

Implementing and Proliferating Asset Based Community Development in Leeds



What do we mean by asset based approaches?



You can't know what a person or a community needs, until they first know what they have.

John McKnight, Co-Director, ABCD Institute

How can we support communities to discover what they have locally, so that they can then figure out what they need from us and other external actors?

Cormac Russell, Nurture Development



Asset based community development

For everyone in Leeds, including those with care and support needs, to have the opportunity to contribute to, be valued by, and be involved with where they live.

For communities to recognise their assets, forge strong connections with one another and feel able to make the changes they want to see.



Community Capacity/Social Capital/Asset Based Community Development: Why is it important?

“No society has the money to buy, at market prices, what it takes to raise children, make a neighbourhood safe, care for the elderly, make democracy work or address systemic injustices.....

The only way the world is going to address social problems is by enlisting the very people who are now classified as ‘clients’ and ‘consumers’ and converting them into co-workers, partners and rebuilders of the core economy”

Professor Edgar Cahn, US-based civil rights lawyer and inventor of Timebanks



Deficit / medical model	Charity model
Done to the people	Done for the people
Co-production	ABCD
Done with the people	Done by the people

The deficit approach	The asset based approach
Starts with deficiencies and needs in the community	Start with the assets in the community
Respond to problems	Identify opportunities and strengths
Provider services to users	Invest in people as citizens
Emphasise the role of agencies	Emphasise the role of civil society
Focus on individuals	Focus on communities/ neighbourhoods and the common good
See people as clients and consumers receiving services	See people as citizens and co-producers with something to offer
Treat people as passive and done-to	Help people to take control of their lives
'Fix people'	Support people to develop their potential
Implement programmes as the answer	See people as the answer



Delivering Asset Based Community Development

ABCD Key Principles:

- Having friends and valued relationships is key to people leading the life they choose
- People are supported to connect and share their gifts, passions and interests where they live
- Reciprocity is vital for community and individual well-being.
- Everybody has a valuable contribution to make
- The assets of an area (as defined by the people who live there) are recognised and celebrated
- Communities are best placed to know what needs changing and make the changes



Proliferating Asset Based Community Development

ABCD Implementation:

- The 'ABCD Framework'
- A way of working/An approach



ABCD 'Framework' - Establishing 'Pathfinder' sites:

- Community Builders
- Finding Community Connectors
- Mapping assets (Inc. people's gifts)
- Small sparks funding



ABCD Stories



12 ABCD Pathfinder Sites

- Seacroft – LS14
- Wortley – New Wortley Community Centre
- Chapletown – Black Health Initiative
- Cookridge – OPAL
- Beeston Hill – St Luke's Cares
- Clifton and Nowells – The Learning Partnership
- Lincoln Green – Touchstone
- (LD Focus) Area TBC – HFT
- (LD Focus) Beeston – Better Action for Families
- Holbeck – Holbeck Elderly Aid
- (LCP Focus) Garforth – Garforth NET
- (LCP Focus) Rothwell – Community First Yorkshire



ABCD Evaluation Framework

- ❖ Individuals and Communities are Better Connected
- ❖ Communities identify and work to bring about the changes they want to see
- ❖ People Have Good Friends



NNS - ABCD

- What's in a title
- Own experience of ABCD
- Stories from ABCD
- How ABCD compliments NNS
- Partnership/Red Tape



Potential Impact Outside of HWB:

- **Community Cohesion and Community Safety**
- **Local Environment**
- **Education**
- **Child Friendly Leeds and Family Life:**
- **Food:**
- **Local Economy**

(From new Cormac Russell Book 2019)



Key Challenges

- ❖ *‘We already do that.....!’*
- ❖ *Seeing the impact for all citizens*
- ❖ *Importance/value of existing work in Third and Statutory Sectors*
- ❖ *Evaluating Impact*
- ❖ *Number of Neighbourhoods*
- ❖ *Resourcing the work – Expanding and Long Term*



Things to still think about

- ❖ It is a move away from 'service land' not from responsibilities
- ❖ It is about services changing
- ❖ Some things may need some 'small sparks' funding – but do not over fund
- ❖ Recognise it's a relational activity (not a project or procurement approach)
- ❖ Let a hundred flowers blossom (and let some wilt!)
- ❖ It will reduce demand – but over time
- ❖ Get out there!



Link To Social Prescribing

SP ideally placed to find out what people's gifts/talents are

Linking people - with people - in local community (this gives the SP an opportunity to support people to act together in groups as well as individually)

Don't do for, let people help themselves (where able)

Be aware of creating pressures on 3rd sector

