

Eddie Bartnik Visit to UK



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Welcome to the Autumn (well, late Autumn anyway) edition of the Local Area Coordination Network Newsletter.

Eddie Bartnik Workshops

We were thrilled to be able to bring Eddie Bartnik (Mental Health Commissioner for Western Australia and founder of Local Area Coordination) to the UK for a series of conversations.

I am very grateful to Eddie for coming here to support our developments whilst he was on holiday—a huge personal commitment to Local Area Coordination and our work in England and Wales.

Eddie was involved in 2 Co Production Workshops in Wales, led by Ruth Dineen. It was really exciting to meet Ruth and hear her passion, commitment and energy to make Co-Production happen—brilliant.

We then had a day for new Local Area Coordinators from Derby, Thurrock, Gloucestershire, Cumbria and Walsall. A chance to build relationships, share ideas and build a positive vision for the future

Finally, we had an amazing day with leaders from different areas who are either delivering, developing or in conversation about Local Area

Coordination. A really exciting day where partnerships formed and ideas for reform started to emerge.

This Issue

In this issue, we will focus on the key themes and actions from the days with Eddie, some great stories from Local Area Coordinators, an article from Jenny Brotchie (Carnegie Trust UK) about the new “Enabling State” paper and the emerging Local Area Coordination Network.

I hope this is of interest. Have a great festive season!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

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Keeping It Simple — Making it Work



On the 13th and 14th November, the Local Area Coordination Network welcomed Eddie Bartnik to Derby to lead two national workshops, one for Local Area Coordinators and their line managers and the other for leaders in areas that are currently delivering, developing or in active discussions about Local Area Coordination. Our thanks to Derby City Council for hosting the two events and also to Thurrock Council and Inclusion North for their support.

Eddie is currently the Mental Health Commissioner for Western Australia and leading mental health reform throughout the state. He was previously Director General for

Communities and had a long career in a senior leadership position in Disability Services where he led the development of Local Area Coordination. This innovative development led to wide scale, positive reform of services in Western Australia. After 25 years, Local Area Coordination is going from strength to strength, now driving national reform across all states as part of the new Disability Insurance scheme

In 2009, Samantha Clark (Inclusion North) and Paul Davies (VPST) supported me to bring Eddie to the UK for a series of Local Area Coordination workshops in England. This proved to be the start of the development of LAC in England and Wales, with inspirational leadership from Ruth Hicks (Middlesbrough) leading to the development of the first, highly successful, LAC site in Middlesbrough.



Sam, Eddie and Ralph—York 2009

Move forward to 2013, we now have Local Area Coordination operating or developing in Derby, Thurrock, Monmouthshire, Walsall, Cumbria, Gloucestershire, Derbyshire, with new conversations emerging across England and Wales.

Local Area Coordination workshops—Derby.

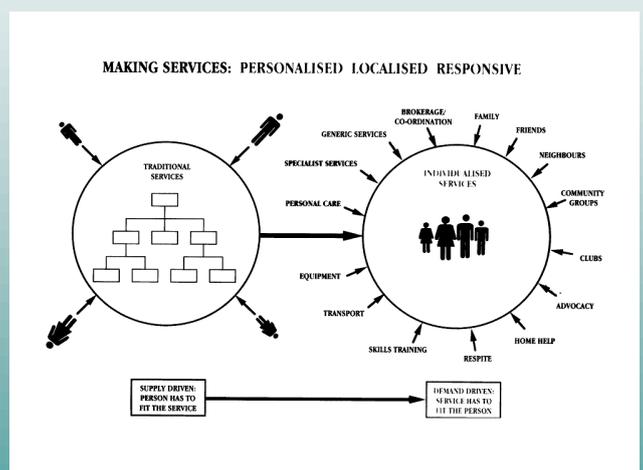
On the 14th November, leaders from across England who are either delivering, developing or in real conversations about Local Area Coordination met to participate in a conversation about getting started, doing it right, reforming services and expanding with integrity for long term success.

Over the next few pages, we reflect on the rich conversations that developed at the event and highlight some of the emerging key themes.

Starting from the Start—Building Hope and Optimism

Too often, services start with questions (assessments) about need, deficits and problems. This often results in poor outcomes for the individual, service dependence and segregated communities.

Rather than “fitting” people into existing supports and services, it’s about walking alongside the person to build a positive vision, relationships, contribution, choice/control, personal resources and local solutions, plus access to relevant, timely and accessible information and services if needed.



Do we wait for crises and fix with services—or build resilience and help people stay strong?



Keeping It Simple—Making It Work

Local Area Coordination starts at a difference place—it

- Takes **time to get to know individuals, families and communities well** over time—LACs are embedded in their local community, a community resource and partner
- **Stands alongside** people as they build and pursue their vision for a **good life**
- Focuses on **gifts, resources, possibilities** and Staying Strong—**Hope, Optimism** and Action instead of needs, deficits and queuing for services to “fix” problems
- Becomes the new “front end” of the service system, pushing formal services back a level as a complementary support to local solutions

If you start with the need and service questions, there are very limited options. However, if you take time to get to know people and help them build their personal vision for the future, possibilities are suddenly much greater.

The Choice—A focus on scarcity and rationing vs a focus on abundance, local resources and staying strong?

A Good Life

Everyone is different and therefore we all will have a different personal vision for a “good life”. But for most people, there are key themes around the importance of

- Valued, supportive relationships
- Choice, control and contribution
- Health, safety and security—Confidence in the Future
- A home of my own
- Challenge



Eddie Bartnik

Whilst services may be positive for some people, for many others they are less effective and can be an obstacle to inclusion and contribution.

There are some things that services can’t do—they can’t provide love, friendship, valued and mutually supportive relationships. These keep us strong and connected.

Services can’t solve loneliness and isolation—relationships do

What Does a Local Area Coordinator do?

The key to Local Area Coordination is the very intentional combination of connected roles, delivered locally alongside local people in their community. They become a single, local, accessible point of contact in the local community—the new “front end”

It combines a range of roles traditionally delivered by multiple services and delivers it very locally alongside local people and communities—it includes

- Taking time to get to know people, their families and communities well
- Providing accurate, timely and accessible information in a variety of ways, including by supporting development of supportive relationships with people with “lived experiences” (experts by





Keeping It Simple, Making it Work

experience).

- Supporting people to build valued, supported personal relationships and connections
- Supporting people to identify, use and share their gifts, strengths and experiences (contribution)
- Building more welcoming, inclusive and mutually supportive communities
- Supporting people to self advocate—to be heard, have a voice
- Supporting people to control supports, services and resources—increase choice and control
- Building partnerships at the individual, family, community and systems levels
- Supporting people to stay strong—building local, flexible, practical solutions
- Support people to access and navigate services, where this may be needed

Fundamentals for Keeping Local Area Coordination Strong

The vision starts with the right question (person by person) — “what is your vision for a good life, rather than what services do you need?”

Local Area Coordination is underpinned by **10 Key Principles** around the power and importance of relationships, information, control, choice, leadership and self advocacy with services as a necessary but complementary “back up”.

These principles both shape LAC practice, outcomes and wider service reform—central to success and outcomes.

For more information about the 10 Principles, go to

<http://inclusiveneighbourhoods.co.uk/local-area-coordination/the-10-principles/>

Evidence and Outcomes

Local Area Coordination has been heavily evaluated over the past 25 years, across Australian states (over 20 evaluations/studies in Western Australia alone and is now driving national service reform), Scotland, and new studies in England. For a reading list of papers and studies, go to <http://inclusiveneighbourhoods.co.uk/local-area-coordination/further-reading/>

What is clear is that “where it is designed with integrity and there is strong leadership across service types AND with communities the range of outcomes are highly consistent and predictable.” These include

- People supported to find and use local, sustainable, non service, no cost/low cost solutions—resilience and reduced demand.
- Increased supportive personal relationships and connections—reduced isolation.
- Better resourced and more inclusive and welcoming communities.
- Improved access to information—choice and control.
- Bringing new resources through partnership working
- Preventing out of area/home placements
- Families and carers more able to continue in caring role

Some Fundamentals of Designing Effective Supports and Services

- Get to know people well over time, person by person
- Connections to the local community
- Positive values and assumptions about individuals, families and communities with safeguards as needed
- Building capacity versus “providing” services
- Ask the right starting question: “What’s a good life?” versus “What services do people need?”



Keeping It Simple, Making it Work

- Improved access to specialist services
- Service reform— LAC as new “front end”, simplified. more connected services

Service integration is no use if not also connected with communities and citizens!

LAC—closing the gap between Citizens and Services/Decision Makers

What Have We Learned?

Where designed effectively, with integrity and with strong connected leadership, outcomes are highly consistent and predictable (see above).

The Local Area Coordination Network and Inclusive Neighbourhoods are leading the development of strong, locally relevant LAC programmes paying attention to.

- Establishing and embedding **10 Core Principles**
- Clear **LAC Framework** underpinning best practice
- All ages & service types** – 50-65 individuals/families
- A **long term relationship** – relationship is central
- Single, accessible point of contact** in community
- Front end** of service system – structural reform
- Reform Services as **complementary back up**, not front end
- Embed in system – Embed in community (**citizen led**)
- Full community involvement and contribution—**co design**
- LACs from a **range of backgrounds**—no single service/ profession bias
- NO SHORT CUTS**, no “pick n mix” or “hybrids” - **Avoid “pilots”**: do it right, commit to reform

Local Area Coordination and reform requires **conversations, partnerships, reflective practice and leadership**. It’s not about to just grabbing a job description from somewhere else and say “we’re doing LAC”, or just turning existing roles into Local Area Coordinators—that undermines core principles and outcomes for individuals, families, communities and services..

Local Area Coordination is about turning the system upside down, integrating/simplifying services (co-design with citizens and communities) and moving emphasis and resources **from** crises, assessment and services **to** prevention, capacity building, resilience and local solutions.

In emerging sites, it’s not only delivering outcomes consistent with best practice evaluations, but also driving cultural change across other services. It is nurturing a strength based focus and action across professional roles—that doesn’t mean other professions are “doing LAC”, but it is helping services to become more personal, local flexible and accountable.

It’s not a panacea for all social care and health challenges, but it is creating space and conversations about the future purpose and desired outcomes of services and the increasing role and contribution of local people and communities. **The Choice—Tinker or Reform?**

Some key implementation decisions/Learnings

- Programme fidelity is the key
- Achievement of outcomes is proportional to integrity of implementation
- Strong consistency of outcomes across diverse settings
- Need to answer a key question: Add on or reform of the current system?

Safeguarding

Challenge = Preserve Core/Stimulate Progress

Broad framework:

- Focus on individuals/families/communities, values and principles. Creating the “right relationship.”
- Clear job design/standards, clarifying expectations and agreement
- Ratios enable personal approach
- Selection of LACs, involving people
- State-wide shared values/ principles, network of human size units

Local Area Coordination – a different starting point



Alex Fox FRSA is CEO of Shared Lives Plus the UK network for small community services, representing Shared Lives carers and schemes and working with Community Catalysts

to support social care micro-enterprises. Alex Chairs the Care Provider Alliance, sits on the board of Think Local, Act Personal and co-lead on 'prevention and early intervention' for the social care White Paper engagement process. He blogs at <http://alexfoxblog.wordpress.com/> and @AlexSharedLives.

www.SharedLivesPlus.org.uk,

At the Local Area Coordination Day in Derby, people from social care organisations like us and around a dozen councils heard from Eddie Bartnik, Mental Health Commissioner from Western Australia (WA), who took time

Starting with the right question is vitally important . Rather than asking “what service do you need?” LAC asks “what is your vision for good life?”

Limited services or endless possibilities?

“What would you consider a good life?” The principles were: personal, local and accountable (which sounds encouragingly close to the ethos of our own, Think Local, Act Personal).

The different attitude of a Local Area Coordinator was summed up by the work of an LAC who came across a number of isolated and stressed Mums of disabled children.

The traditional response would be counselling,

advice and respite.

The LAC response was to bring those parents together: they formed a group they called “Recharge”.

The LAC helped them to find an accessible leisure centre and negotiated with the centre that it would make its activities accessible to their children, whilst the parents took fitness classes and socialised. The cost was low and the benefits multiple: not just to the parents who were able to offload, get some exercise and have some fun; to the children who were now included in new activities, but also the staff and the centre which learned how to become accessible.

A key lesson was to base LACs outside of state agencies, but with a link into the state system – and easy access to small amounts of money – when they need it.

As one UK LAC at the event put it, we won't take referrals, with the implications of a transfer of power associated with that, but anyone can introduce us to people.

One project in WA looked at how to help people with a significant impairment to live in an ordinary home. They have developed a community living placemat which sets out the building blocks including support, info, planning, supportive family and friends, building opportunities to explore and work towards goals, developing partnerships.

Using this tool, they moved away from a choice between “you do it all” or “we'll do it all” and instead helped people to bring their own resources – which sometimes included money and housing which people had long wanted to use but couldn't get support to – into play in a coordinated way, such as developing shared living approaches.

Eddie outlined some rules for reform. In no particular order, these are the ones I picked up, paraphrased in some cases:

- Ask, what kinds of relationships would you aim for if you started 'social care' again? We wouldn't start from here.
- Getting to know whole person well over time creates the possibility of speedier change later on. Move too quickly early on and all you will have is

false starts.

- You won't understand and meet people's needs, if their needs are all you are interested in.
- We all use our natural networks to help us find jobs, social activities and other opportunities which we use to make a life.
- Services are a poor replacement for these networks for isolated people, particularly when that isolation is caused or exacerbated by a building-based service.
- 'Contribution' is the most neglected concept in public services. Well being comes from what we are able to contribute. Start with high expectations.
- People have 'natural authority' – respect it. Too often, services can feel like they are dismantling your life and offering it back, bit by bit, on their terms.

had previously only interacted with the man through complaining came over to offer help.

The complaints were the only response they could think of or felt confident to offer as ways of expressing their concern. Another elderly lady was struggling to keep on top of her house and had become isolated following the death of her husband. She was about to move into residential care away from the area. One problem identified was dealing with letters which she struggled to read.

The first solution was an expensive piece of kit which read letters for her, which she didn't use. The successful solution was reaching out to a neighbour who was happy to help her with her post.

She'd wanted a human, not a machine, but it had taken everyone a little while to hear and know how to respond to her loneliness.

That was one of many links which she started to rediscover and make and she now lives without any formal support.

There are just under 10,000 people directed supported by 150 LACs in Western Australia (1 LAC: 50-65 people). The average cost was just under €2,000 per person.

20 evaluations since 1988 have consistently found it to be low bureaucracy, low per capita cost, strong on prevention and 'multiplier' effects (added value), low on opportunity cost.

A major evaluation found that the "LAC model provides value-for-money outcomes not matched by any other areas of disability services delivery" and that "the operational costs of LAC have remained relatively stable over time, compared with other forms of service delivery."

You can find links to these evaluations at www.inclusiveneighbourhoods.co.uk.

LAC is now being implemented across Australia and across the UK among other nations. Its ethos is evident throughout the Care Bill currently going through parliament here.

"We won't take referrals, with the implications of a transfer of power associated with that, but anyone can introduce us to people."



- We need to turn fixed assets into flexible assets. Services can do lots of vital things but can't provide love, belonging, community.

Neil, who manages LAC in Derby, described how the approach has worked for a number of individuals, including an elderly man who had lost control of his overgrown garden and his house.

When the LAC persuaded some people he'd met to help clear the garden, neighbours who



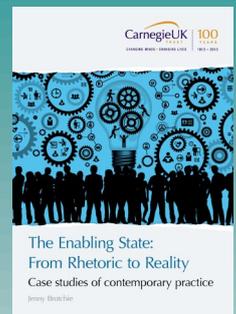
News

18th November 2013 –Enabling State Published

The report “The Enabling State—From Rhetoric to Reality” by Jenny Brotchie, Policy Officer at

Carnegie Trust UK has been published today. Local Area Coordination has been highlighted as one key approach to strengthening individuals, families, communities and reforming the service system.

It is available via <http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=09d03abb-9667-4419-8925-5d887c8a0621>



15th November 2013 Local Area Coordination—A Different Starting Point

Check out the blog by Alex Fox (Shared Lives Plus) following the conversations with Eddie Bartnik in Derby. Available via <http://alexfoxblog.wordpress.com/2013/11/15/local-area-coordination-a-different-starting-point/>

November 5th—14th Eddie Bartnik Visits the UK

Eddie Bartnik, the Mental Health Commissioner for Western Australia and founder of Local Area Coordination visited the UK this month. In a very short period, Eddie (who was actually meant to be on holiday) supported conversations in Dublin, Cardiff, Newport and 2 fantastic days in Derby.

Thanks Eddie for your time and ongoing support!



LACs and managers from Derby, Thurrock, Gloucestershire, Cumbria and Walsall—13th November

Inclusion North—Disability History Month Live Broadcast 4th December

The class of 2013/14 Tomorrow’s Leaders will be hosting the broadcast and are inviting people to watch the broadcast and give their views via the chat panel and text. To find out more, go to <http://inclusionnorth.org/uploads/attachment/453/disability-history-month-flyer.pdf>



News

Investing in Families and Communities— Strength Based Approaches and the Care Bill

The paper from Shared Lives Plus, Inclusive Neighbourhoods, Inclusion North, Community Catalysts, In Control and Partners in Policymaking is out now.

This paper highlights the opportunities and challenges presented by the Care Bill and the move from waiting for crises, assessment and services (if available) to supporting individuals, families and communities to stay strong—nurturing and sharing personal, family and community gifts, strengths and resources. You can see it via <http://sharedlivesplus.invisionzone.com/index.php?files/file/216-investing-in-families-and-communities>

New Publication—Turning the Welfare State Upside Down

Check out the new publication by Jon Glasby and colleagues from University of Birmingham about the need and opportunities for turning the system upside down and making services and supports more local, personal and flexible, including some reflections on Local Area Coordination.

Thanks to Jon for the great conversations!

Glasby, J. Miller, R and Lynch, J. (2013). 'Turning the welfare state upside down?' Developing a new adult social care offer. Health Services Management Centre, University of Birmingham. Available via

<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-social-sciences/social-policy/HSMC/publications/PolicyPapers/policy-paper-fifteen.pdf>

27/09/13 Building Positive Futures in Thurrock

Check out the new article from Les Billingham in The Guardian Newspaper 26th September 2013.

"We not have enough high-quality housing for older people - With our growing older population, we need to create accessible homes and supportive communities".

Available via <http://www.theguardian.com/social-care-network/2013/sep/26/not-enough-high-quality-housing-older-people>

It reflects the importance of both people having the right environment AND nurturing more mutually supportive, welcoming and inclusive communities.

Also have a look at the earlier paper "Building Positive Futures" -

Williams, S. (2013). Building Positive Futures in Thurrock. Available via

http://www.housinglin.org.uk/library/Resources/Housing/Practice_examples/Housing_LIN_case_studies/HLIN_CaseStudy72_Thurrock.pdf

The Enabling State: From Rhetoric to Reality



Jenny Brochie is a Policy Officer at the Carnegie UK Trust and the author of *The Enabling State: From Rhetoric to Reality*: a collection of contemporary case studies due to be published later this year. The report is one of a series of publications exploring the Enabling State: the shifting relationship between the state and individuals and communities in the UK and the Republic of Ireland. The project is led by Carnegie Fellow Sir John Elvidge. You can find out more about the Enabling State project [here](#).

A paradigm shift in thinking about public service delivery is in progress across the five jurisdictions of the UK and the Republic of Ireland. Citizens are no longer passive recipients of state services but are being given opportunities to be active agents in improving their own wellbeing. The Carnegie UK Trust is referring to this as the rise of the Enabling State.

Since inception in the early 20th Century welfare states have seen a number of changes. They are by and large, now bigger, more tightly managed and more marketised.

The 'top down' nature of our public services has however remained largely unchanged. Decisions about how best to deliver public services are made centrally by professionals working in departmental silos, public services are 'provided' by the state to passive citizens and the emphasis is on crisis intervention rather than prevention.

While this model has provided very well for many of us, complex social problems and stubborn inequalities persist in our society.

The economic crisis, resource pressure and demographic change have brought these inequalities into sharp relief. We have seen an appetite amongst policy makers and stakeholders - both in and outside of government - to move away from the traditional centralised and siloed top down model of public services to a more enabling model.

This takes different forms in the different parts of the UK and Ireland. In England for example, this change in thinking can be seen in the 'Localism' and 'Big Society' agendas of the coalition government. In other parts of the UK and Ireland, however, the terms 'coproduction', 'community empowerment' and 'citizen participation' are more commonly associated with this shift in thinking. The debate goes beyond political boundaries and parties of all colours are pursuing their own version.

Our Enabling State project is describing this shift across the five jurisdictions of the UK and Ireland and seeking to better understand it. Could a more enabling approach hold the key to addressing some of the fundamental failings in traditional 'top down' models of public services?

In November 2012 we published *The Enabling State: A Discussion Paper* written by Sir John Elvidge. This was the basis for wide consultation in 2013 as well as an extensive policy and evidence review

After a year of research and consultation we have identified a common set of 7 interlinked shifts in approach:

The Enabling State—con't.....

- From new public management to public value;
- From centralised management to localism;
- From representative to participative democracy;
- From silos towards integration;
- From acute intervention to prevention;
- From recipients to co-producers;
- From state delivery to the third sector.

We also wanted to capture what a more enabling approach means in practice. Our forthcoming report the Enabling State: From Rhetoric to Reality contains 12 real world examples from across the UK and Ireland that encapsulate some of these interlinked features. The **Local Area Coordination** approach is one of our selected examples. Others include the Self Management Fund in Scotland, the Violence Reduction Unit's work at Hawkhill Community Centre and Participle's Circle and Life Programmes.

Enabling State: From Rhetoric to Reality highlights some examples of pioneering enabling practice in the UK and Ireland. Together the 12 case studies provide some insight into how public services could be delivered in a more joined up, preventative way with greater citizen and community involvement. They give a flavour of some of the practical realities associated with an enabling approach to public services.

The experiences of our case studies suggest that:

Leadership and financial support from the state is crucial: the public service environments in which our case studies operate were either supportive or created barriers. All of our case studies received some financial support from the state.

Sufficient time is critical: developing and implementing radically different approaches and building deeper relationships with individuals and communities takes time.

Investing in the right staff is important: a large enough staff team with the right skills, training and support is key.

Supporting individuals and communities to build links within their own community, to access specialist support and to connect with influential people or organisations is a central component: of an enabling approach and vital in helping individuals to realise their full potential.

Transformational change is challenging but crucial: while it is tempting to 'add on' enabling elements to traditional services taking the time to rebuild services from the bottom up is critical. Our case studies suggest that incorporating co-production into service design and implementation may be particularly challenging.

Building mutually beneficial relationships is key: the voluntary element of co-production is important. Participants need to trust front line workers and to see how they can realise their own aspirations and goals through coproduction. Our case studies took care to understand individuals' own strengths and priorities.

An Enabling State requires a transformational change in the way we deliver public services. In practical terms this means creating the conditions in which frontline workers can forge and facilitate, deeper, mutually beneficial relationships with and between individuals, communities and organisations. Leadership and financial support from the state, the right staff and sufficient time are all critical components.

See News Section for links to the report

Jenny

Local Area Coordination in Gloucestershire



Introducing Julia Horsfall—Local Area Coordinator Gloucestershire

"I have been working in social care since 2005 in a variety of roles from home care assistant to service coordinator. I was working for the adults team completing assessments and getting more and more frustrated by the lack of time I was expected to spend with people I supported and feeling that my work was not actually making any differences to their lives. When I saw the job description for the LAC position I couldn't believe what I was reading. I could see how LAC could be so much more rewarding than the current role I was in, this was not an opportunity to be missed, luckily for me I got it!"

Here, Julia talks about her reflections of the day with Eddie Bartnik, some stories about local people and her positive vision for the future.

Imagining a Positive Future

After the meeting on 13th November with Eddie Bartnik I wanted to share my reflections and a story showing how, as a LAC, I have been privileged to work differently alongside , evidencing the positive impact my role has had on one individual.

Meeting Eddie and other LAC's across the country has given me reassurance, inspiration, motivation and I feel re-energised in my LAC role. Listening to Eddie gave me confidence that there is a future for LAC. Although the trials and tribulations were highlighted, Eddie was able to demonstrate this in such a way that it shows the learning and how to turn the learning into positive outcomes.

Being a LAC in Gloucestershire has been quite a lonely journey over the last 15 months, partly due to the lack of understanding of the role. Being on secondment and trying to pioneer a new way of working within our council has also felt very unstable. My time in Derby with Eddie and all the other LACs has caused me to rethink about LAC and to start demonstrating and sharing the benefits.

For the last year I have been part of the Living Well Team which was set up to develop, experiment and learn how we can work differently with individuals by understanding and testing the system across health and social care. The whole team use the listening and understand principles which have proved to achieve great results for the individuals in our community. I have also had the opportunity to coach and support my colleagues that there is an alternative and ultimately a better way of working for professionals but most importantly the person we are working with.

Phil – Taking time to listen.

I would like to introduce you to Phil, he is 43 years of age. Phil contacted the adult helpdesk asking for a grab rail to be fitted to assist with showering. Phil has a mild learning disability and is hard of hearing. He was introduced to the Living Well team and, whilst the request for the grab rail was easily rectified, we quickly realised that he was asking for help in lots of other ways.

Working together, myself and the OT took time to find out what was important to Phil. We could see that he was very low in mood, he often felt victimised, focused on the negatives, felt isolated and undervalued as a citizen. The OT worked with Phil to resolve the functional problems such as accessing his bath. As a LAC, I continued to build a relationship with him and spending time listening. With time, I was able to help him to build a more positive vision for the future.

What's Important?

Phil often looked outside his window and saw the overgrown garden which the housing officer was continually reminding him needed to be cleared. He wanted to be able to sit outside and enjoy it with his daughter and spend time in this space. However, he could not see a way forward and there were no garden tools readily available.

From understanding what was important to Phil, a few simple connections with local resources began to positively impact on Phil's well being.

After introducing Phil to the local community project GL11, we discovered that most of his friends also accessed this resource.

We then worked with the community builder. A day was arranged for Phil and his willing friends to help clear the garden, enticed by a BBQ! I also asked a local gardener to help with the heavier work and to dispose of the waste.

A successful and fun day was had by all with a great achievement of completely clearing the garden and a few laughs.



BEFORE



DURING



AFTER

In one day, with support from his friends and a volunteer, Phil has seen that he has a whole resource out there to draw on and was beginning to see that life could change.

More positives followed for Phil and he enrolled on a number of courses run by GL11. This began to give him structure, motivation and increased self esteem.

I was also able to help him resolve a neighbour dispute with support of his housing officer.

What Happened Next?

Phil's dream is to become a chef. From attending the courses at GL11, this began to become a possibility. I became aware of a cancellation on a course 'How to train to be a professional chef' run by the Cotswold Chef a local initiative here in Gloucestershire. We applied for a grant from Barnwood Trust, a very forward thinking local charity made it entirely possible for him to attend. If you could have seen his face when the grant was agreed!



Proud in his chef whites



One of his many creations

Outcomes for Phil — Confidence in the Future, Relationships, Contribution

We have worked alongside Phil for just over 6 months. He has reported the following changes in his life;

- ⇒ He is now able to safely access his shower independently.

- ⇒ He is enjoying his training course, learning new skills and confidence is growing. He regularly attends and has begun to cook and bake at home. He hopes that at the end of the course he will find work.
- ⇒ His relationship with his daughter remains strong.
- ⇒ His confidence has grown and he is less isolated due to his new community connections, he has used the computer in the local library and is now more confident at doing this.
- ⇒ The situation with his neighbour has improved significantly.
- ⇒ He has more confidence in managing his own finances. He is more aware of his spending and how to budget. Significant support from Q Care to increase Phil's income, manage debts and obtain equipment is a contributing factor to his progress.
- ⇒ He is transferring the learning from his course to his daily diet.
- ⇒ Phil and his daughter were able to enjoy the garden over the summer.
- ⇒ He felt empowered to ask for help and support to attend an appointment and is now able to address his health concerns in a timely way.

As a LAC I have been able to build a relationship and support Phil long term which has resulted in life changing opportunities by facilitating and empowering Phil to make some simple changes. Whilst the time taken to work with Phil may be challenged as time consuming the connections needed throughout the intervention have been flexible dependent on needs. Some weeks I had regular contact and multiple visits and other times no contact for several weeks. Phil knows that he can contact me when needed but this is becoming less frequent as he has been coached to resolve things himself.

If Phil had not been introduced to the Living Well team the outcome would have been very different.

The bathing needs would have been assessed and the case closed. It is extremely unlikely that the worker would have had the time to fully understand the issues.

We have learnt that it takes time to fully understand and identify the root cause of the problem. Phil would have remained in the same situation which ultimately would have had a negative impact on his mental health, ultimately this would have increased the long term demand on the health and well being economy.

There is so much that I could say but this is just a quick snap shot of someone who has made the LAC role so rewarding, it enables me to demonstrate how we have used lots of different resources in the community to help him take control of his life and build a vision for what is possible in the future.

Summary

There are lots of other individuals in our community who I have worked with and gained very positive results which has been incredibly rewarding. LAC has given me the tools to be able to give people a future and their lives back and take control of situations. I hope that Gloucestershire County Council is brave enough to take the risk and make this a permanent way of working across the county along with the Living Well model.

Gloucestershire has only 2 LACs in two locations, it remains a pilot and we are seconded from other roles. As LACs we want to influence and develop our communities through self sufficiency and resourcefulness making Gloucestershire a better place to live.

I would like to thank Phil for giving me permission to share his story.

Written by; Julia Horsfall - Local Area Coordinator

Edited by; Karen Burton - Team Manager

Twitter Corner!!

Well, it had to happen—I have joined twitter world. Check out the tweets (and some photos) from the recent Eddie Bartnik days in Derby—send in your favourite tweets for the next Newsletter



Les, Neil, Michelle and Tania



LACderby @LACderby 14 Nov
You need people that understand how community works, building capacity not providing services. #lacday



Caroline Tomlinson @Cazzatomlinson 15 Nov
Any thoughts? Everyone has skills and gifts #lacday #inclusionis pic.twitter.com/g2qVfcNgj



Alvaston Residents @DerbyARA 14 Nov
We don't solve isolation through services. #LACday



LACderby @LACderby 15 Nov
After a truly amazing #LACday please join us to continue the conversation at Derby's first Social Care Curry Club <http://socialcarecurry.eventbrite.com/>



@LACderby 25 Nov
Off to speak to people at the Gurdwara this morning to explore ideas for reducing isolation and building resilience in our communities.



LACderby @LACderby 22 Nov
@KirstyEverson @brian_frisby Derby - local, flexible supportive solutions has to be the key!



Follow Local Area Coordination developments on twitter @RalphBroad and @LACNetwork



Taking Time—Getting it Right—LAC in Derby

Simran Sandhu is Local Area Coordinator for Alvaston in Derby. Here, Simran talks about some of her experiences as a Local Area Coordinator.

Like most of us in this day and age, here in the UK, work is an integral part of our lives, unlike where I come from where I was very much a lady of leisure.

Growing up in very comfortable confines in India, having studied in convent schools and lived pretty much in an ivory tower where things were done for me is a far cry from my life here and being a LAC is some thing I had never envisaged myself being !Ever!

My journey began in 2012, when I was offered the position (I was the second choice since the lady first chosen did not join this job!). So, I do have a bone to pick with Ralph and Neil!

At the beginning, the LAC terminology seemed very much like jargon to me and I think, to most people that we met.

I could see puzzled frowns and sceptical looks when we spoke about the LAC,

”A vision of a good life”... “A life, not a service “, did not seem to make much sense but many months into this, I am beginning to realise the true meaning of this as I am sure are the people who I met at the beginning of my journey.

The LAC family is growing as are the wonderful ladies, gentlemen and young people that I walk alongside with and it is some of these people that I would like to talk about!

Building Relationships, Staying Strong, Planning for the Future

An elderly couple in their early 80's have a daughter in her fifties who is differently abled. She had known a particular day centre for most of her life. With the advent of the centre closing down, the family were worried and stressed about the change that might come in their daughter's, and consequently their, lives. They had been given some information but were unsure about a lot of things. The first time I met them, I saw a hugely independent, strong couple who had so much dignity and fortitude, it simply touched my heart!

I started by taking time to get to know the daughter and her parents, what was important to them and their individual and shared vision for a happy, fulfilling and safe future. We reflected on some of the local opportunities, possibilities and the range of choices that may be of interest in the future.

But in the course of building my relationship with them, I also realised they also had other stresses - jobs and chores around the house that could not be done because of their recent stress, age and frail health.

Thankfully, I was able to gather support from a wonderful man and his team of fabulous friends who pitched in with all sorts of garden equipment and made a “haven” out of their “jungle” The sight of their tidy garden and the pruned bushes went a long way in bringing a smile back into their eyesthey are now regular visitors to our coffee mornings, have been for carers breaks and life is generally ok; the fact that I get a big hug from them when I see them is just the icing on the cake!

Relationships are central

A gentleman I walk alongside has recently amazed me by his community and volunteering spirit.

This particular young man lives on his own in a council property, has never worked and has very little contact with his family. He has mental health issues and in the event of not having his medication has been known to find it difficult to cope in public places .

He has, over a period of time, taken to visiting me in my little office and I share my coffee and biscuits



Taking Time—Getting it Right. LAC in Derby

with him. I have even done him a curry, though I must admit secretly that he was in effect my guinea pig (since my culinary talents are extremely limited). The fact that he sent me a text after 20 minutes to say he had finished the curry was a big surprise. Whether it was the magical blend of the right spices or he had just been starving is not something I am willing to debate about! However, a key thing is that I was there—easy to access as a local, friendly face in his community.

No judgements, no deficit assessments, no quick service “fixes.”

I started by just **listening** to his story of what life was like now and how he would like it to be in the future. I was **there just for him**.

Together, we started working out how he could take control of some of the day to day challenges he was facing around his benefit claims, his electric and gas bills and most of all, his fears and insecurities.

He has had some really bad days without basic amenities and I have worked with the local church to supply him with his basic needs....but all is not lost.

“Relationships are Central”

He is now picking up the pieces of his rather “fragmented” life, he has made contact with his long lost sister who lives in Australia and has taken to visiting his elderly grandfather a lot more than he did previously.

His housing officer tells me his house has never looked tidier, relationships with his neighbours have improved, his garden is neat and tidy, he smiles a lot more, is looking to rejoin some adult learning courses and has even binned his hoody!!

From “Service User” to Contribution

Very recently, he volunteered his time to help with a leaflet drop for a public meeting that I was supporting; he has also offered his services to help look after gardens for elderly people in our community. **Contribution.**

His personal journey has been one of moving from isolation to a rejuvenated belief in his own self, being part of and contributing to community life, building relationships and feeling

more optimistic about the future.

The LAC approach does work!

I also met another gentleman recently. His wife passed away some 20 years back and since then, his two children and he seemed to have drifted apart, so much that his only son has not set foot in his father’s house for the last 8 years.

Understandably, he had become isolated over the years and was now finding it very difficult to look after his house and garden.

But, some weeks down the line, his garden has been tidied by our wonderful local friends (a modern day band of Robin Hood and his merry men) who I cannot thank enough!

I have also made contact with his son and the daughter who have said they are keen to rebuild the connection with their dad.



Before and After—Supportive Communities in Action

have also contacted the Health Housing Hub about providing him with central heating and a new boiler.

And so friends and a warm, clean, safe and tidy home for this gentleman do not seem like a distant dream any more!

Being a LAC is both challenging and humbling...

It has given me an insight into the reality of life...the reality of living with an illness, mental health and physical impairments... a reality that I had never before experienced. It has given my life a new meaning and made me appreciate what I have got a lot more! And of course, the red wine sale in my local village pub has soared so it is a “win win” for everyone!

Coming Soon!!!!



Shared Learning

Training — Local Area Coordination & Building
Stronger, Supportive Communities

- Family Leadership
- Micro Enterprise and Innovation

Local Area Coordination Resources

Leadership and Reform

*Local Area Coordinators, Managers, Senior Leaders
and Elected Members/Citizens*

WATCH THIS SPACE!

Have a great Festive Period!!