

# Service Design: social innovation is our motivation

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## Case background

This case is about a community called Wyndford in the North West of Glasgow, ranked the 18th most deprived area in Scotland(1). Until September 2009, the people of Wyndford had never worked or met with designers who didn't focus on a physical output of the design process. That changed when Getgo, a collection of designers from the Masters in Design Innovation course from the Glasgow School of Art, began work for Audi's Sustain our Nation competition in the area.

Getgo used techniques and skills adopted from the service design process to create a 'social enterprise' for the community that tackled the issue of crime. The way in which the project was conducted relied heavily on visualisation skills, co-design, user centred processes and systematic thinking.

The enterprise is a service, designed with people, in order to create a valuable proposition for both community members and local stakeholders. Throughout the project, community members, local stakeholder staff, management and politicians were all involved in the project, echoing the sentiment of service design with all users at the heart of the process.

The project saw designers question their role in such a heavily co-designed proposition; If this is service design, then what are we actually designing? Are we just facilitators of a creative process?

The project highlighted gaps in students' skills in terms of creative facilitation, direct user contact and business knowledge to name but a few. Further to this, it highlighted exciting ways of working with people and pushed the boundaries of the typical level of involvement for designers. In this instance, Getgo challenged new methods of consultation and funding models within the area, and has been the catalyst for many exciting prospects for replication in other areas.

In an increase of these types of projects dealing with 'social innovation', service design has become the 'go to' for designers to understand how they can 'do something good' with their skills. Service design, and its open attitude to sharing methods, techniques and 'tools' on such sites as [servicedesigntools.org](http://servicedesigntools.org) and leading consultancy websites has become a lifeline to students who are trying to grasp what this is all about. These tools bring a tangible way to understand the complex landscape of 'social design and innovation'.

With a new league of eager students keen to 'do something good' with their design skills,

how can we use service design to promote a pragmatic and skilful way of undertaking projects that promote social innovation? Getgo did it. We won £20,000 for the community of Wyndford.

But, as a discipline, are we ready to step up to the hype service design has created and lead a responsible way forward?

## Take home

This community cohesion scheme proves that expertise in Service Design can help create social change. We want everyone to leave ServDes believing this!

This case demonstrates the key service design approach of working in collaboration with the users, rather than imposing a solution on them. All the tools we implemented are tools that the community can use after the service designers have gone.

This Glasgow scheme really makes you think about the process of social innovation. In this case the result was not only a satisfied service user, but motivated staff and a fulfilled service designer too.

In particular, we want people to leave knowing:

1. What students, graduates and junior service designers might need in terms of guidance in live Service Design projects
2. What responsibility students AND tutors have in running live projects both ethically and in terms of safety
3. How Service Design can be used as a process for community development
4. How to 'end' projects well – what happens when the service designer leaves?
5. How to go into a community as a stranger and excite, motivate and inspire the people who live there to change things for themselves.

(1) BBC, author unknown (2003, 02 27). Glasgow tops 'most deprived' list, Retrieved 11 15, 2010, from BBC News website, Scotland:  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/2804895.stm>

Wyndford is discussed in the article as a ward. This means that Wyndford is the 18th most deprived ward out of 1222 in Scotland.

This case will be presented by Sarah Drummond  
The excerpt was co-written by Lauren Currie and Sarah Drummond