



## Testimonial

Mark Sharwood and Andy Wilson were part of Cohort Alpha for the Infuse Project. Mark is the Public Services Development Manager and Andy is the Data, Research & GIS Manager for Torfaen Council.

Andy and Mark both have an interest in how we can be more targeted and effective in our support for our communities. Specifically, how social capital can be used as an indicator of the readiness of a community (individuals & institutions) to support and enhance its own wellbeing in collaboration with the public sector.

Through Infuse, Mark & Andy were put in touch with Dr Muhammad Irfan, a research fellow at Cardiff University whose expertise are in spatial decision support systems. Irfan has expertise in spatial decision support systems. With Irfan's support, Andy and Mark have developed a GIS system for estimating the levels of social capital in each community in Torfaen by bringing together a range of existing data sources and through some new research based on the Scottish Government's model.



This work has huge strategic value for Torfaen. Torfaen has an ambition to place our communities at the heart of public service and to empower community leaders and community organisations to play a greater role in setting and delivering local priorities.

Working with Mark and Andy, the Chief Officer for Communities is now looking at how the social capital map can be used to inform a community based approach to service design and delivery in Torfaen. This includes how to target community development and early intervention resources around the strengths of individual communities, and how to strengthen engagement and communications at a local level.