

**Investigating barriers and opportunities in Whitley  
from the perspective of key community stakeholders  
as part of the Whitley for Real project 2017**

Whitley Researchers and University of Reading

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## Background

Reading Borough Council and the University of Reading are co-developing a project with the community to access the 'local voice' in South Reading, with the aim of influencing both current and planned activities in the area, so that resources can be targeted more effectively, ultimately helping to reduce deprivation. The project, named Whitley For Real, is a partnership between Reading Borough Council, the Whitley Researchers<sup>1</sup>, the Whitley Community Development Association (WCDA) and other key organisations within the community.

Whitley is a 'warm and friendly' environment plagued by stigma surrounding low aspirations, poverty, unemployment and fear amongst others. It is often attributed with negative connotations despite being very centred on people and their community. With a large amount of potential in the area, this project aims to unlock the hidden aspirations and allow the area to grow in a sustainable and manageable manner.

This is in response to the 2015 document Index of Multiple Deprivation which can be found on the Reading Borough Council website at <http://www.reading.gov.uk/borough-profile>. Another key document, which can also be found on the Reading Borough Council website, is the Poverty Needs Analysis (2016), which gives further details on both general deprivation in the area as well as child and work poverty.

These reports have shown that Whitley is the most deprived ward in Reading with key factors such as poverty, employment and education being key issues. One LSOA in the area is also in the bottom 1% in the country in terms of percentage of students not staying on in education post 16, and almost half the number of pupils in the area gained 5 GCSEs (A-C\*) than in Reading generally in 2015. Furthermore, the ward has a proportionally younger population than the rest of Reading with 25% of the population aged between 0-15, highlighting the need for raised aspirations and enhanced schooling.

This partnership aims to develop a better understanding of:

- young people's aspirations and how they feel they might achieve them
- the school/ family relationship and how engagement with schools can be improved
- how to strengthen links within the community to aid service provision relating to education and aspirations

To help tackle this, as part of the Whitley for Real project, the Whitley Researchers will be working with student researchers in South Reading schools to carry out participatory research with their peers into young people's aspirations and the school-family relationship, as well as carrying out research

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<sup>1</sup> The Whitley Researchers are a group of local people who have been trained by University of Reading to carry out research with the local community, as part of the Big Local project.

with parents, teachers and other school staff. This research is funded by the Council's Decent Neighbourhoods Fund and Affinity Housing.

Prior to this research being undertaken and to help shape this work, a number of interviews with key partners and stakeholders has been undertaken by the University of Reading over the summer 2017 to gain their insight into issues in Whitley and to find out what information they would like to get from the research which would help inform their future service delivery and engagement with the community.

## Executive Summary

Two University of Reading interns were asked to complete interviews with key stakeholders and policy makers in Reading on behalf of Reading Borough Council. This report lists the results from interviews with key stakeholders and potential beneficiaries of the Whitley for Real research regarding the key issues Whitley faces, the data we need to collect as part of the research and their views of youth aspirations.

The key questions asked related to families and schools, aspirations, stigma and improving service provision.

Key findings are as follows:

- Little engagement between secondary schools and parents is an issue that is key to preventing students reaching their aspirations. The opposite can be seen in primary schools, however, where there is a lot of involvement from parents
- Lack of careers advice from a young age, with both students and parents often being unaware of the opportunities available
- Strong sense of community- food 4 families, community café, Whitley library, fundays and other events all adding to the welcoming community spirit
- Area surrounded by wealth and job opportunities - (Madejski Stadium, Tesco Distribution Centre, Thames Valley)
- Higher education isn't necessarily a sign of 'high aspirations', with getting a job or apprenticeship alternatives that should be equal- idea of goal setting and ensuring everyone can reach their individual potential, whatever it is
- Intergenerational poverty seen as one of the main barriers, which adds to the stigma and stereotypes of the area that need to be dispelled
- The ward is not lacking in resources, and it isn't a lack of money flowing into the area that is preventing the barriers being resolved. There are other issues and hidden needs that can be solved with increased resourcefulness

# Introduction

Whitley is a ward of Reading, well-known for different reasons; some speak of Whitley with pride, others with a sneer. Over many years a lot has been done to try and dispel the harsh stereotypes of the area, with multiple cash injections and schemes being implemented, few resulting in the desired continuity and sustainability. In order to create a more sustainable outcome, a number of interviews were carried out among key stakeholders in Whitley, The interviews aimed to further engage with stakeholders and for their views to inform the development of the research questions to be employed in schools as part of the Decent Neighbourhood Fund funded research to better understand youth aspiration in South Reading.

To do this, two interns from the University of Reading, Hayley Ryall and Bethany Brown, worked with the project over the summer of 2017, under Sally Lloyd Evans's supervision, to plan and carry out interviews with a range of partners, stakeholders and policy makers, to find out their opinion of Whitley for Real, and how the research can be tailored to best benefit the community and organisations involved, as well as their opinion of Whitley itself.

The topics in the interview covered the four broad subjects stated below:

- Identifying key issues facing the community in Whitley and how they can be overcome
- What the organisations wanted to gain from the Whitley for Real research and how they could use it to improve service delivery or engagement in the area
- What can organisations bring to the project
- How to increase involvement with the project

The interviews lasted around 30 minutes, the questions asked can be seen in *Appendix 1*. The interviewees were asked if they were happy to be recorded to aid analysis of the script for the purposes of this report, but were also able to remain anonymous if they so wished.

This research will feed into the development of the questions and methodology to be used by the Whitley Researchers and student researchers as part of the research carried with schools over the autumn.

## Literature review

### Educational Attainment

There are a number of reports detailing the different factors that a child can face which affect their level of aspiration; one of the most documented being educational attainment by Berzin, S. 2010 which focused on the 'poor' and youth aspirations and parental engagement. "It has been well-documented that educational aspirations are one of the most important predictors of educational attainment" and therefore it is important to understand aspirations at a younger age to identify those who need extra help and to boost these aspirations. Parents in poor families may be less engaged in academic activities or have less experience in the educational arena than other parents. Low-income students who perceive greater barriers and lower levels of support, report lower aspirations. Through mechanisms related to parental income, parental education, parental employment, high expectations around education, and the provision of academic experiences, youths are influenced toward particular aspirations (Mau, 1995; Sewell et al., 1970). Parents influence aspirations by modelling behaviour and providing academic resources to their children (Sewell et al., 1969, 1970;

Wilson & Wilson, 1992). Parents' educational expectations are often more important than parents' education, occupation, or school involvement.

### Home and community surroundings

Hartas 2016 examined the contribution of young people's psychosocial and background factors and home environment to their educational aspirations in the UK, which showed that they were good predictors of their educational aspirations. Emotional closeness to parents and cultural capital (e.g. participating in cultural events, discussing books) were better predictors of 10–15-year-olds' aspirations than were more school-driven parent–child interactions (e.g. homework, extra-curricular activities), which exemplifies the important role parents have in their child's future and aspirations and is the reason our questions focus on parent- school relationships.

According to Slack, K (2003) "Traditionally many young people left school and entered the same job as their parents within the ceramic, mining or steel industries; industries which have either disappeared or are in the process of contracting". This can be seen in Whitley where they have experienced protracted deindustrialisation. Whitley was an area that used to produce things; now the jobs in the area, as in the Thames Valley generally, require qualifications. Numerous factors are involved in the development of aspirations: feelings and emotions, experience, access to information and guidance, perception of opportunities available, family background, class and gender (Hodkinson and Sparkes 1997). Kintrea (2011) completed a long term study in secondary schools from 2007- 2010 looking at the main factors affecting education- family, place and school. Across all three case locations, young people had a very high degree of exposure to local influences, particularly to the local norms, beliefs and expectations about what is important in life. It was also found that young people's aspirations towards education and jobs are high.

### Standard of Development

Prodonovich et al (2014) found that that the disadvantaged aspire to education attainment levels similar to any other section of the population, but that they may not be allowed to develop their aspirations due to constraints such as structural hurdles and uneven access to the resources and information that support the capacity to aspire. The disparity between aspiration and participation for disadvantaged groups has been attributed to the constraining of aspirations by factors leading to 'adaptive' rather than 'pure' choices (Sarojini Hart, 2013, Parker et al 2013)

### General Factors

It has been stated that a variety of factors can each affect an individual's level of education or aspiration. "The benefits of Higher Education for Individuals and Society" suggests factors like race and ethnicity, gender, family income, and parental education level affects the level of education obtained. It finds that "Any college experience produces a measurable benefit when compared with no post-secondary education" suggesting the need to carry on to further education and the importance of aspiring to do so. The article "Aspirations, Education and Inequality in England: Insights from the Effective Provision of Pre-school, Primary and Secondary Education Project" discloses data on the educational aspirations of pre-school, primary school and secondary school children and analyses factors that help to predict aspirations. It finds high aspirations occurring in disadvantaged situations, with factors such as income and social class affecting aspirations. Within the family situation it explores how "In far too many communities there is a deeply embedded culture of low aspiration that is strongly tied to long-term unemployment" (Department of Education, 2010b). This is relevant to Whitley, with the idea that aspiration levels are generational. Predictors for aspirations include parental jobs and qualifications, the presence of a computer at

home, attainment of grades, % attendance at school and how important students rate obtaining an undergraduate degree.

A recent consultation document published by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) looks at the level of future growth in demand for higher education places which is required to hit the government's target of 50% of young people in HE by 2010. According to the report, the largest potential for growth in student numbers comes from young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds. 'The big question is whether the potential of this cohort can be realised: whether demand for HE can be stimulated among groups in society with a history of low participation' (HEFCE 2001).

### Previous successful examples

Somerset Community Foundation recruited and trained 36 volunteers from the Somerset community to engage in one-to-one coaching and mentoring with young people aged between 11 to 13 years of age. The objective of the programme is to raise the aspirations and attainment of young people in Somerset. Coaching and mentoring have been shown to have a positive effect on educational performance, wellbeing, hopefulness and attitude to learning. This shows the importance of external influence. Participants felt positive about the experience of sharing the responsibility of setting the agenda for what was discussed during mentoring/coaching meetings ("We both sort of decide what we should talk about"), A similar approach is used by the Whitley Researchers, who are carrying out the Whitley for Real research, by working with the community using participatory methods.

## **Methodology**

1. Initially, meetings were held at Reading Borough Council with Chris Bloomfield, Ebony George and Jill Marston to discuss the key aims of the interviews and the desired information that was to be obtained. The meetings also narrowed down a key list of stakeholders and potential beneficiaries of the research to be interviewed
2. Following from these meetings, a draft copy of interview questions was created, which were then refined with the help of Chris Bloomfield, Jill Marston and Sally Lloyd-Evans. A copy of the finalised interview questions can be seen in Appendix 1. Also, at this stage, issues of confidentiality and ethical practice were discussed.
3. Next, personalised emails were sent out to each of the stakeholders, detailing how they could help and what they could gain from the interviews. The emails also mentioned why there was a need to gain the insight of that particular stakeholder.
4. Times and dates for the interviews were then agreed with the stakeholders This proved difficult as many were on annual leave (interviews conducted in July/August), making the interview process slightly fragmented.
5. The first two interviews were conducted as pilot interviews to help tailor the questions to the stakeholder, bearing in mind the involvement they had had with the Whitley For Real project to date. Slight amendments were then made to the questions before the interviewing process continued.
6. The remainder of the interviews were then either conducted by one or both of the interns and lasted on average between 30-40 minutes. The interns asked for permission to record for transcribing purposes and also obtained a preference of how they would like to be quoted to ensure good ethical practice.

7. The recordings were transcribed after each interview with both interns also providing a reflection on the interview, and a list of key points for each interview compiled.
8. Finally, the interviews and key points were collated and compared at the end of the interview process, creating a list of key points for each question that can be found in *Appendix 2*. From this, a report was written.

## Results

The data collected shows that the key issues facing communities in Whitley revolve around employment, family and the stigma experienced in the community. Additionally, two stakeholders expressed the idea that Whitley experienced protracted decidualisation due to closure of businesses like "Courage Brewery", which has led to fewer employment opportunities that require low skill levels. This means there are fewer jobs in Whitley that don't need qualifications and an increase in jobs that do. Often the jobs young people's parents aspired to don't exist anymore. *"When that closed, I think in terms of opportunity, it became quite hard for them to see where the opportunities were maybe, and that people were letting them down by not actually giving them that careers advice and training support that they needed"*. Sue Brackley, Reading UK CIC.

There is the idea that aspirations are relative to generational goals and that what worked for children's parents will work for them, which is no longer the case (*"there are a lot of people whose mum and grandmother didn't work and their dads on disability benefits all his life and it is intergenerational"*, Children's Centre). The fact the parents have low aspirations for their children, leading to intergenerational poverty, and the idea that children don't want to move out of the community both suggest that some residents hold the perception that they won't amount to anything or reach their potential. Respondents were quick to identify numerous barriers stopping students from achieving their aspirations and many did refer to the stigma and stereotypes associated with Whitley.

In Whitley, there are *"great facilities, they've got the leisure centre there, the community centre, New Directions is based there"* the *"surrounding area is high with employment opportunities"* with *"fantastic"* bus and transport services running *"every 15 minutes into town"* The Madejski Stadium and Tesco Distribution Centre were also listed as assets within Whitley itself. This then begs the question - if the facilities and resources are so good, why is there still poverty and unemployment?

Another key asset within the area was *"the people themselves"* and the strength of the community which is *"very supportive about wanting to make a change and get things done"* (**Matthew Breadman, Whitley Library**). Small projects such as 'Food 4 Families', the 'Secret Garden', as well as the museums and the Whitley Researchers were all listed as assets to the community. The attitude of the community was highlighted as one of the biggest strengths, with the children's centre describing it as a *'friendly and warm place'* where loyalty is returned in *'bucket loads'*. This creates a stark contrast to the stereotypes that are commonly attributed to the area, which the participants were all keen to dispel. The children's centre, again, spoke of how *"Whitley's strengths were also its weaknesses"* in that Whitley is well talked about, sometimes with pride and sometimes with a sneer, but you would not find any other ward in Whitley getting the same attention, so it can also be seen as a positive.

Several participants were quick to highlight the same barriers that both young people and the community in general faced. Many acknowledged that it was not money that was the issue but rather a lack of resourcefulness. It was also highlighted that the changes that had been made in the past had not been sustainable or had only lasted as long as the funding, therefore there were issues with continuity and using the funds efficiently. In terms of what

the organisations want from future research and data that would be helpful, the focus was on parental aspirations for their children, what sort of future they'd like their children to have, and what are the main barriers for their children. *"So I think that if the data were collected by Whitley researchers and from the local community then it would be extremely useful to know peoples aspirations for their children and what sort of future they'd like their children to have"* (Steve Musson, *Aspire 2*). As the Whitley Researchers use participatory methods to involve the community, Steve Musson from *Aspire 2* believes the Whitley for Real research will provide different, more honest answers in comparison with previous research. *"A community based project working as part of community discussion would open more answers."* In addition, questions like, "what stops the community being more involved?"; "what are the community needs/ top priorities" and "what are the employment opportunities in Whitley?" were also suggested.

The research we collect through participatory methods as part of the Whitley for Real project can then be used, for example, to help plan the training and support provided by organisations such as New Directions, Reading College and Whitley Library. Reading College said that once the issues have been identified, for example the need to increase skills relative to employment, they can then *"go to Whitley and set up courses to support and educate in the issues identified"*. These organisations expressed their wish to work more at a community level with families and help recruit and find other organisations and agencies that could be involved to help with the key issues identified. *"It's about how we can support children and families to use the opportunities that are made available to them"* (Shelia Tibbenham, **Whitley Excellence Cluster**).

## Discussion

*"We are looking at a population of individuals who statistically share some characteristics but I think it's all about the individuals and that individual approach to supporting people and understanding of individual needs as a parent, child or family unit and that's what we need to be working towards."*

The results were generally quite consistent, with only a couple of interviewees providing a significantly different perspective. The answers given depended heavily on whether the interviewee had a lot of existing knowledge of the Whitley For Real project, as well as Whitley itself, however overall the results were insightful. There were mixed responses to the question about defining 'high aspirations' and responses generally could be grouped by participant sector. Most linked 'high aspiration' to an individual being 'self-motivated' and 'reaching their own personal goals', whilst others linked it to geographic mobility (where residents think they can go or where they would like to go).

Whitley residents feel that strategies are implemented and "stuff is done too them", not with them. There needs to be more engagement between different organisations and between the organisations and the community. By strengthening links with the community, organisations will receive more guidance regarding the type of provision that is needed and communities in turn will benefit more from that provision, creating an altogether more efficient and happier environment. Leading on from this, there was a lot of discussion around the idea that the 'challenges are also something that need to be celebrated'. Not only are the Whitley residents themselves arguably the strongest asset in the community, but the difficulties they face are also some of their key strengths, with one respondent arguing: *'my counterparts in other wards aren't being interviewed about their area, so we are special and we stand out'*. It is this comradeship that shines from Whitley and it can be seen both through this report

and previous documents<sup>2</sup>, with everyone wanting to get involved and help (and with all our interviewees being willing to help us recruit more Whitley Researchers. With this community spirit being such an integral part of Whitley's personality, it is then vitally important that residents have their say about changes to the area rather than changes simply happening to them.

A point that was raised by numerous stakeholders was that the link between secondary schools and parents needs to be greatly strengthened. A stronger relationship needs to be formed to both raise children's attainment and aspirations and also to break down the stigma surrounding schools, where parents themselves may have had a bad experience when they were at school. It was stated that one parents' evening a term is not at all enough to ensure that children get the best education possible and more needs to be done on both parts to make communication more interactive, with both schools reacting to feedback and parents taking a more active part in their child's education. The representative from the children's centre highlighted that it was engaging with your child from a young age and helping them with reading and homework that can really enhance that child's education, and also help raise their aspirations, as they are more aware of the world and what is possible. This suggests that parents need to play a more interactive role within their child's education to help them in the best way possible. Barry Wren (New Directions) felt that parents are beginning to do more to try and help their children. Barry stated that more parents are coming to New Directions' adult learning classes to understand the more modernised way of teaching so that they were able to help their children with their homework, as the methods have changed greatly since some parents were at school. More of this then needs to be encouraged so support can be found at home, whether it is help with homework or simply reading a story at night so that the ideas and teaching that are created in schools are continued and practiced in the home.

From previous research, it is known that access to some services is a difficulty among residents, and leading on from this, it was found that another key issue was ensuring that individuals know what is available to them, especially in terms of healthcare and adult education. Organisations need to be aware of the best way to circulate information throughout the community, and also ensure that the community have accessible ways to feedback to the organisations to enable the most efficient provision. Potential methods to achieve this could include the use of social media or family workers performing more proactively where possible.

Finally, it was highlighted that there should be a change in the way that careers advice is provided within schools, with many methods, , having been the same for decades, for example the one week of work experience in year 11. The work experience needs to have more value and effect on the children and could be reinforced by careers fairs or open days at local companies, again to allow individuals to see what the options are post year 11. Not only is there a general consensus that students are unaware of the options but there is also a distinct lack of information being given to parents, with many potentially having low aspirations for their children as a result of not knowing the opportunities available for their children.

From our research, it became clear that there were two extremes in terms of parent mindsets, with some arguing that university is the highest ambition to have, and others believing that if everyone in their family has always been on benefits, why should it be any different for their child. These ways of thinking suggest that some parents haven't been kept up to date with their children's education and

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<sup>2</sup> for example, the Working Better with Whitley project in 2014, see the link for more information, [http://localtrust.org.uk/assets/images/uploads/Whitley\\_Report\\_25.09.2015\\_FINAL\\_VERSION.pdf](http://localtrust.org.uk/assets/images/uploads/Whitley_Report_25.09.2015_FINAL_VERSION.pdf)

that more needs to be done to both raise aspirations and show that obtaining a work placement or apprenticeship can be seen as equally successful as going to university.

By recognising and celebrating all careers post year 11, this should help to raise aspirations within secondary schools and also in a student's home life and misconceptions surrounding future aspirations and careers should begin to be dispelled. One key way of doing this, raised by many of our respondents, involves getting more local businesses and organisations to interact with secondary school students and their parents. By holding open days at local businesses, where students and parents can really begin to understand the process of that particular business, they will be more aware of the opportunities available. This could be reinforced by careers fairs and other events at schools to ensure that the link with businesses remains.

Furthermore, looking forward to the future and potential careers should be introduced at an earlier age. Following on from this, parents should also be aware of the opportunities available to their children from a younger age and should be open to discussing that going to university is not the only option that equates to success. This will be explored further with the young Whitley Researchers from Reading Girls School and John Madejski Academy, as part of the Whitley for Real research with schools..

## **Summary of issues and key findings**

### **The following were suggested as ways to help tackle deprivation in Whitley:**

- Improving communication between organisations so there is no duplication of provision- including use of feedback we have obtained from this research and ensuring this feedback is continued. Also, ensuring everyone is involved, e.g. primary schools
- Strengthening ties between school and home life and helping schools create incentives for parents to be more actively involved
- Increasing community engagement with methods including frequent feedback from projects
- Focusing on what resources are available and using them to full effect
- Tackling stigma in and around Whitley
- Ensuring projects are sustainable and long term with consistent funding
- Making most effective use of the wealth of data from different organisations, including anecdotal evidence e.g. from the childrens' centres.
- Getting more people involved, in particular the churches and the primary schools
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### **The following were suggested as ways to boost aspirations:**

- Increase careers advice through methods including mentoring schemes, introducing ideas around work and experience at an earlier age and involving more local employers in work tours and careers fairs etc.
- Continue to involve the community more in decision making
- Increase exposure to positive role models (speakers, local employers etc.)  
Celebrating small/all achievements to encourage progress and inspiration

## Concluding Statements

The research presented above provides a basis to help build and tailor the upcoming Whitley for Real research in schools so that it benefits as many sectors and individuals as possible. Many key ideas have been raised through these interviews and important steps have been identified to work on moving forward. It is clear from the discussion that strengthening both communication between schools and parents and also organisations and the community is an issue that needs to be addressed. Now that barriers have been identified, the next stage of research can be moulded to help combat these, and tailored to allow organisations to make best use of the results and consequently to enhance their practice.

From our key findings schemes have been implemented to investigate further. Below is a list of the findings with what has been done to tackle these issues underneath.

- Little engagement between secondary schools and parents is an issue that is key to preventing students reaching their aspirations. The opposite can be seen in primary schools, however, where there is a lot of involvement from parents:

Parent research will explore differences between primary and secondary school engagement

- Lack of careers advice from a young age, with both students and parents often being unaware of the opportunities available

Career advice and support will be raised in the aspiration game and also in a school-wide questionnaire and focus groups

- Strong sense of community- food 4 families, community café, Whitley library, fun days and other events all adding to the welcoming community spirit

Important to look at community in addition to parents, young people and schools. Qualitative research with community organisations will look at ways in which this key asset might be utilised to support young people and their parents achieve goals/aspirations. Also by looking and researching questions like 'How might community-school engagement be improved?'

- Area surrounded by wealth and job opportunities - (Madejski Stadium, Tesco Distribution Centre, Thames Valley)

Interviews with employers and Dragon's Den event at JMA

- Higher education isn't necessarily a sign of 'high aspirations', with getting a job or apprenticeship alternatives that should be equal- idea of goal setting and ensuring everyone can reach their individual potential, whatever it is

- Explored through the research

- Intergenerational poverty seen as one of the main barriers, which adds to the stigma and stereotypes of the area that need to be dispelled

- Research questions explore the extent to which poverty is an underlying factor

- The ward is not lacking in resources, and it isn't a lack of money flowing into the area that is preventing the barriers being resolved. There are other issues and hidden needs that can be solved with increased resourcefulness
  - Need to identify these barriers from school, youth and family perspectives and understand what these 'hidden' needs might be and how they could be addressed by service providers (e.g. parent focused education; confidence building etc.) Also identifying potential activities to reduce stigma

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# Appendix 1: Whitley For Real Stakeholder Interview Questions

## Introductions

Brief introduction to WRF and aims of interview; confidentiality and ethical practice.

1. *Please could you tell us about your organisation/department and your particular role?*
2. *What do you know about the Whitley for Real Project? (and if appropriate the Whitley Researchers/DNF research)? (prompt: are they already participating and in what way?)*

## Whitley: Barriers and Opportunities

3. *What do you think are the key issues facing communities in Whitley? In your opinion, why are there pockets of deprivation? (prompt: key barriers to education, skills and training for local residents and families)*
4. *How does your organisation help local residents and families tackle the challenges we've discussed? (prompt where appropriate: To what extent do you already work with communities in South Reading? Would you like to work more closely with local residents and organisations and do you have the capacity to do this?)*
5. *We've talked about barriers, but what are the opportunities/assets in the local community? Can you share examples of successful projects/services that are working well in Whitley? (prompt: what's good about Whitley/good news stories)*

## Decent Neighbourhoods Funded Research

6. *Are there any particular research questions or data that would be helpful to you and your organisation? (prompt: what would you like to know? is there information that we could collect to better inform the way you shape local service provision?)*
  - (i) *Do you think that you can use this research and if so, how?*
7. *As part of WFR, we're undertaking research exploring student aspirations and school-parent relationships with JMA, Reading Girls and WEC schools with the aim of developing initiatives to raise aspirations and attainment:*
  - (i) *How would you define 'high aspirations' and how might our project measure a raise in aspirational attainment of students participating in the project? (prompt: what does success look like?)*
  - (ii) *What are the barriers for some young people to achieving 'higher aspirations? What do you think needs to change?*
  - (iii) *How important are good parent-school relationships to increasing access to education, skills and training in South Reading? Do you have any views on current parent-school engagement in Whitley?*

## Whitley for Real Programme

8. *How can WFR programme strengthen links in the community or better engage with local families/organisations to shape service provision? (prompt: initiatives increase social inclusion, social networks, build confidence and wellbeing)*

9. *Do you have any ideas for how we can get more residents, families, local organisations involved in the project? Do you know of any other organisations that would like to participate in the programme or might benefit from our findings?*

10. *Is there any research or other information that you could share with us to better inform this project or anything else we've not discussed?*

11. *Finally, we're hoping to recruit more local residents to join the Whitley Researchers. Do you know anyone that would be interested? Would you be able to help us advertise the positions through your networks?*

*Thank you for your time etc. We will feedback on our research to all participants in due course.*