

# What is a Theory of Change?

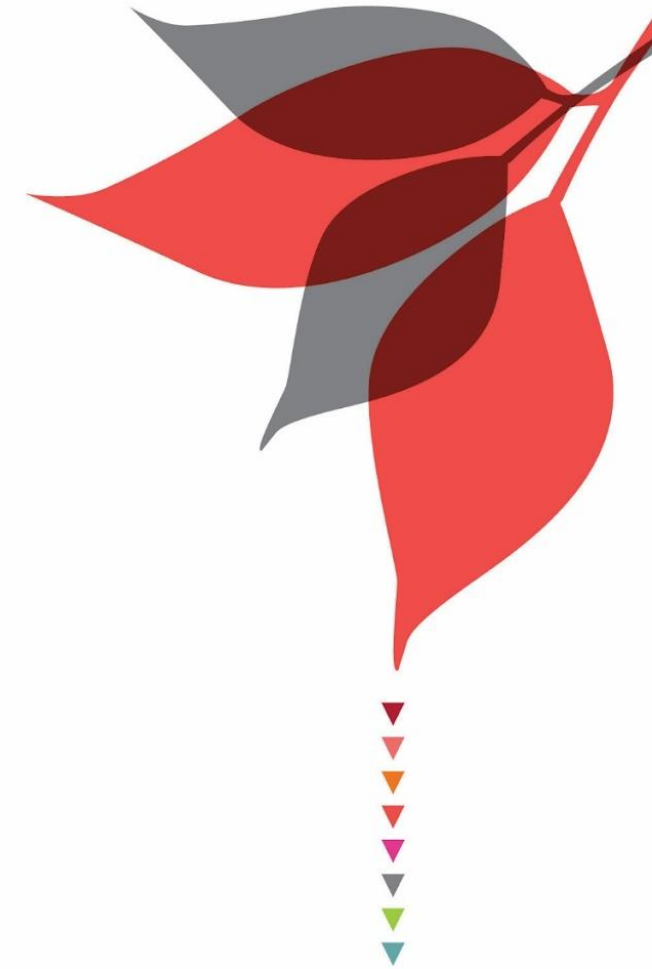
How might it be useful?

Madeleine Spinks, Co Chief Exec



# Theory of Change

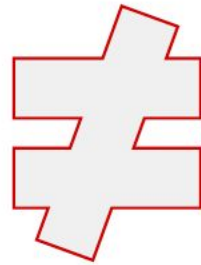
- A PROCESS
- An OUTPUT



# Not all impact is created equal

## Impact

Positive change in people's lives



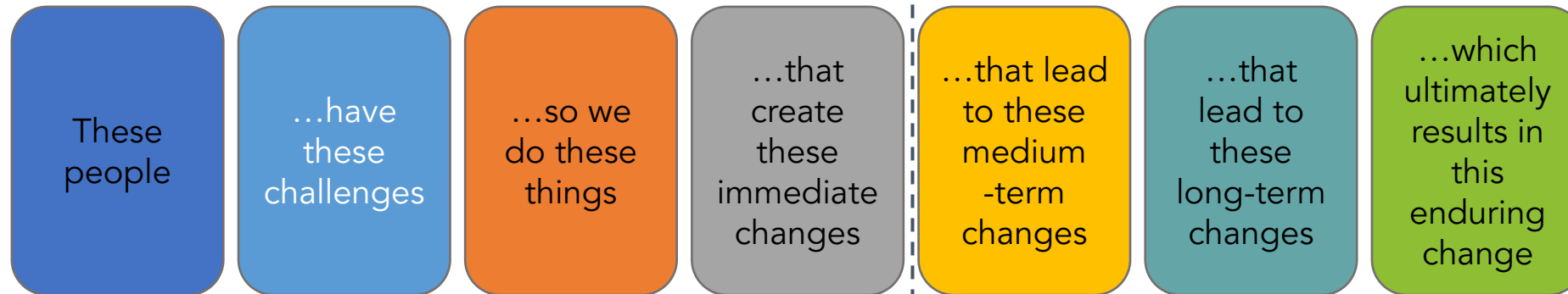
## *Meaningful* Impact

Positive change in people's lives

Changes life's prospects

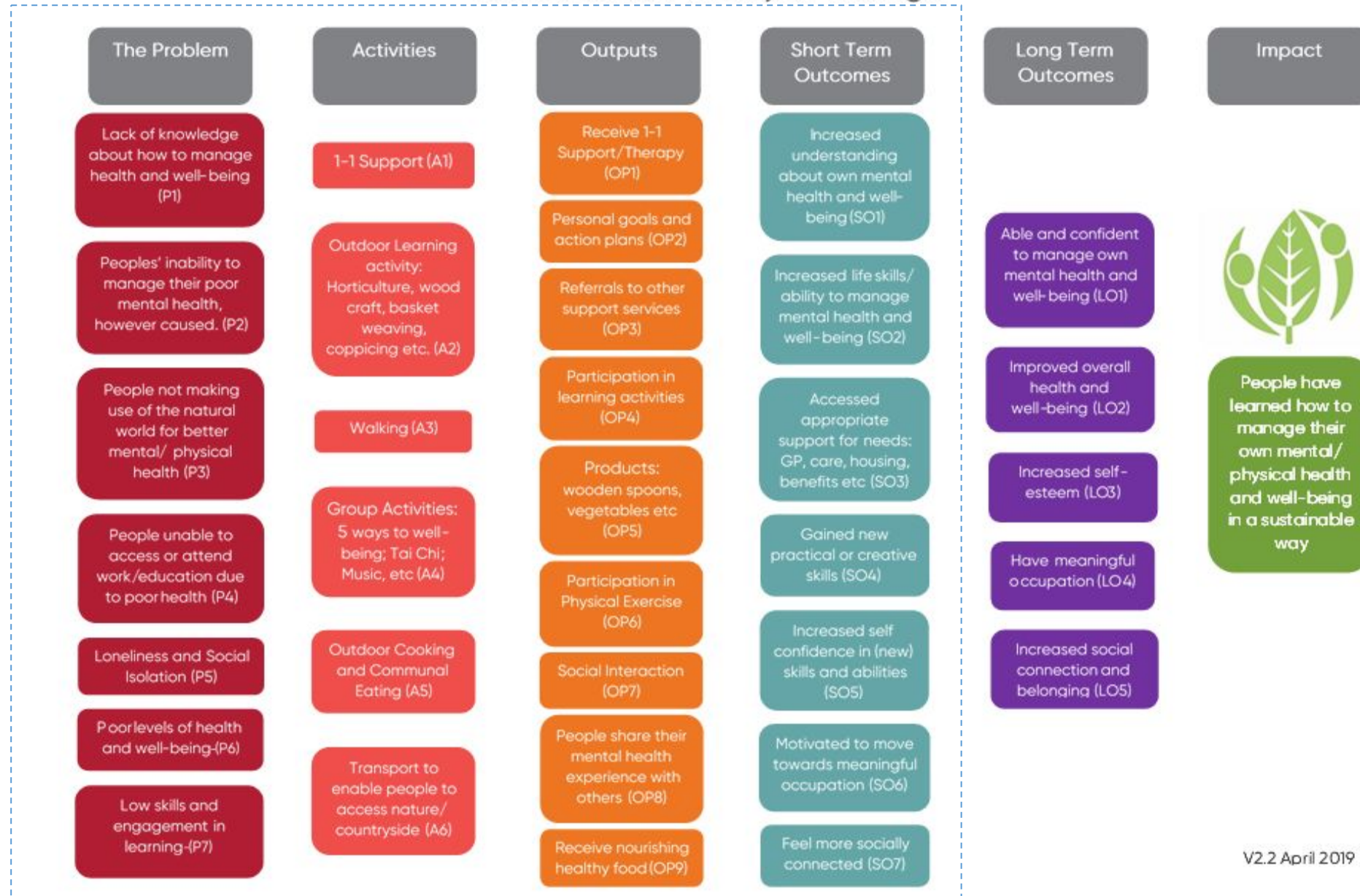
Change endures

# Theory for/of Change components



Line of accountability

## The Cart Shed Theory of Change



# Definitions

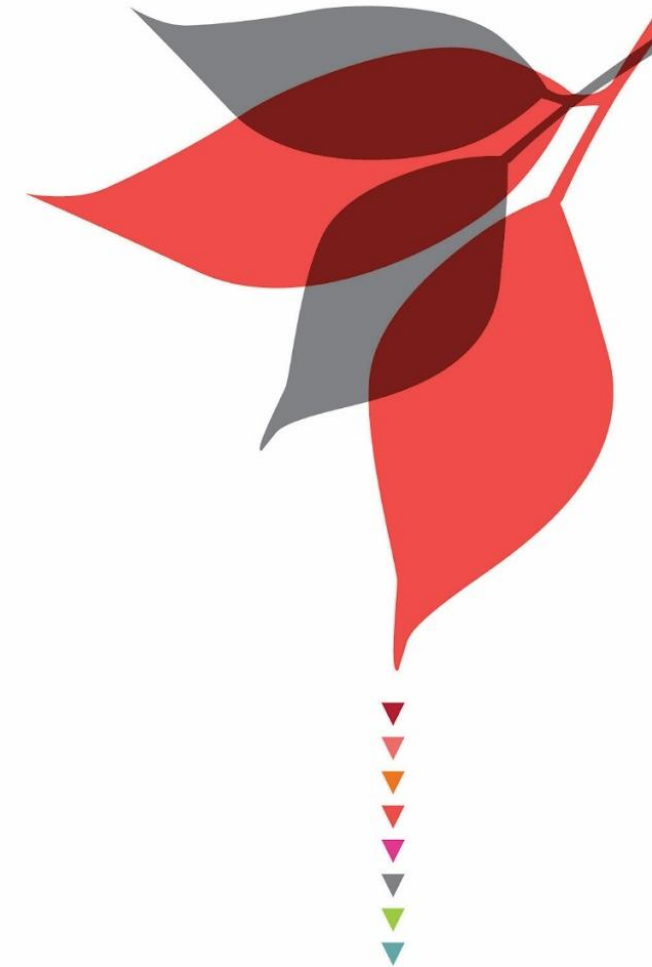
**Challenges:** The issue or challenge your work aims to tackle

**Activities:** What you offer or promise to do

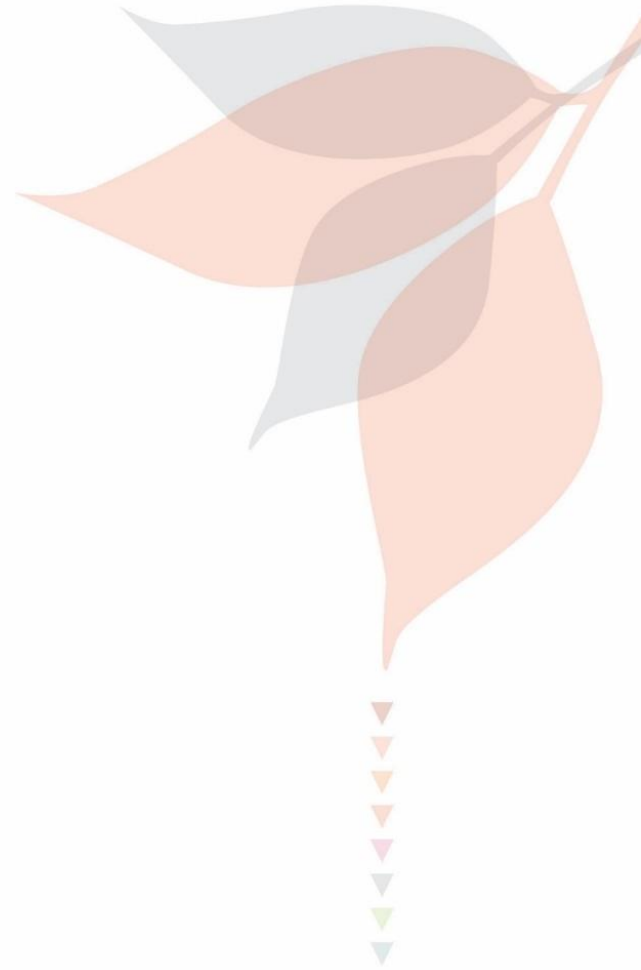
**Outputs:** Products, services or facilities that result from activities

**Outcomes:** Changes to attitudes, behaviours, skills or knowledge

**Impact:** The sustained change you want to see in your target group



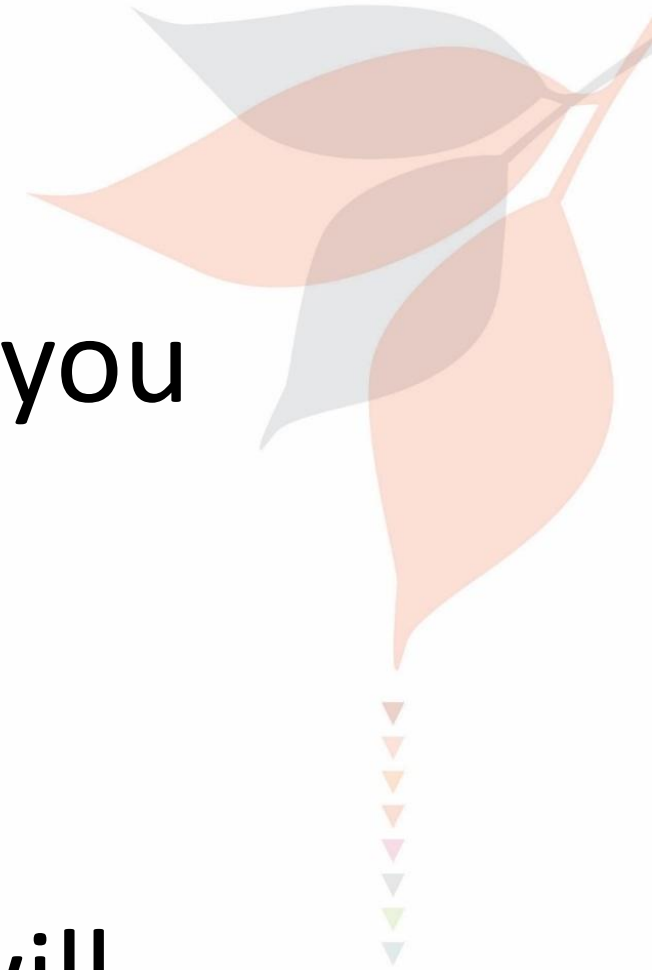
Any questions?



## Exercise 1

**What** is the problem or challenge you are trying to address?

**Who** is affected by these problems/challenges, and who will benefit the most?





# Recap: Impact and Outcomes

Impact: the sustained change you want to see in your target group

Outcomes: changes to attitudes, behaviours, skills or knowledge



# Example Impact Statements

People have learned how to manage their own mental/physical health and wellbeing in a sustainable way (The Cart Shed)

People no longer die prematurely or suffer from cardiovascular disease. (The British Heart Foundation)

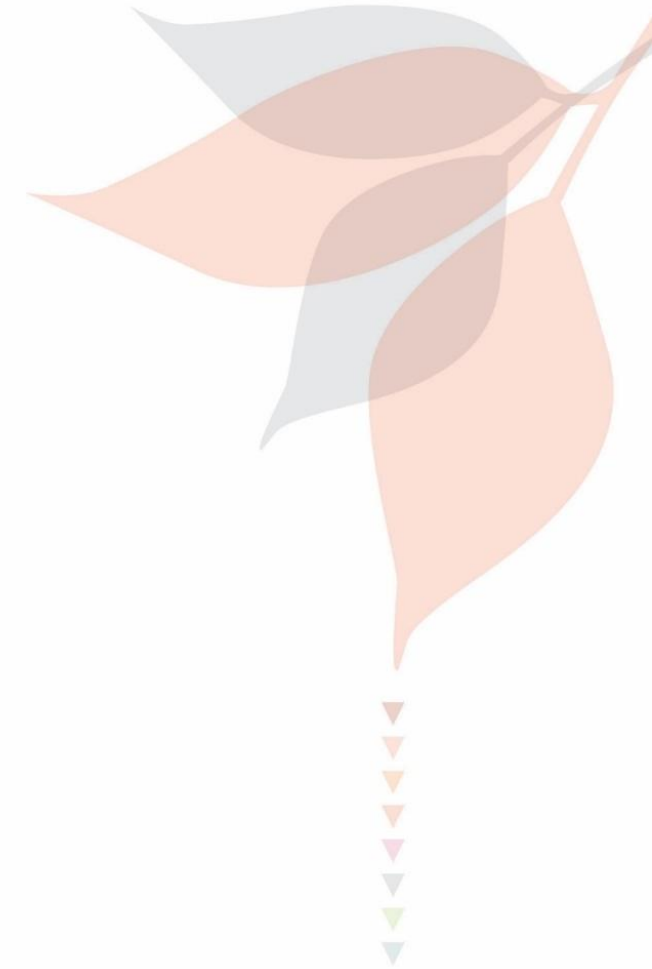
Youth homelessness no longer exists. (Centrepoint)

A world where every woman's right to equality and freedom from violence is unquestioned. (Women's Aid)

People are emotionally resilient, thriving, and feel they belong in their communities. (YSS)

Healthy people in healthy communities (The Family Centre)

Every nonprofit organisation uses data effectively to achieve their goals (Data Orchard CIC)



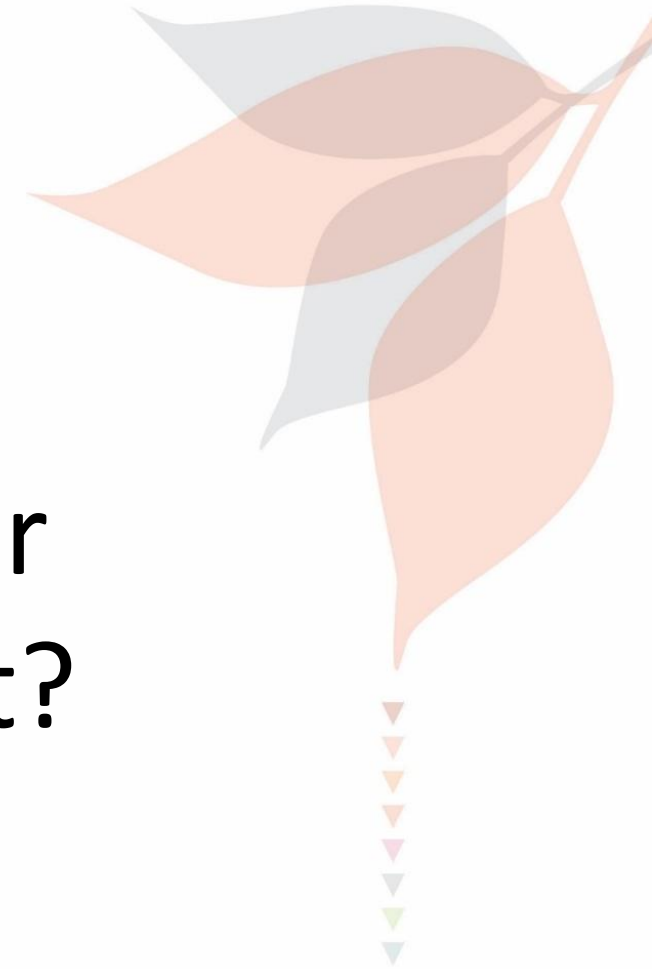
## Exercise 2

What is the long-term change (impact) you want to see people make in their lives?

In one succinct statement  
avoiding jargon



What shorter-term changes  
(outcomes) are you aiming for  
that contributes to the impact?



# Outcomes – hot tips

## Changes in attitudes, behaviours, skills or knowledge

- Use words like ‘increased’, ‘improved’ ‘reduced’ or ‘decreased’ to convey that *change* is taking place.
- Use the past tense to avoid confusing outcomes with activities i.e. ‘*increased self-esteem*’ instead of ‘*increasing self-esteem*’.
- Define a single change, not many, so that ‘*increased resilience, confidence and self-esteem*’ describes three outcomes, not one.
- Specific enough to be meaningful and measurable; ‘*increased knowledge*’, for example, is neither.



# Reflections/questions?

“If you don't know where you're going, you'll probably end up somewhere else!”

