YORK MCN CULTURAL VALUES

NOVEMBER 2021

York MCN Cultural Values

1. Introduction

York MCN involves various projects, organisations and people coming together to create change. The goal of those involved is to improve the lives of people experiencing multiple complex needs across the city.

'**Multiple Complex Needs**' (or multiple disadvantage) refers to a range of issues which make life difficult, including:

> housing issues
>
> mental ill-health
>
> contact with the criminal justice system
>
> substance misuse
>
> financial problems

The York MCN Network provides spaces, practices and platforms to enable those working and living in the city to act collectively and change both the culture and the system in which we live.

We are guided by the theory of **Systems Change.**

By 'system', we are referring to everyone living and working within York and the web of support and services which exists across the city. This is a broad definition encompassing people and communities, voluntary and community sector groups, formal service systems and leaders/elected members, and the way these all interact together.

The Cultural Values journey

In August 2020, the Network undertook a Cultural Values Survey, supported by Barrett Values Centre, as a part of our desire to build relationships and consensus about **what good support looks like,** and to identify **what enables 'system stakeholders'** to act collectively in order to better support people. The COVID-19 crisis brought an additional, and not yet fully visible layer of opportunities and challenges

to this work plan. The recent pandemic brings a potential reworking of the survey to reflect the new conditions and opportunities.

The Barrett Values Centre cultural values assessment is an internationally recognised model, the results of which provide insights into what **is** working and **not** working in the prevailing culture of any setting.

Crucially, it highlights **what is important to people, how they experience the culture and how they would like to improve it.**

The values assessment (or survey), data interpretation and findings report were carried out by an external, independent consultant. The results give us a strong platform to work from. Armed with new knowledge about the change people want to see, we can now make sustainable adjustments to improve the culture of the system, and ultimately better support those experiencing multiple complex needs in York.

A note on Cultural Entropy
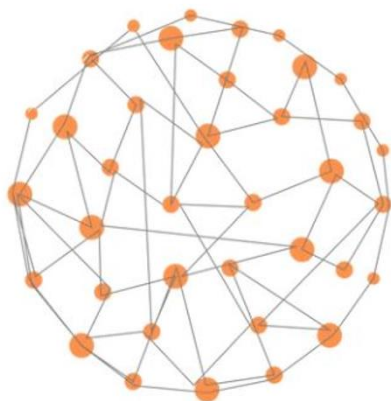
Cultural Entropy is the measure of *negative force* or *resistance* in a system that is limiting it, and consequently inhibits change or progress.

It is calculated by the ratio of positive to potentially limiting values selected by participants, and is presented as a percentage.

A **HIGHER** entropy rate means there is **MORE** resistance and dysfunction.

%

For further information about how to read and interpret the results, please see Appendix 2: How to read the results.

2. Cultural Values Results Overview

Cultural Values Assessment Survey Questions

The survey asked participants about four reference points: the personal values of each person, and their view of 3 points in time; namely the "pre-covid19" system, the current system (Aug, 2020) and the desired system in the future.

A values profile was collated from answers to four questions. Each question invited participants to choose ten values from a varied selection.

Questions that were asked:

1. **Personal Values:** please select ten values/behaviours that most reflect/represent who you are now.
2. **Pre-Covid19 Cultural Values:** please select ten values/behaviours that from your own experience, best describe how the system in York operated <u>before</u> the impact of COVID-19.
3. **Current (August 2020) Cultural Values:** please select ten values/behaviours that from your own experience, best describe how the system in York is operating now, in the current climate.
4. **Desired Future Values:** please select ten values/behaviours that you believe are essential for the system in York to reach its highest potential.

The survey also collected basic demographic data about participants, and invited them to qualify their value choices by answering three additional questions.

Additional questions:

1) To what extent does your personal lived experience of complex needs influence the values selected during this survey on a scale of 1-10 (1 being no influence and 10 a huge influence.
2) What 3 things do you think would be helpful for the system to take forward following this survey?

3) Having completed the survey, is there anything else you would like to comment on about your answers?

In asking these questions, the plan was to take a snapshot picture of the current system, and feed that back to participants and other stakeholders within a series of "sense-making" groups. This, in turn, would help inform the next steps for the Network and the System development process as a whole.

For further information about the Barrett Values Centre Model and how it works, please see Appendix 1.

Headline Results

York MCN Cultural Values Survey 2020: Top Values

Purpose
Compassion
Relationships
Caring

Personal Values

Control
Competition
Change averse
Blame

Pre-covid

Short-termism
Confusion
Lack of resource
Uncertainty

Current Culture

Learning
Adaptation
Community
Holistic
Inclusive

Desired Culture
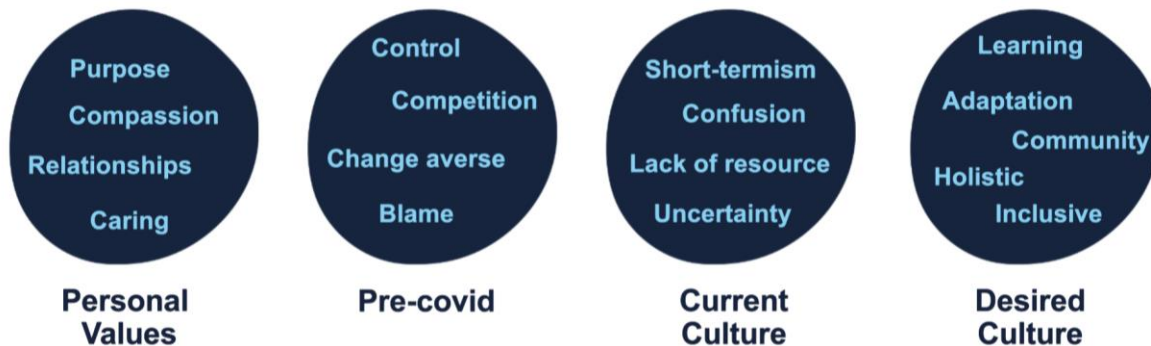
Personal values:
- People are motivated by being caring, compassionate and able to make a difference.

Pre-Covid Current culture:
- Pre-covid picture was quite heavy - more of a "control" "competition" and "blame" culture. A sense that the system was "change averse".

Current Culture (August 2020):
- Challenges focused around lack of resources, short term focus, uncertainty about the future and confusion.
- BUT there was positive change between pre-covid and current culture: and adaptability and freedom was enabled in a time of lockdown when physical freedoms were highly limited.

Desired culture:
- Values focused on learning, adaptation and development of the community as a whole, more holistic and inclusive approach.
- Relationships were seen as integral to a good system culture.

Headline Messages

- The system currently has a **high entropy** (level of dysfunction) rate at 35%. However, this is a significant improvement of 11% on pre-covid rate of 46%.
- The shifts and adaptations generated by the pandemic have been welcome in the sense that they have generated movement and **new energy for change**.
- Energy and motivation exists within system partners. There's a **desire to learn and adapt** so they can affect further changes.
- The message from the field is to focus on those core values of c**ommunity involvement**, **cross-group collaboration** and **adaptability**.
- There is real energy for change, only inhibited by factors such as **uncertainty about the future** of lack of resources.
- There are common values across all areas, including **community involvement** and **adaptability.**

Click [here](#) to:
- watch the results being presented
- read the results slides
- read the summary and full report
- see the breakdowns of different sectors, roles, and between Network and non-Network members.
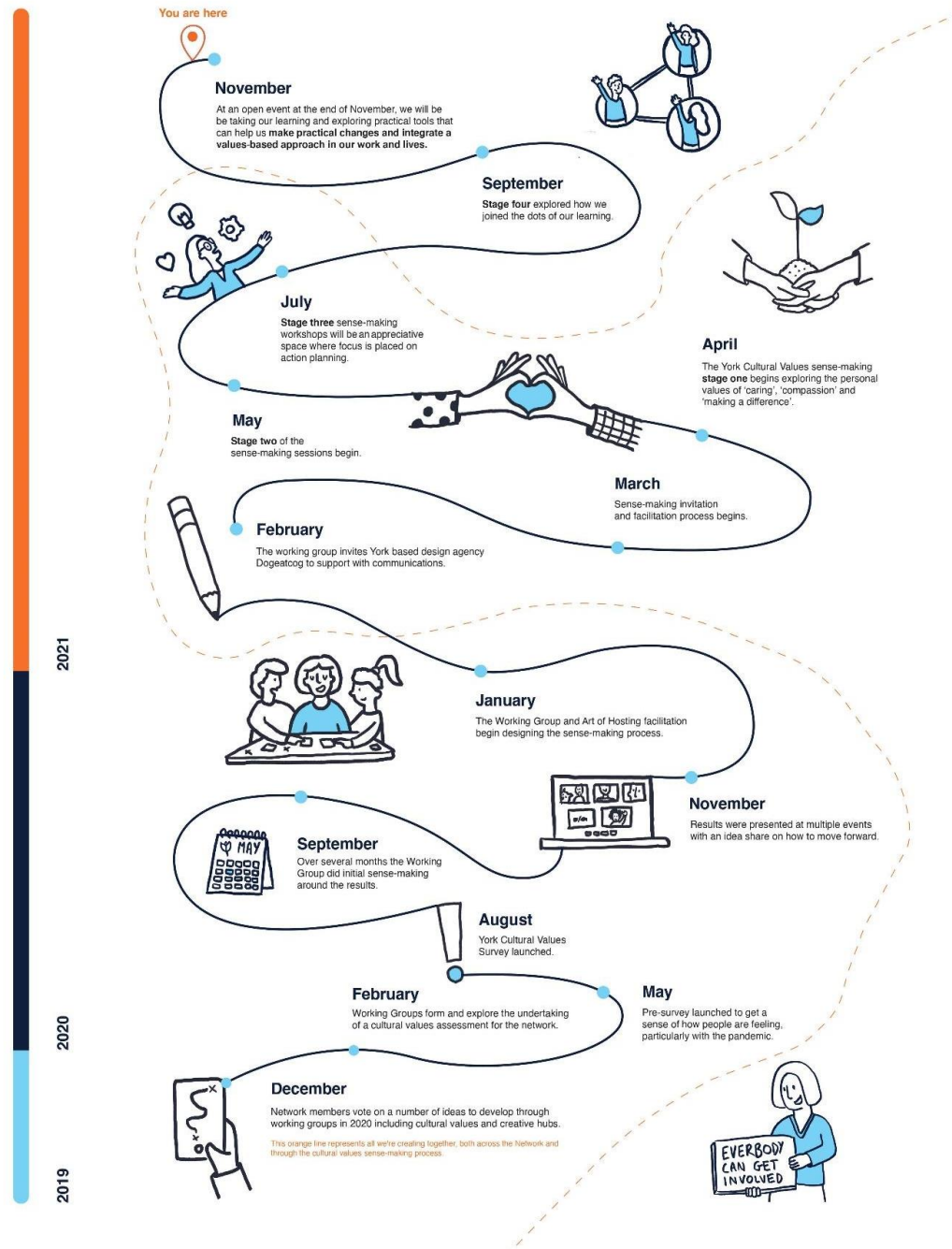
3. York Cultural Values Sense-making Process

The Journey So Far...

Watch our animation, The Journey So Far, telling you more about York MCN and the York Cultural Values process **here.**

See the full journey illustrated, here.

We began a collaborative sense-making process at the end of April 2021 to explore the results together, help us understand the health of the system, and ultimately make changes that will improve the support people can get.

You can hear members of the facilitation team and working group speaking about the York Cultural Values journey on the [York MCN website](#).

Each video is only a few minutes long, and together they take you through the journey of how we got here, connections to other work across York, and why it's been so important to get involved in this process.

Sense-making Process

Our sense-making journey has taken place over multiple 'stages':

- **Stage one** - we made sense of our **personal values.** We asked: *'How can we create the conditions which enable these to come about?'*

- **Stage two** - we explored the **current cultural values.** We looked at how they differ from the *desired values.* We asked: *'How can we begin to work to overcome some of the barriers and challenges we all face together?'*

- **Stage three** - we did **action planning** around meaningful projects. We asked: *'How can we design for the inclusion of the desired values from the start?'*

- **Stage four -** we joined-up the dots of our learning, taking us into a period of 'doing'. We explored **tangible actions and tools to support us all to incorporate the desired values** into our lives, workplaces, teams and across the system in York.

Our next event will be a hybrid event online and at Friargate Quaker Meeting House, on 30th November 2021. We will be reflecting on the York Cultural Values journey so far, and spending time sharing and exploring tools that can help us incorporate a values-based approach into our projects, teams, workplaces, and across the wider system in York, leading into a six month period of 'test and learn'.

You can register to attend the event here.

4. Why is York Cultural Values so important?

**"What we practice at the small scale sets the patterns
for the whole system"**

*Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds,
by Adrienne Maree Brown*

We are taking this approach to allow **listening** and **informed action** to be at the core of our work and methodology. We hope to display a set of behaviours that all parts of the system can adopt.

When behaviours change, culture changes too.

Culture is the pattern of our behaviours and actions over time. If we alter our patterns of behaviour, we automatically begin to alter the world around us. This is why we've taken the approach of working to *create conditions* rather than creating outputs.
Better conditions will have a ripple effect, reaching individuals, teams, organisations, and ultimately the wider system.

There have been many benefits of undertaking the York MCN cultural values process, both tangible and intangible.

Tangibly, it has provided opportunities for participants to be part of a values driven approach to system-wide change. It's allowed the chance to learn new skills, meet like-minded people with shared experiences, share learning and develop new relationships.

Intangibly, it has helped uncover and explore some of the often-invisible context and conditions that we know can influence how things are shaped, delivered and experienced in the future.

It's supported us to align and anchor the system in a shared set of values and explore how these can be embedded throughout all our

work. It has enabled us to create meaningful, authentic and impactful action together.

What now?

We have been exploring cultural values in the 'confines' of the multiple complex needs agenda. Given that this exists within the wider context of York as a whole, we recognise we need to engage with partnerships, strategic leaders and citizens across the city for there to be genuine and long-lasting change.

Through relationships and participatory actions, we have nourished the soil, planted the seeds and tended to the seedlings, and we now need some other gardeners to come along and help us!

The Cultural Values Working Group and Facilitation Team will be sharing the journey at various meetings across York, and asking people to think about how we might want to take this work forwards together. We've already presented to the Health and Care Alliance Board and Leadership Team, with the likelihood that both will be undertaking a cultural values assessment and process themselves.

There are many opportunities for how this work could be taken forwards by system leaders, sectors, organisations, teams and individuals.

Some of these include:
- Getting involved with the '**test and learn**' **phase** of our process – using tools and resources used and developed through the sense-making sessions to embed a values-based approach into existing or emerging initiatives. This might mean exploring what it looks like to model the cultural values yourself, embed it in teams, or use a cultural values lens when reviewing or creating policies and processes.
- Engaging with and **learning from the results** and sense-making process - the results provide a snap-shot picture across one agenda area, but there will be many similarities with different areas of the system.

- **Undertaking a cultural values process** yourself, across a partnership, organisation, agenda area, or the wider health and care system.

Talk to us

Sometimes the simplest of conversations makes the biggest change. If you'd like to learn more about the Cultural Values Process or how you can have input, please contact us at: info@yorkmcn.org.

We're very open to hearing new ideas, questions and queries - and the opportunity is open for absolutely everyone to get involved.

APPENDIX

Appendix 1: About the Barrett Values Centre Cultural Values Assessment model

The Community Cultural Values Survey is an assessment and mapping tool which invites participants to choose specific values which relate most closely to their personal and system experience, and their aspirations for the future.

The values chosen by participants are then collated and ranked by preference, to give a values profile. They are also mapped onto the seven levels model (see below). The resultant profile enables system stakeholders to see themselves as well as understand what motivates people involved, how they are experiencing the current system, and where they aspire to go next. The profile also reports levels of "entropy" or resistance in the system, so it is possible to identify clearly what is inhibiting change or progress at the same time.

This tool is part of a methodology created by Richard Barrett, Founder of Barrett Values Centre (BVC)®. The fundamental basis of his approach is The Seven Levels Model. This model, adapted from Maslow's Hierarchy of (human) needs, profiles individual as well as community or system level values. It works on the basis that communities are comprised of individuals, with individual and collective motivations. When identified, collated and ranked in importance, these motivations can hold a mirror to who people are, what they collectively value, and crucially, the degree to which they can express, or find these values in the workplace or current community or system. Finally it aims to collate a values profile of what that community aspires to be and do in the future.

All of the values chosen by participants are mapped onto one of the seven levels of 'community consciousness' which enables stakeholders to see how community values are distributed, and what effect that has.

Service — 7 — **Societal Contribution** — Social Justice, Human Rights, Ecology

Making a Difference — 6 — **Community Development** — Community Care, Sustainability, Environment

Internal Cohesion — 5 — **Community Spirit** — Shared Vision and Values, Optimism, Trust

Transformation — 4 — **Continuous Renewal** — Democracy, Freedom, Adaptability

Self-Esteem — 3 — **Institutional Effectiveness** — Efficient Public Services, Community Pride, Bureaucracy, Complacency

Relationship — 2 — **Harmonious Relationships** — Family, Friendship, Loyalty, Tradition, Manipulation, Blame

Survival — 1 — **Financial Stability** — Public Safety, Health Care, Nutrition, Exploitation, Over-control

Positive Focus/Excessive Focus

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Research conducted by BVC has highlighted how communities at multiple scales have seven well-defined developmental levels of consciousness, and each of those levels focuses on a particular existential need that is common to all forms of human group structures.

The seven existential needs are the principal motivating forces in all human affairs, and communities develop and grow by learning to master the satisfaction of these needs.

The levels are grouped into three cluster areas:
1) **Lower Needs:** The "lower" needs, **levels 1 to 3**, focus on the basic requirements of communities: economic security, harmonious internal group relationships, as well as systems and processes that create order and institutional effectiveness.
2) **Transformation** point: The focus of **level 4** is transformation: the creation of the conditions that allow citizens to have a voice in the running of the community and actively embrace and manage adaptation to external conditions and continuous renewal.
3) **Higher Needs:** The "higher" needs, **levels 5 to 7,** focus on resilience building and the long-term sustainability of communities: developing a cohesive culture, building mutually beneficial alliances with neighbouring communities, and actively participating in the larger society for the common good.

The Seven Levels of Community Consciousness

Level 1: Survival

This level focuses on matters to do with the survival, maintenance, and expansion of the community and the security of its citizens. Healthy communities are financially sound and safe. This level includes values such as prosperity, financial stability, health care, employment, and emergency services.

The potentially limiting aspects of this level of consciousness include poverty, corruption, and environmental pollution.

Level 2: Relationship

This level concerns the quality of internal interpersonal relationships within the group. Healthy communities create a sense of belonging. This level includes values such as family, friendship, tradition, loyalty, neighbourliness, hospitality, and open communication.

The potentially limiting aspects of this level of consciousness include discrimination, loneliness, segregation, conformity, and intolerance.

Level 3: Self-esteem

This level addresses the community's need for efficient performance. Healthy communities are orderly, regulated, and law-abiding. This level includes values such as institutional effectiveness, quality, pride, cleanliness, and public services.

The potentially limiting aspects of this level of consciousness include bureaucracy, elitism, corruption, complacency, and arrogance.

Level 4: Transformation

This level focuses on giving members of the community, not just the leaders and managers, an opportunity to participate in decision-making. Healthy communities encourage members to be responsible and focused on their goals. There is a focus on learning opportunities and entrepreneurship.

This level includes values such as freedom of speech, equality, fairness, adaptability, accountability, self-reliance, and consensus.

Level 5: Internal Cohesion

This level concerns the creation of a collective group identity. It involves deepening the sense of internal connectedness among community members by creating a collective vision for the community and a set of shared values. Healthy communities have a positive spirit, a sense of direction and above all, optimism.

This level of consciousness includes values such as enthusiasm, integrity, fun, fairness, trust and dedication.

Level 6: Making a Difference

This level focuses on the deepening of internal connectedness within the community as well as the creation of alliances and partnerships with other communities. Healthy communities care for the disadvantaged and provide counselling services. They also develop links with neighbouring communities and participate in exchanges of information with communities that share similar issues.

This level of consciousness includes values such as community care, sustainability, environmental awareness, aesthetics, and quality of life.

Level 7: Service

This level focuses on a further deepening of internal connectedness within the community including the expansion of external connectedness with other communities and society. Healthy communities are not only
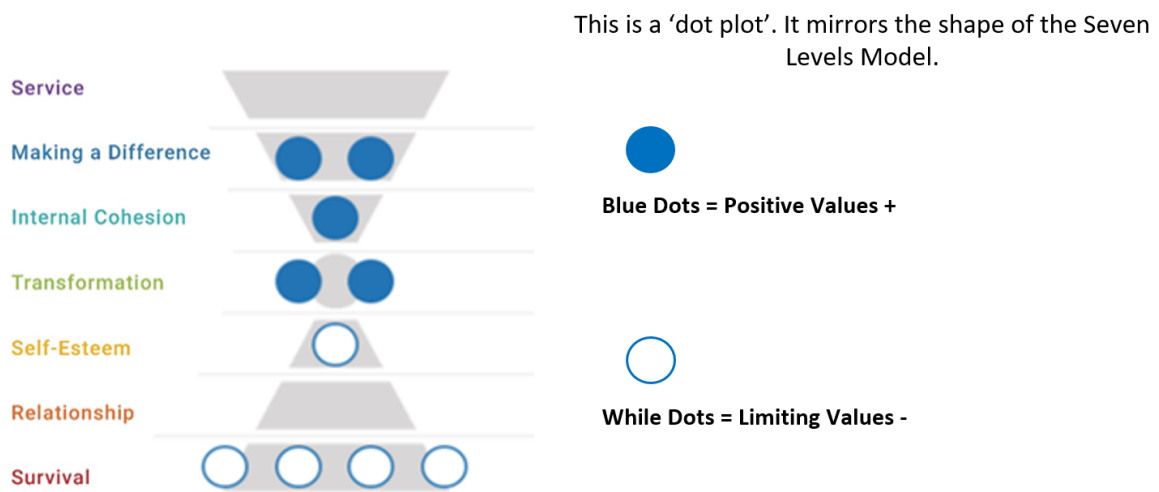
concerned with local issues; they are also advocates for social justice and human rights at a national or global level.
They are concerned with the impact of their decisions on future generations and demonstrate wisdom and compassion.

Read more about the Barrett Values Centre and their work, **here**.

Appendix 2: How to read the results
Dot Plots

This is a 'dot plot'. It mirrors the shape of the Seven Levels Model.

Blue Dots = Positive Values +

While Dots = Limiting Values -
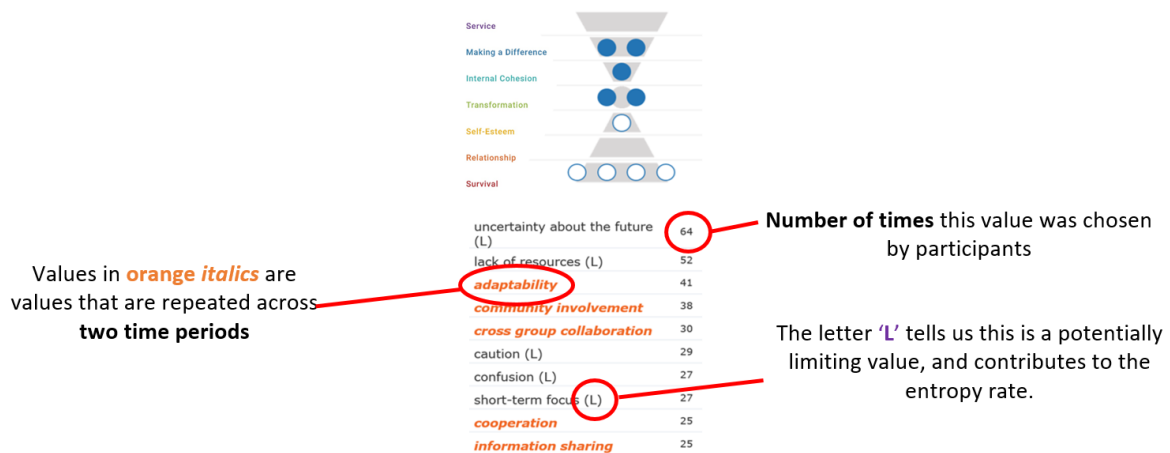
- Blue dots indicate positive values. They indicate where the energy exist that we can work with
- White dots potentially limiting values

The list beneath the dot plot indicates the top ten (highest to lowest) value preferences.

We can also break down data and see the top values chosen by participants in preference order.

Values in **orange *italics*** are values that are repeated across **two time periods**

Number of times this value was chosen by participants

The letter **'L'** tells us this is a potentially limiting value, and contributes to the entropy rate.

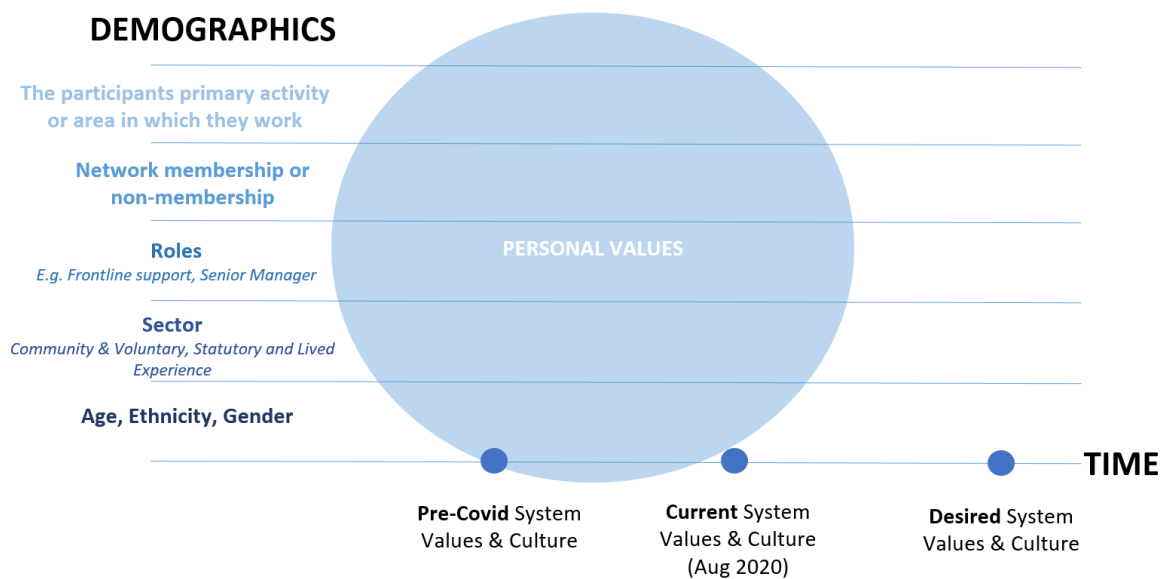|	
uncertainty about the future (L)	64
lack of resources (L)	52
adaptability	41
community involvement	38
cross group collaboration	30
caution (L)	29
confusion (L)	27
short-term focus (L)	27
cooperation	25
information sharing	25

Cultural Entropy

Cultural Entropy is the measure of *negative force* or *resistance* in a system that is limiting it, and consequently inhibits change or progress.

It is calculated by the ratio of positive to potentially limiting values selected by participants, and is presented as a percentage.

A **HIGHER** entropy rate means there is **MORE** resistance and dysfunction.

%

Mapping the results to demographics and time periods

DEMOGRAPHICS

The participants primary activity or area in which they work

Network membership or non-membership

Roles
E.g. Frontline support, Senior Manager

Sector
Community & Voluntary, Statutory and Lived Experience

Age, Ethnicity, Gender

PERSONAL VALUES

TIME

Pre-Covid System Values & Culture

Current System Values & Culture (Aug 2020)

Desired System Values & Culture

The survey gathered certain demographics which have allowed us to break the results down in various ways. This is an overview of how these different breakdowns link together.

The survey asked people about: Age, Ethnicity and Gender; Sector; People's Primary Roles; Whether people considered themselves to be a

member of the York MCN Network or not, or if they weren't sure; People's primary activity at work.

This means that we can understand the system as a whole, as well as dig deeper into individual sectors and roles, understanding differences, and thinking about how we move forwards collectively as a community.