

Reframing and Re-Energising Suicide Prevention on the Sussex Coast using Design Methods

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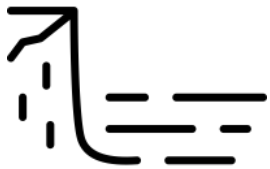
28th January 2020

Overview

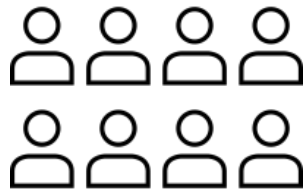
- The issue
- Historical suicide prevention work
- Using a design approach to review & reframe the issues
- What we learnt
- Questions

Why we did it

In 2018 alone:



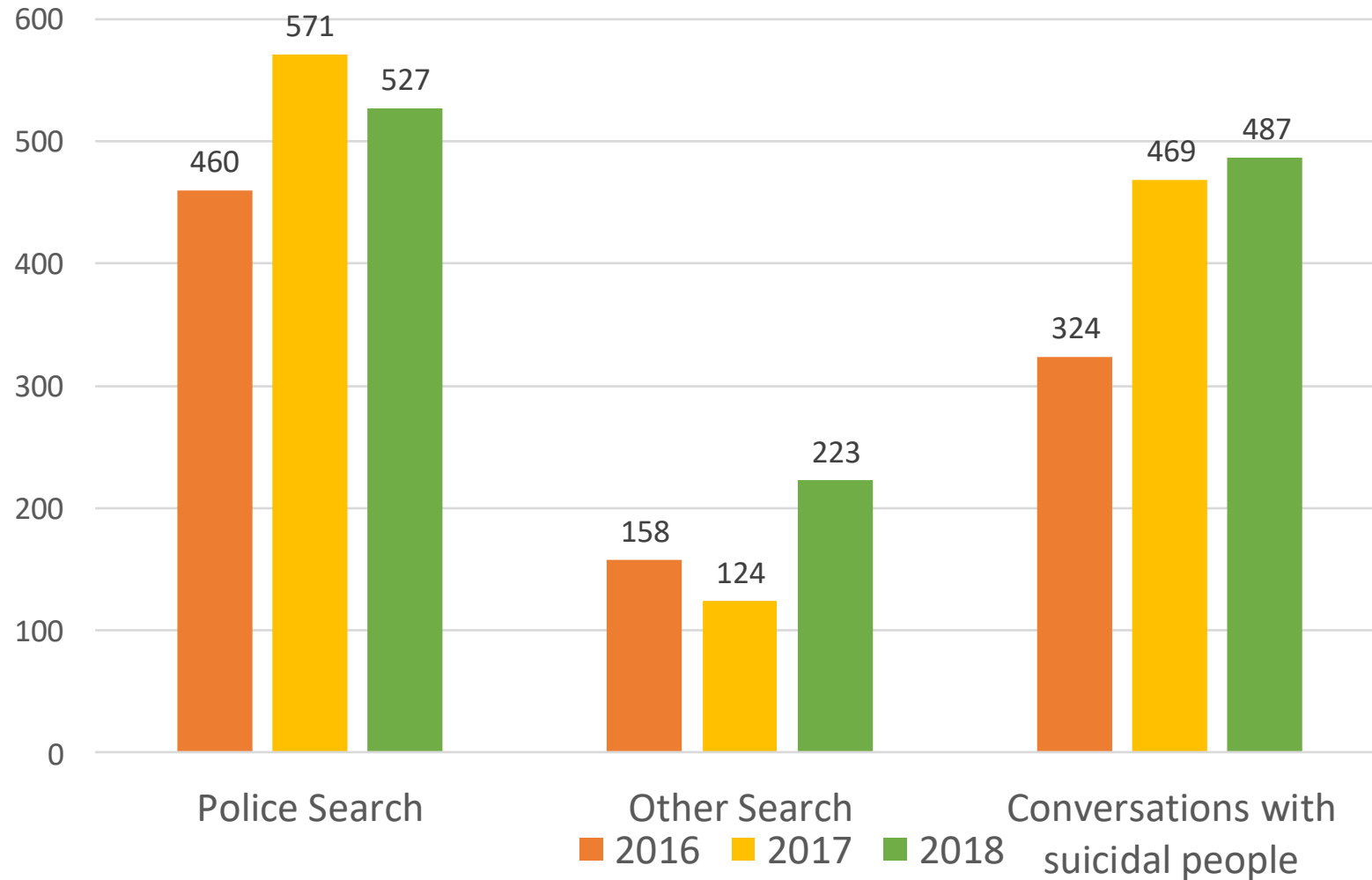
About **60*** **people** believed to have died from suicide at the site



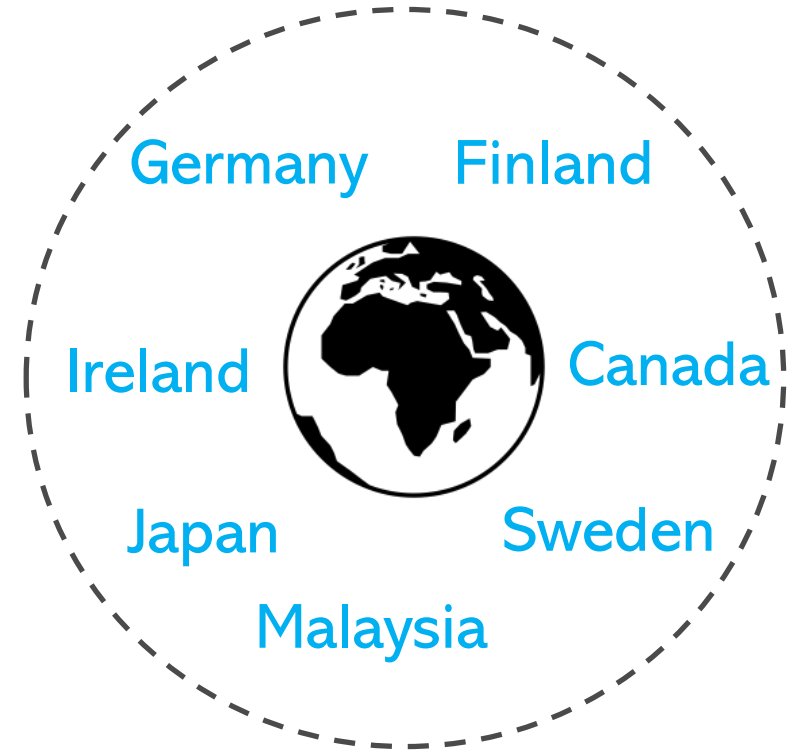
For each life lost **8 people** come to the site in crisis

* The coroner has yet to determine verdicts for all of these deaths

Conversations with people with suicidal intent



International importance



80% Suicides at the site between 2006 and 2017 were of non-East Sussex residents

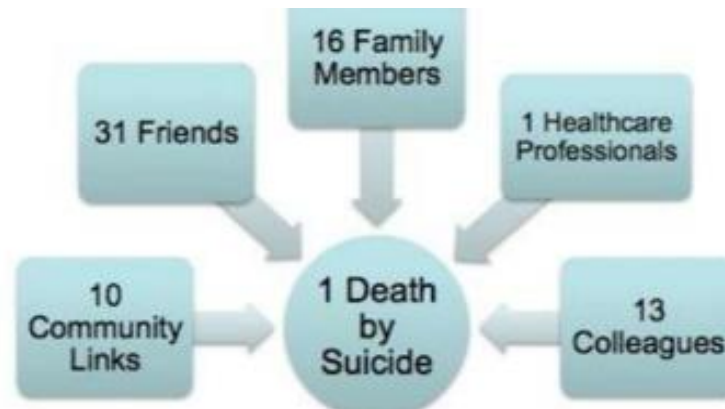
- **5%** from overseas

The financial cost



£100 million estimated cost to society of deaths from suicide in 2018 alone

The human cost



Other international sites

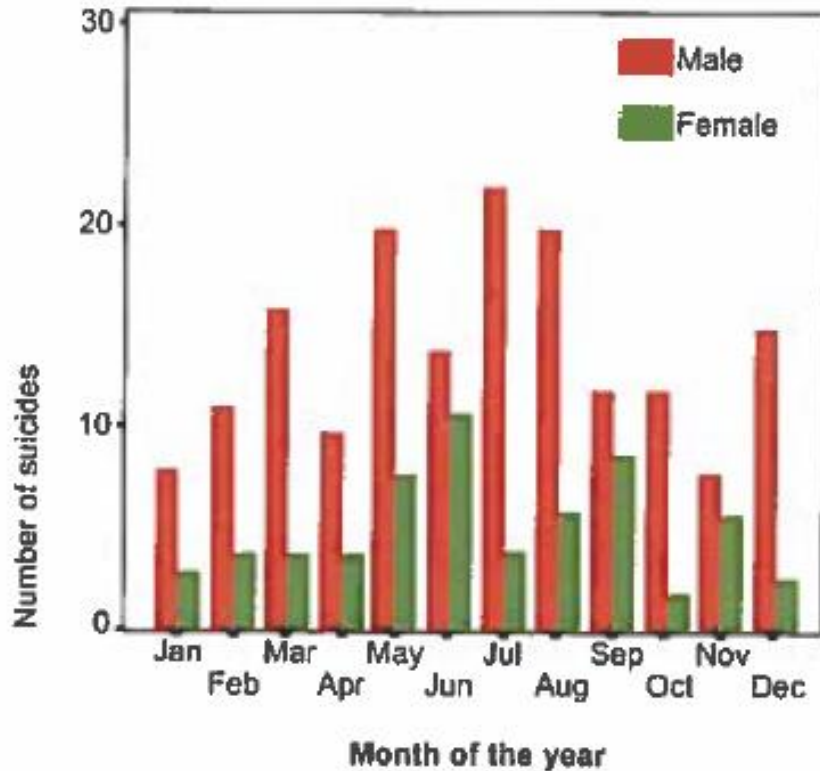


Aokigahara Japanese forest
Suicide ↓ 70% 2009 - 2018 (26 in 2018)



Golden Gate Bridge
Implementing safety nets
Less deaths & interventions in current year

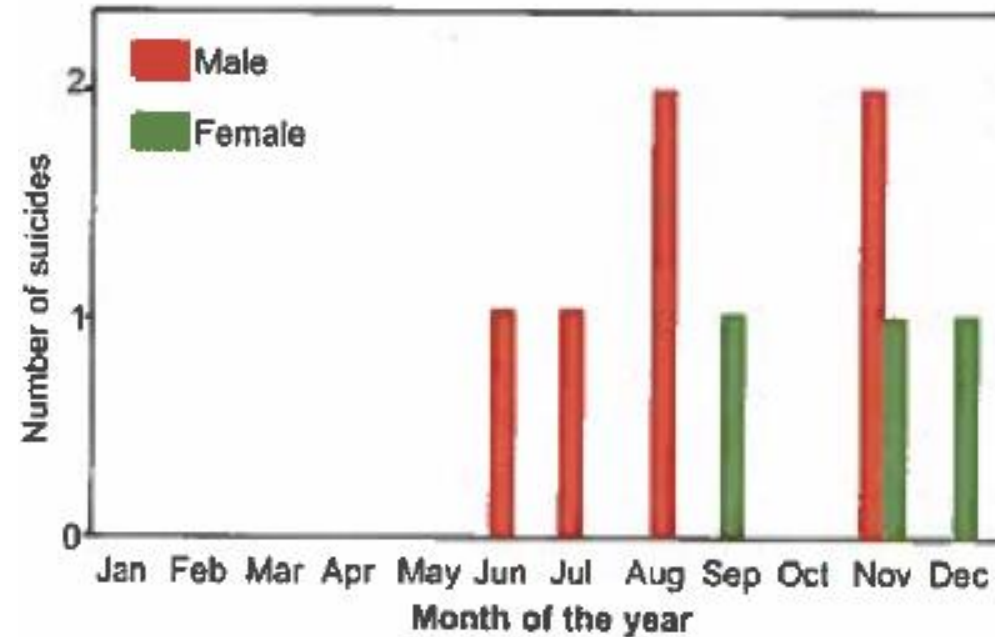
When access closed



1 - Suicide & accidental deaths by gender & month at Beachy Head 1987-2001.

Source – Coroners records.

*Spring & summer higher no. of deaths.



2 - Suicide & accidental deaths by gender & month at Beachy Head in 2001.

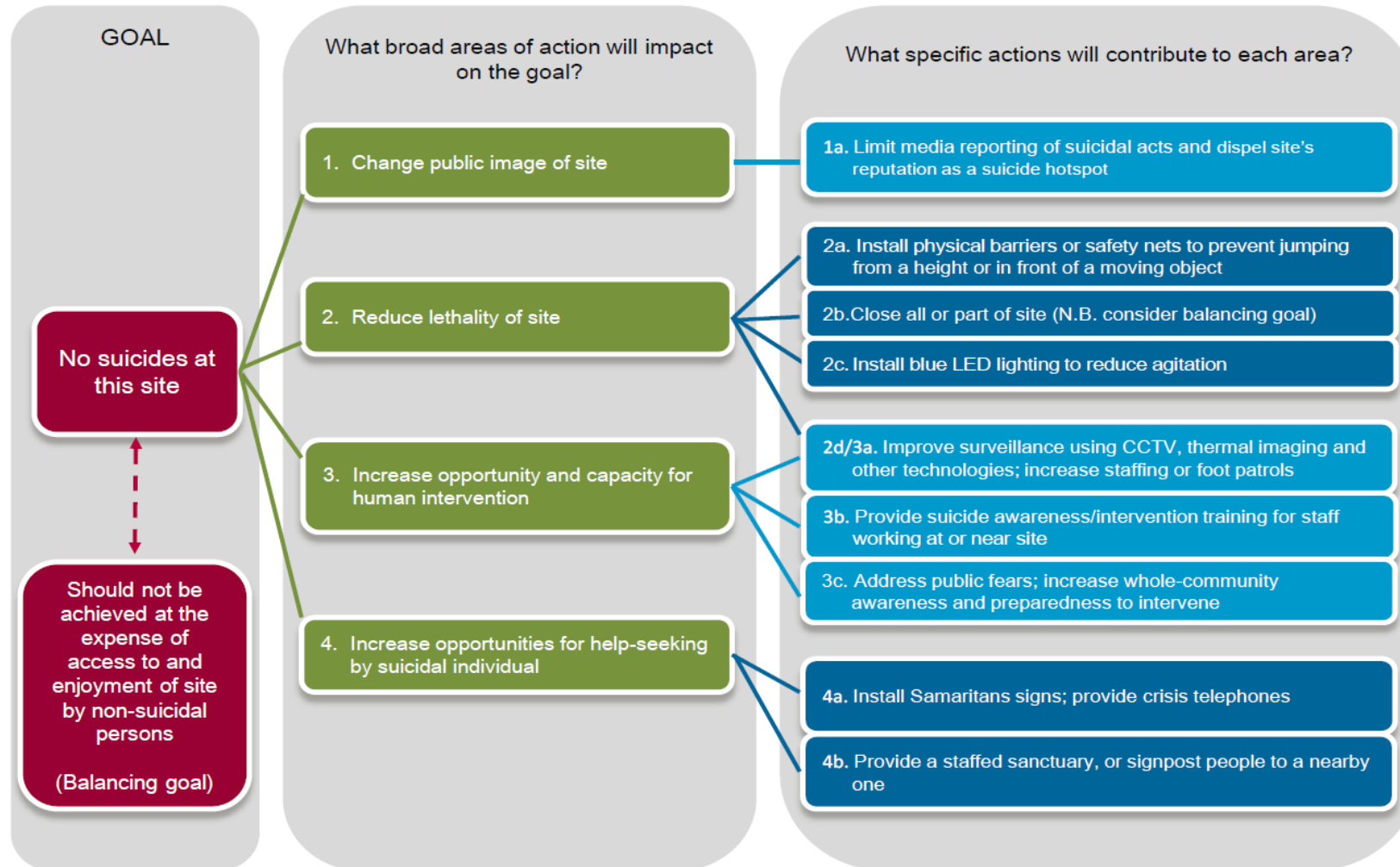
Source – Coroners records.

*Spring & summer higher no. of deaths.

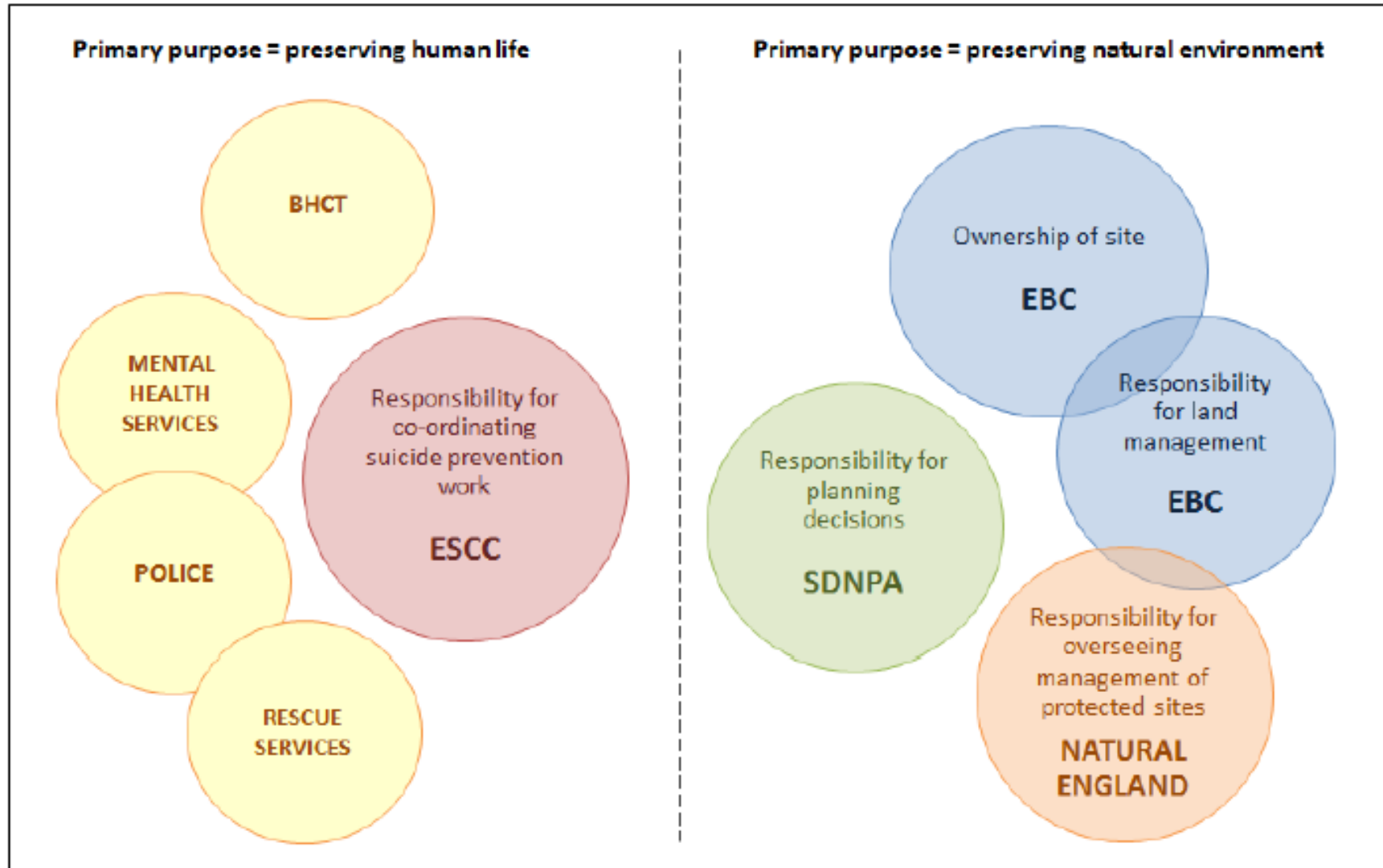
Historical suicide prevention plans

Review & Recommendations

Figure 1: A framework for site-specific suicide prevention (Public Health England, 2015)



Complexity of stakeholders



University of Exeter recommendations

1. Reduce access to and lethality of site

- Trial 1-2 year closure of remote lay-bys
- Engage taxi orgs suicide-safer community
- Train taxi & bus drivers suicide prevention & encourage pledge
- Consider no taxis after dark policy
- Inter-agency discussion provision continuous boundary marker & signage
- Innovative & environmentally-sensitive design solutions should be sought
- Longer-term – consider restricting vehicular access to the site as a whole.

2. Increase opportunities and capacity for human intervention

- BHCT should give urgently consider lowering its online profile, as a precaution against attracting vulnerable individuals to the site.
- Implement secondment of a mental health worker to work with volunteer patrollers.
- Consider low-key community policing initiative, possibly reinstate Downs Patrol
- Arrange visit from international security expert who designed the surveillance system for Gap Park, to advise on what might be possible at the site.
- Consider installation of a bespoke electronic surveillance system using minimally-invasive technology.

3. Increase opportunities for help seeking by suicidal individual

- Clarify Samaritans call charging.
- Urgently consider freephone number
- Urgently consider the installation of free emergency telephones or intercoms that are linked directly to Samaritans, the Chaplaincy Team and the police.
- Signpost the Samaritans'
- Carefully coordinate all signage to avoid proliferation and clutter.

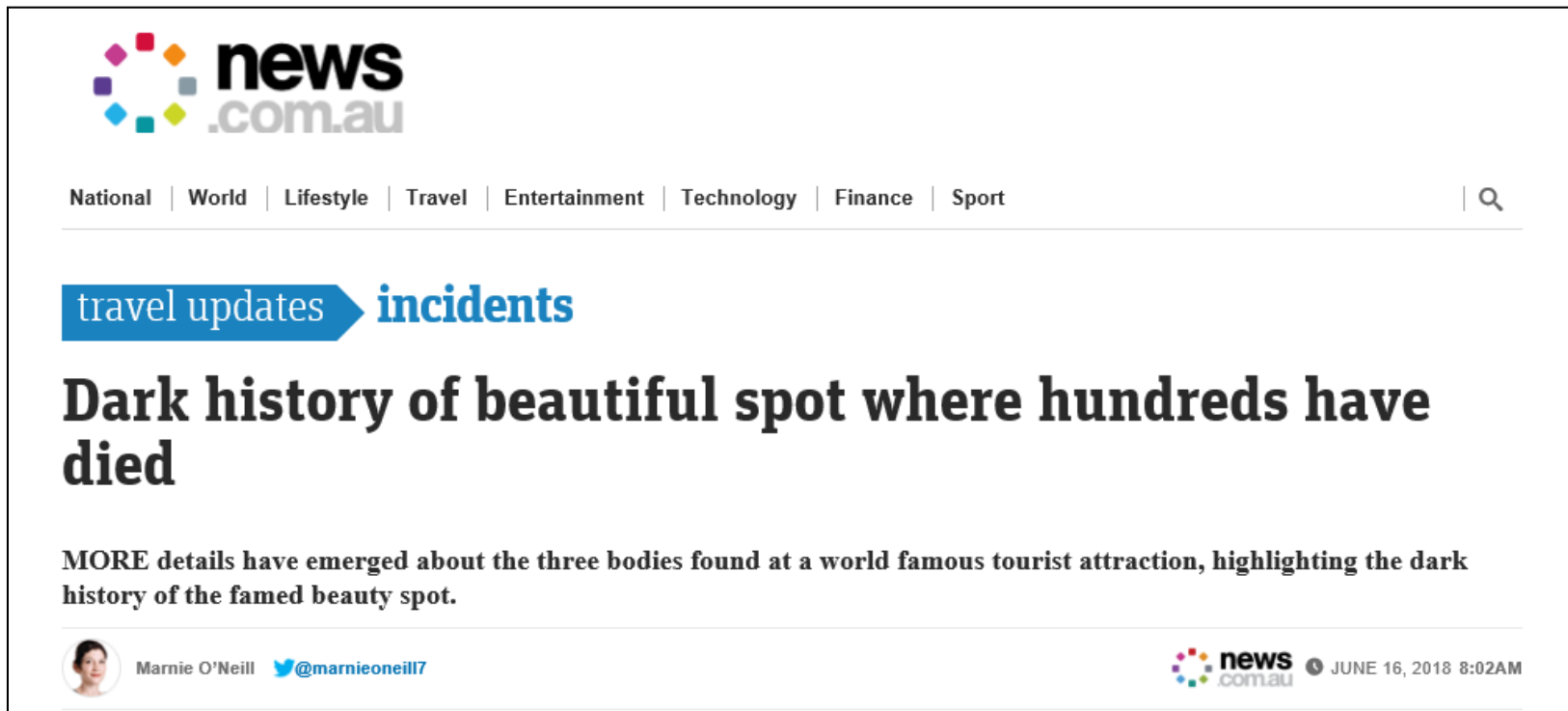
4. Change Public Image of the site

- Keep working with local media to limit reporting of suicides and liaise closely with Samaritans regarding national newspapers.
- Strongly discourage the practice of installing private memorials.
- Begin discussions to develop a 'suicide-safer community' initiative, including the idea of remarketing the site locally.
- Encourage hotels, B&Bs and other front-line community to undertake ASIST/SafeTalk training.

Why a different approach was needed?



9 of 20 of the first images on Google Images reference suicides or deaths



The screenshot shows the top portion of a news article on the news.com.au website. At the top left is the news.com.au logo, which consists of a circle of colorful squares (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple) next to the text 'news.com.au'. Below the logo is a navigation menu with links for 'National', 'World', 'Lifestyle', 'Travel', 'Entertainment', 'Technology', 'Finance', and 'Sport', followed by a search icon. The article's category is 'travel updates' (in a blue arrow) and 'incidents' (in blue text). The main headline is 'Dark history of beautiful spot where hundreds have died'. Below the headline is a sub-headline: 'MORE details have emerged about the three bodies found at a world famous tourist attraction, highlighting the dark history of the famed beauty spot.' At the bottom left is the author's name 'Marnie O'Neill' with a small profile picture and a Twitter handle '@marnieoneill7'. At the bottom right is the news.com.au logo and the date and time 'JUNE 16, 2018 8:02AM'.

news.com.au

National | World | Lifestyle | Travel | Entertainment | Technology | Finance | Sport

travel updates → incidents

Dark history of beautiful spot where hundreds have died

MORE details have emerged about the three bodies found at a world famous tourist attraction, highlighting the dark history of the famed beauty spot.

Marnie O'Neill @marnieoneill7

news.com.au JUNE 16, 2018 8:02AM

Suicide forums

- Sharing information on access & how to overcome obstacles
 - e.g. How to avoid the volunteer patrollers & automated number plate recognition
- Providing peer networks & support for method & location
 - People from other countries befriended online & made pacts to end life at the site

The usual image





Newer developments









The design approach

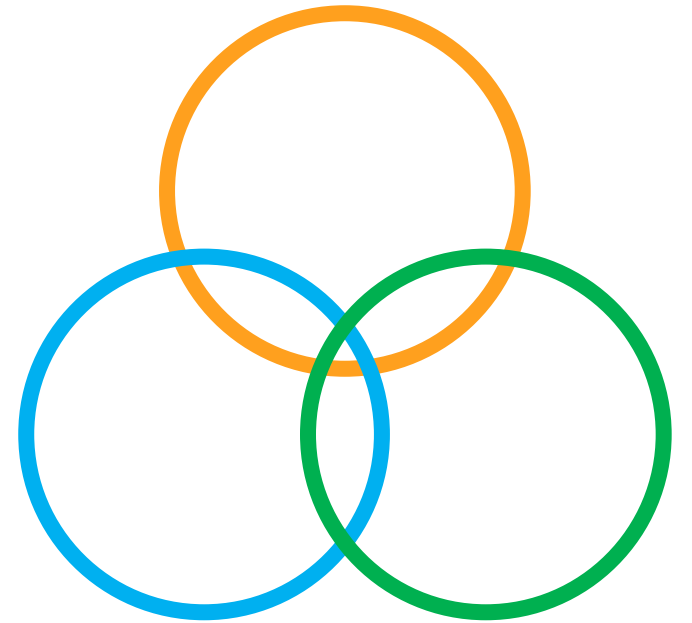
So what's design got to do with this?



“To promote by all practicable means the improvement of design in the products of British industry”

**We make life
better by design**

**We offer services
across public service
design, architecture &
the built
environment, &
business innovation**



Who is a designer?

Who is a designer?

“ Everyone designs who devises courses of action aimed at changing existing situations into preferred ones”

Herb Simon, Nobel Laureate in Economics

What is design?

“ Design is what links creativity and innovation. It shapes ideas to become practical and attractive propositions for users or customers. Design may be described as creativity deployed to a specific end.”

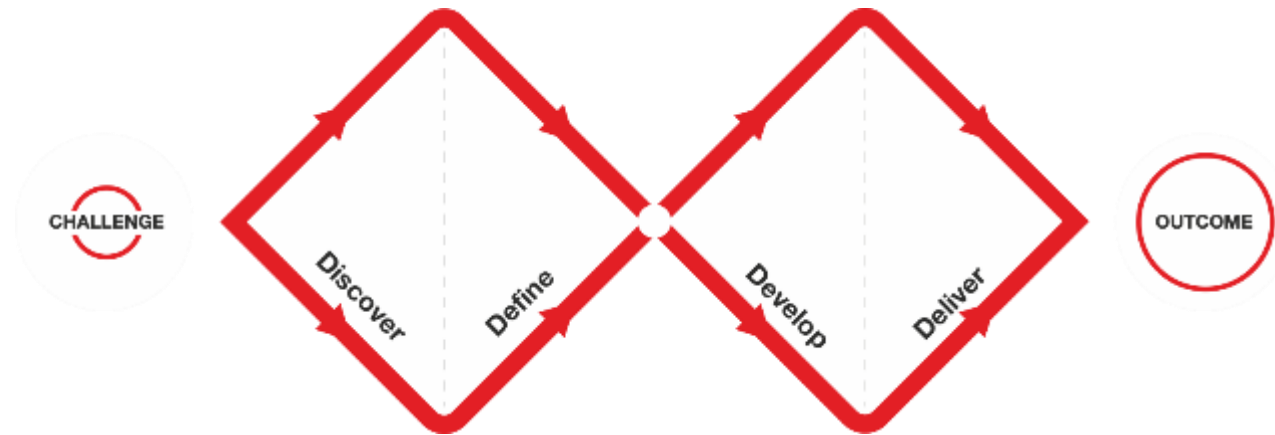
George Cox, Chairman, Design Council

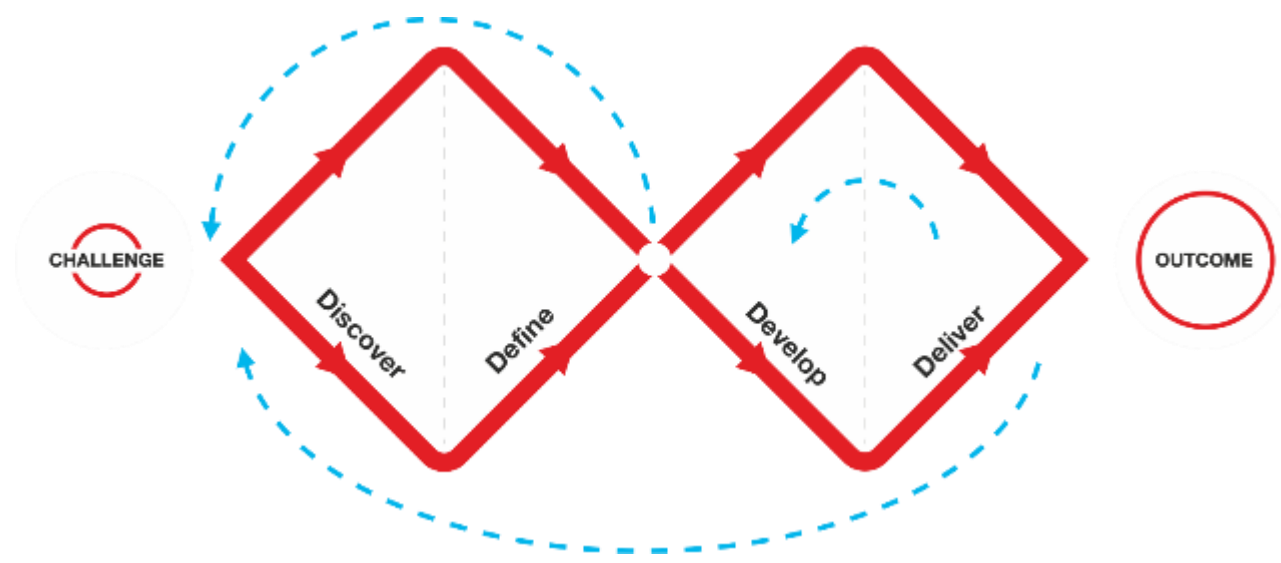
Our Framework for Innovation

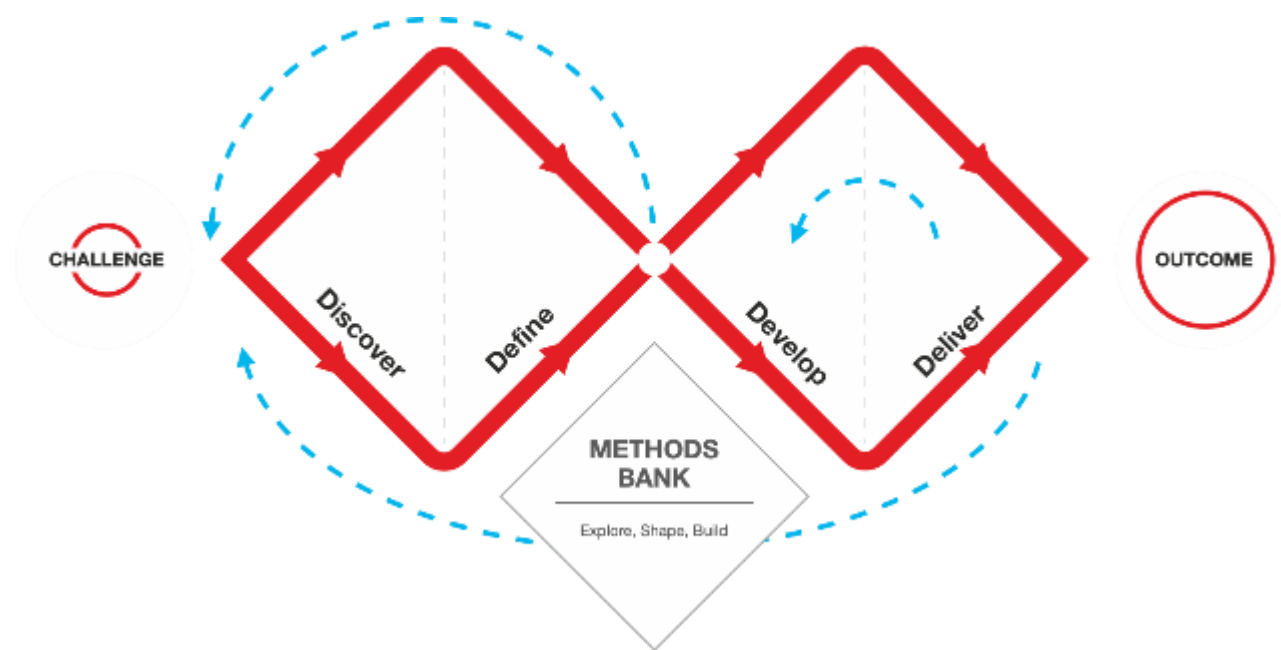
CHALLENGE

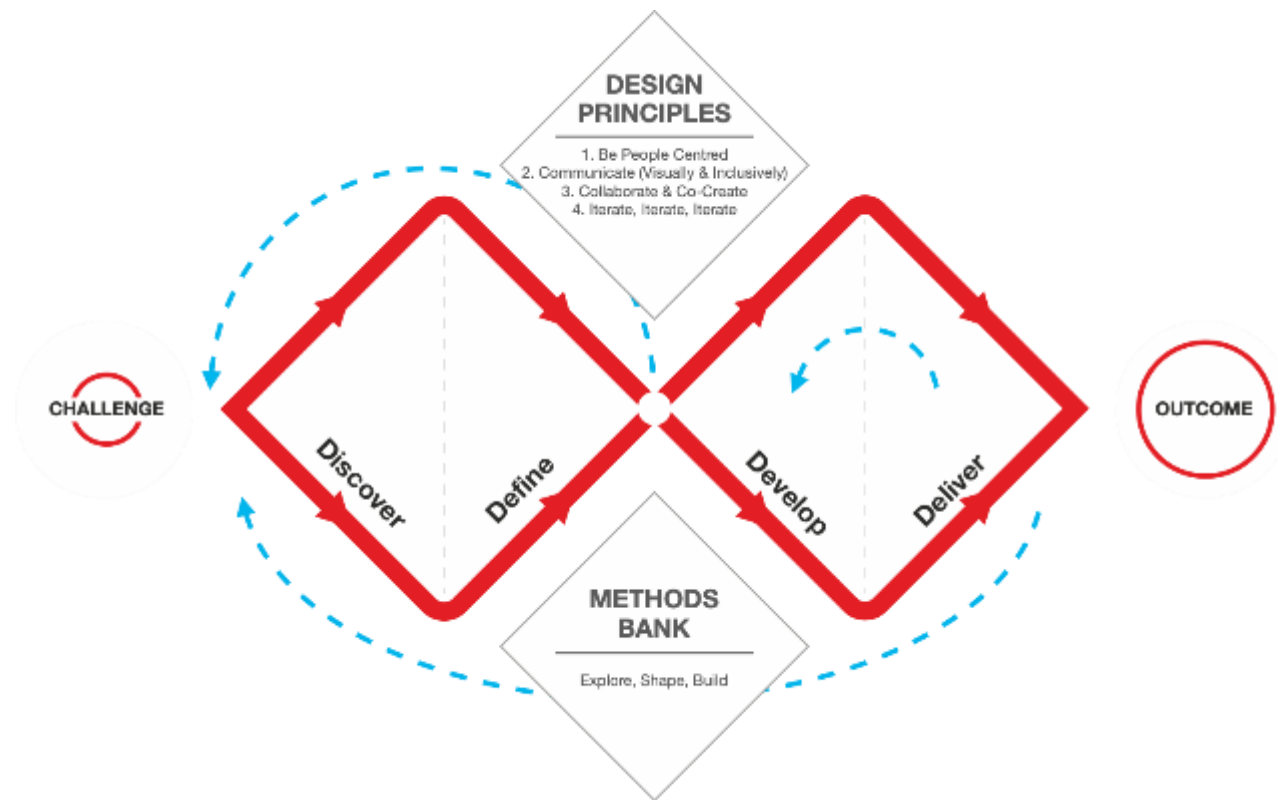
OUTCOME

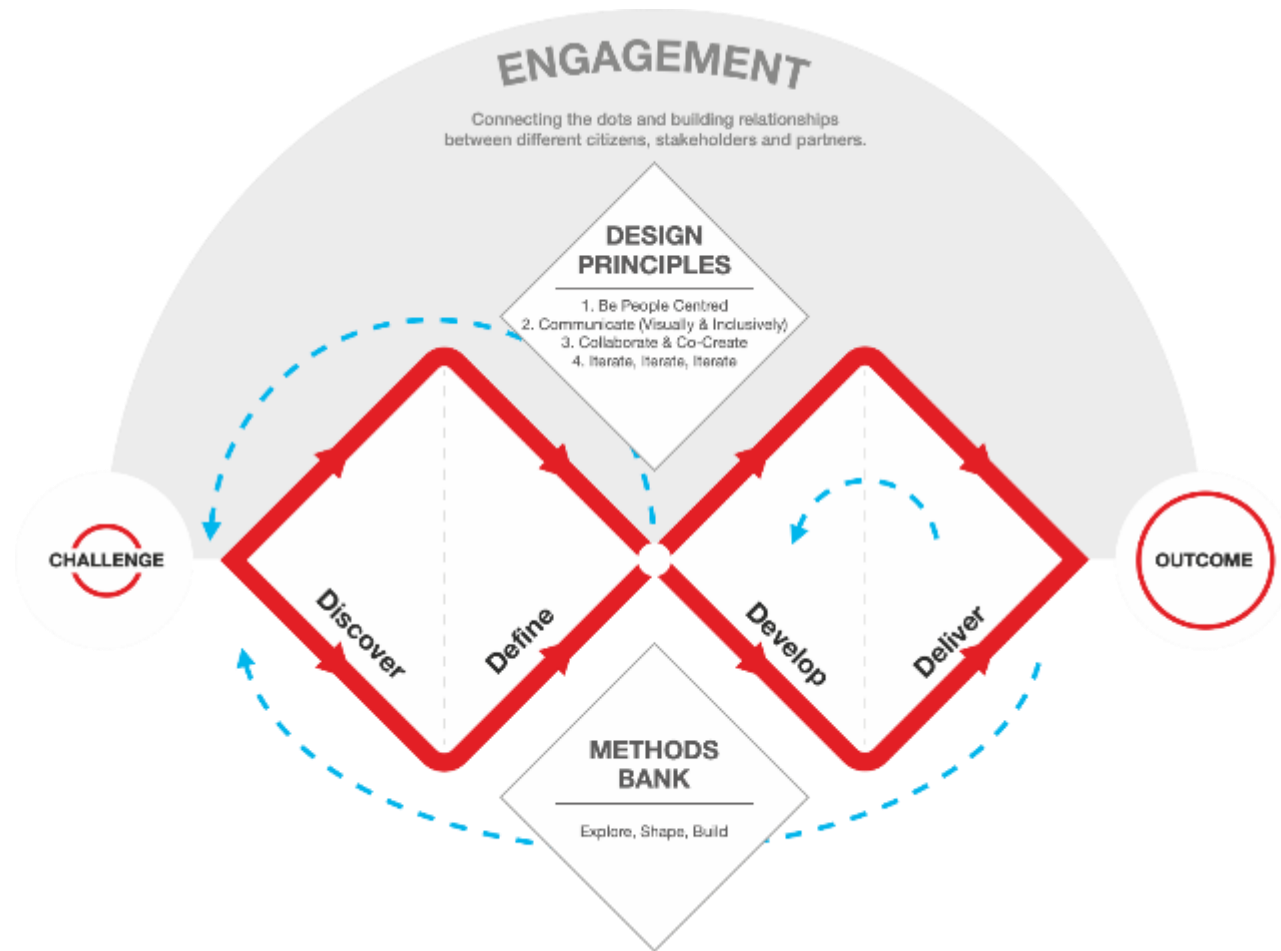












ENGAGEMENT

Connecting the dots and building relationships between different citizens, stakeholders and partners.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- 1. Be People Centred
- 2. Communicate (Visually & Inclusively)
- 3. Collaborate & Co-Create
- 4. Iterate, Iterate, Iterate

METHODS BANK

Explore, Shape, Build

CHALLENGE

Discover

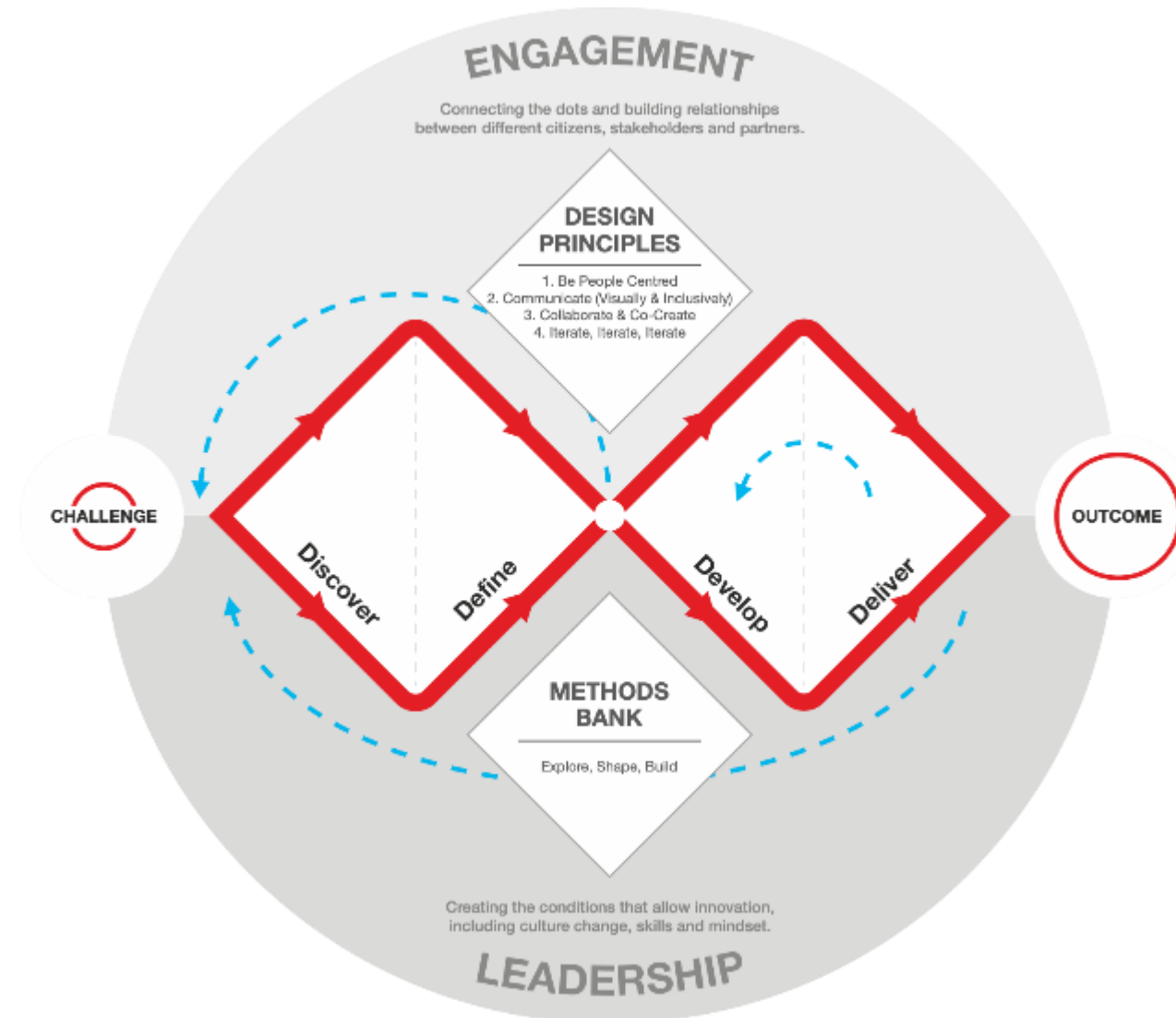
Define

Develop

Deliver

OUTCOME

Framework for Innovation



The starting point for the programme

We're looking at how we might work even better together to reduce deaths by suicide at the site?

The programme looked at these three interrelated areas:



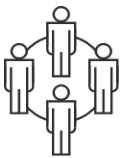
Culture and folklore

How might we re-imagine the site and its folklore?



Land and place

How might we better balance the protection of the people and the land?



People and services

How might we ensure that the right people are in the right place, at the right time, to do the right thing?

The whole team

The project involved people from the following organisations:

East Sussex County Council	South Downs National Park	Sussex Wildlife Trust
Eastbourne Borough Council	Natural England	Samaritans
Sussex Police	NHS England	East Sussex Fire and Rescue
National Trust	Chaplaincy Team	University of Brighton
East Sussex CCGs	Coastguard	Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
RNLI	Southdown	South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust

Before the workshops



Stakeholder event & comms



Welcome pack and briefing pack

A series of 5 workshops and coaching

1



You will get to know each other.

You will get to know the process and the methods you'll be using.

You will be ready to start on your challenge.

2

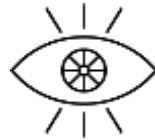


You will know who you are designing for.

You will know what you need to find out.

You will have a plan to do this.

3



You will have a vision for your project.

You will have some initial ideas to test.

You will have a plan to get feedback.

4



You will feel more confident about what you know and don't know about your ideas.

You will know how to test your ideas further.

You can summarise and communicate what you've done and what you think needs to happen.

5



You can tell a compelling story about your work.

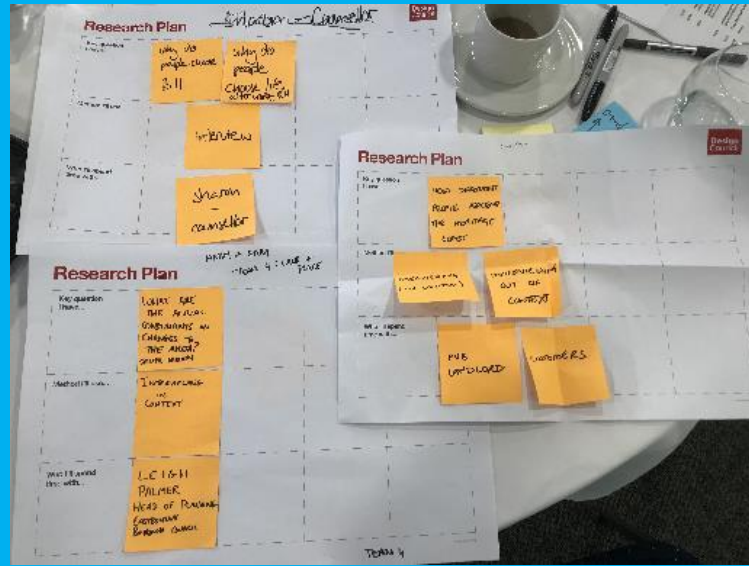
You will have a joined up view about what's needed.

You can make recommendations about future investments.

RESEARCH

RESEARCH

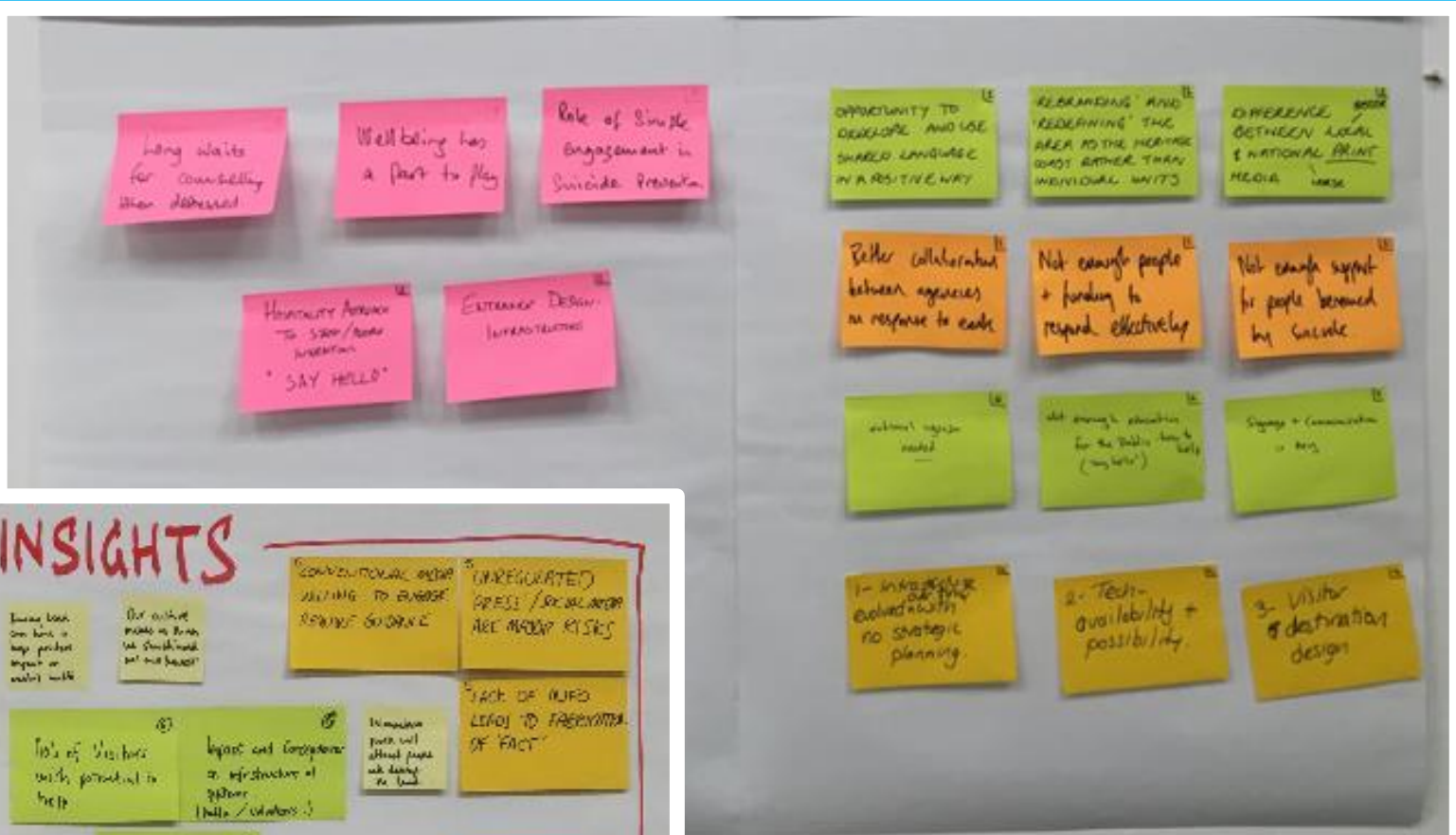
RESEARCH



Workshop 2

Exploring the challenge





Generating new insights

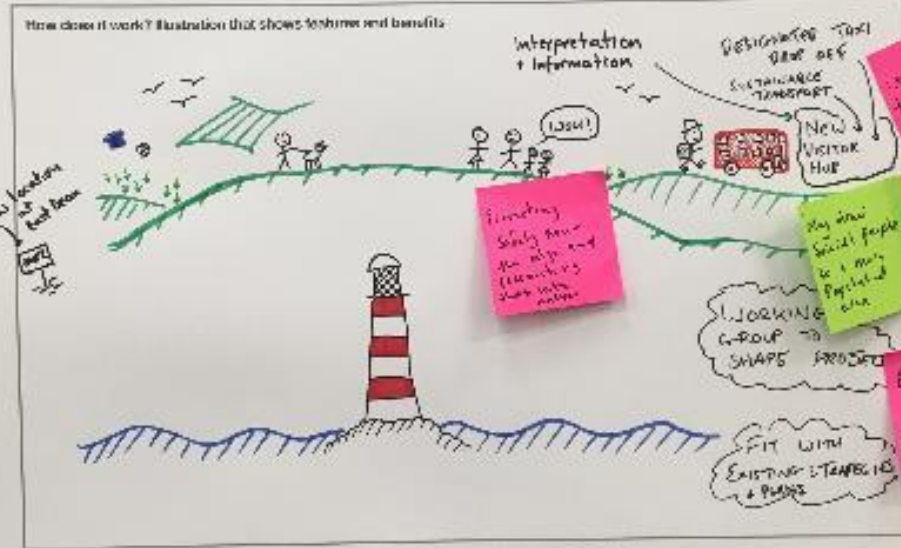
Project Poster

Project title/name "WORLD CLASS DESTINATION"

What is the problem statement?
Rethink how we use Land + Place to reduce Suicide (+ realise multiple benefits)

Who are the key stakeholders?
Landowners - ESC - NT - GSC
Stakeholders Highways (ESCC) - Planning (SOVIA)
Tenants Bus Co. SOVIA
Public - test ideas

What is the big idea?
ENSURE PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE IS FIT FOR PURPOSE



Why might it fail?
- Partnership challenges (competing demands + resources)
- Long time scale
- Resources
- Constraints of SSSI
- Other constraints + permissions

What needs to be prototyped or tested?
Pilot bus stop relocation
THE NEW INFRASTRUCTURE

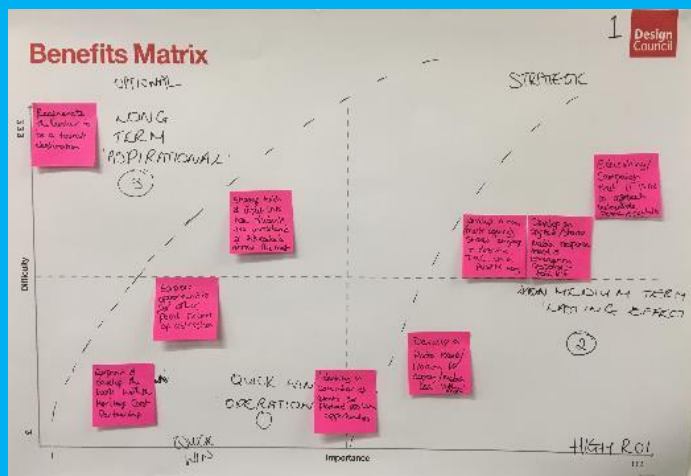
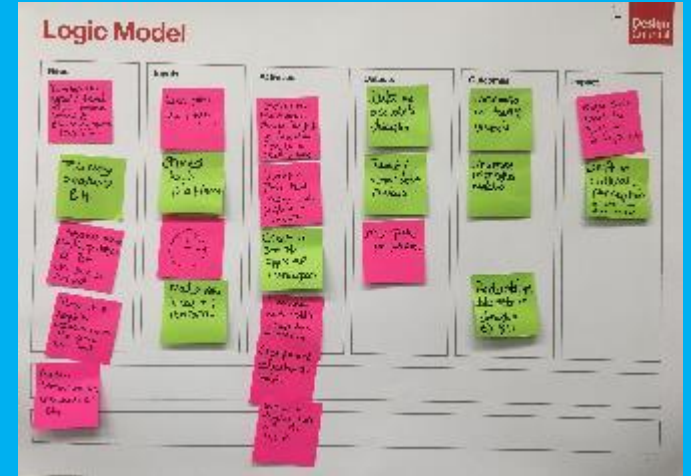
How will we measure success?

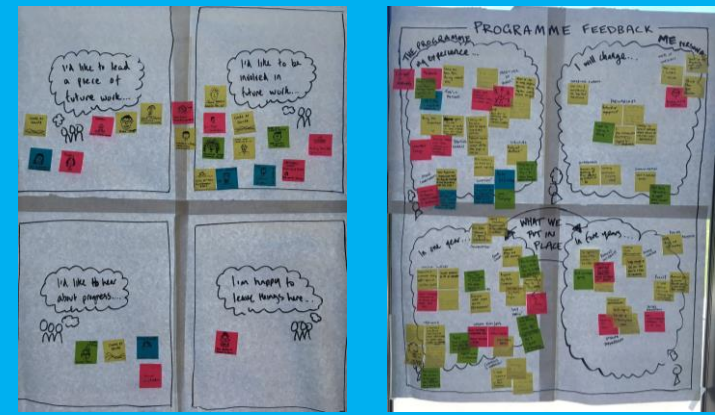
Key milestones

What resources might be required?
Partners commitment / resource
Specialist SSSI advisors
£'s to implement solutions
£'s commission solutions design / tech

Time constraints + Constraints and Permissions

Workshop 4 Developing opportunities





WHAT PERCEPTION DO WE WANT PEOPLE TO HAVE OF THE HERITAGE COAST?

“The heritage coast is a place of happiness, wellbeing and opportunity”



Workshop 5

Developing a way forward

Our findings

Culture & folklore opportunities

Change Perceptions of Site via:

- **New media online portal**
- **Media & engagement strategy**
 - positive filming & media policies
 - commission specialist re-branding agency
 - focus on 'Downlands' not site
 - influence search engine results
 - consider artist in residence
 - engage tour operators & language schools in telling a new story



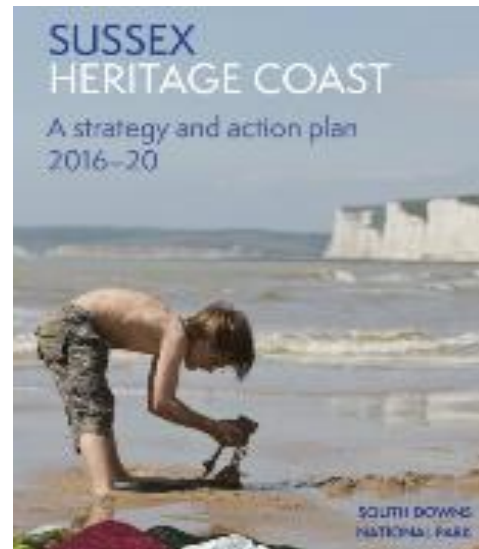


Ensure fit for purpose as world class destination

Commission:

- site infrastructure review
- design / technology solutions as appropriate

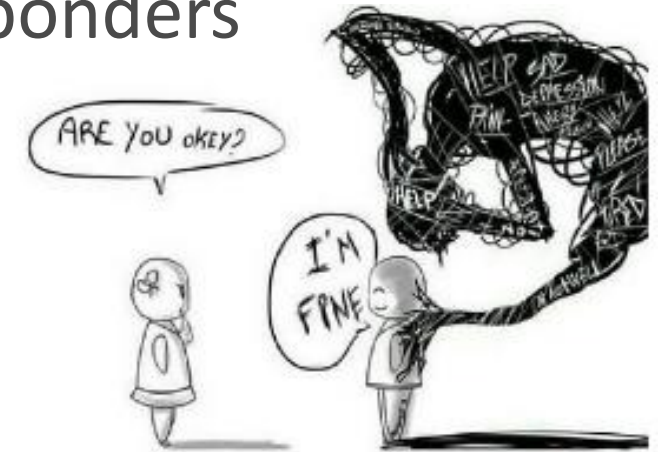
Land and place



People & services opportunities



1. Improve wellbeing support for responders

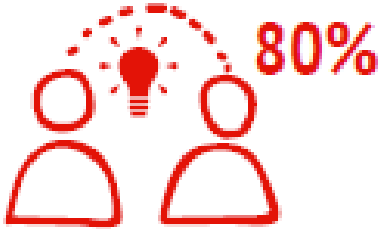


2. Raise awareness, skills & confidence of public & workers in the area

Outcomes



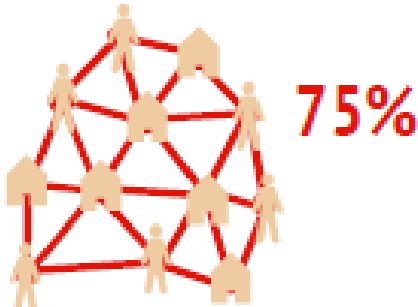
Positive experience for all



reported shared understanding of the issue



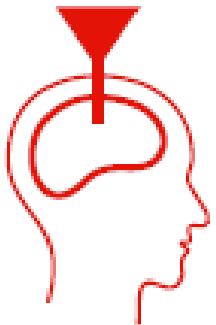
felt collaboration was beneficial



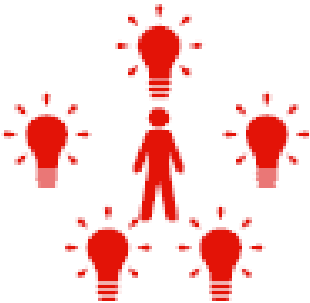
reported better relationships with local organisations



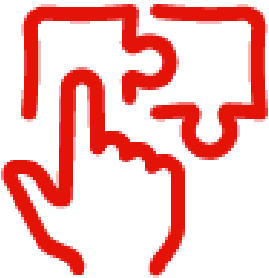
moved towards a longer term outlook



Improved knowledge of the issue

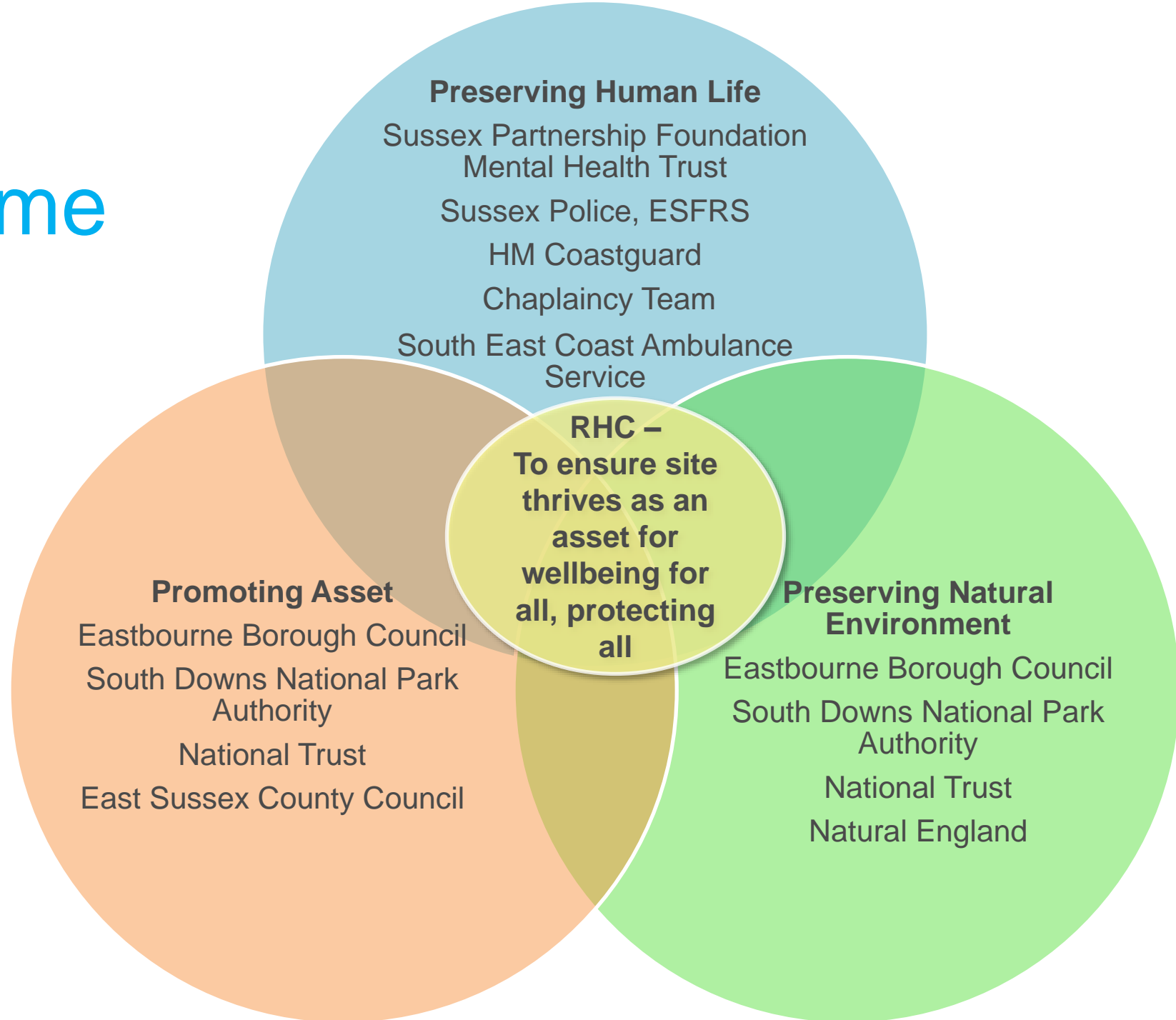


People-centred ideas



Learning and applying new design techniques

Stakeholders post- programme

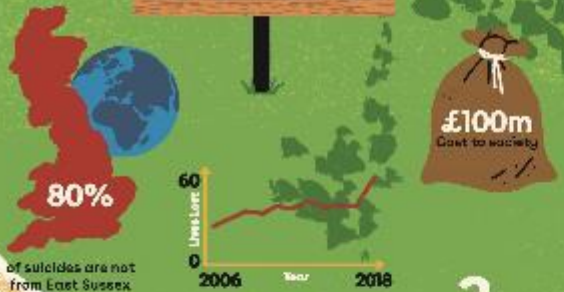


The programme:

- ✓ Re-energised existing agencies & engaged new partners
- ✓ Worked collaboratively to creatively reframe issues
- ✓ Built commitment to ensure site will thrive as asset for wellbeing
- ✓ Identified this is a national issue – not just a local one
- ✓ Additional resources will be required to address this large-scale national issue.

RE-FRAMING AND RE-ENERGISING SUICIDE PREVENTION ON THE SUSSEX COAST USING DESIGN METHODS

OUR CHALLENGE



A site with complex and competing interests

WORKSHOPS
With 37 People from 17 Organisations

OUR APPROACH

DOUBLE DIAMOND Methodology

DESIGN RESEARCH



6 AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY DEVELOPED



OUR OUTCOMES

- ✓ Learned new design techniques to apply to all work
- ✓ Knowledge of issue increased
- ✓ 3/4 moved to a longer-term outlook for the project
- ✓ 4/5 reported shared understanding of the subject
- ✓ People centred ideas developed
- ✓ 94% benefited from collaboration
- ✓ 3/4 built better relationships
- ✓ Partnerships & commitment to the issue strengthened

CONCLUSION

- ⚓ Re-energised existing agencies and engaged new partners
- ⚓ Worked collaboratively to creatively reframe issues
- ⚓ Built commitment to ensure site will thrive as an asset for wellbeing
- ⚓ This is an issue of national importance
- ⚓ Additional resources are needed to implement solutions

"I have been really excited by what I have seen of this project, which has brought to life the process outlined in the PHE guidance, Preventing suicides in public places. The East Sussex public health team has shown how it is possible to bring together a large and diverse group of stakeholders, break down political barriers and, using creative methods, work together to understand the challenges posed by their particular site and draw up a community action plan. Time and careful evaluation will tell whether it delivers the desired outcomes, but no-one can question the commitment and innovative thinking of this team."

Professor Christabel Owens
University of Exeter Medical School.

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Thank you

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