our opinion in this way before" (resident at school)