

Public Engagement, Consultation and Community Research



Voluntary Action North Lincolnshire
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Voluntary Action North Lincolnshire is registered in England and Wales
as a Private Company Limited by Guarantee No 3346067
and a Registered Charity No 1063019

About us

Voluntary Action North Lincolnshire is a support and development organisation. We are a council for voluntary service and a member of NAVCA. Established in 1997, we are a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee and have a successful track record in support and development services for the voluntary sector as well as liaison with statutory and commercial organisations and promotion of voluntary sector activities.

Community research is a part of our development work, and clients include North Lincolnshire Council, Big Lottery, Bishop Grosseteste and Barton upon Humber Chamber of Trade.

We offer a flexible staff team with many years of experience in a wide range of fields including community research, needs assessments, community development, volunteering, training, management consultancy. The Team are qualified up to level 4 in an internationally renowned participatory methodology called Community Assessment and Action (CAA) - ©Development Focus.

Some Team members are also qualified in Experience Led Commissioning (ELC) - © GCA. ELC also uses participatory methods to co-design services, with those who know most about the needs of a sub-section of the population i.e. Service Users, Carers and Family Members and service providers, including front line staff.



Our Values

We are a local organisation, this means that our local knowledge and relationship with the community is second to none, and we can draw on this and the experience of our staff team. The whole is the basis for individually tailored work to our clients' requirements.

As a third sector organisation, we can take an external impartial view of statutory and commercial organisations when consulting communities on outcomes and needs and we are recognised and trusted by our local communities.

We take an asset development approach which is based on the principle of identifying and mobilising individuals and community '**assets**', rather than focusing on problems and needs.

As a charitable organisation with members and contacts from the whole range of fields of charity work (over 900 VCS organisations), we are very keen on promoting the sustainability of our organisation and others. We reduce waste to a minimum and recycle what waste we produce. We protect the environment we work in and endeavour to reduce our impact as resources allow.

We look after our staff team and encourage flexible working so that they can achieve a good work/life balance. We appreciate age and experience as well as youth and enthusiasm and they all fit into our overall staff resource.

We have achieved a NAVCA Quality Award, Volunteering England Quality Mark and are a CERTA-registered training centre. We have just been recognised as a Big Assist Beacon in recognition of our willingness and ability to lead change and ability to innovate;

Big Assist Beacons are:

- Actively embracing change
- Willing to share their story and lessons learned
- Demonstrating and communicating their impact
- Well networked with good relationships and partnerships
- Diversifying their income and working towards financial sustainability



Why carry out community engagement and research?

Any organisation will at some point need to carry out research. You need to know what other organisations are doing, what people think about what you are doing, or what people think you should do and what might strengthen the community you are interested in (geographical or interest).

Voluntary Action North Lincolnshire's team uses a wide range of research techniques to carry out non-academic research in the community. The variety of methods used include participatory appraisal, questionnaires and face-to-face interviews. Through a mix of these techniques we achieve good qualitative and quantitative results.

Questions are kept as open as possible, and we attempt to record anonymously everything the respondents say. This means that we capture the important issues at the time in the area we are studying. However, we also keep statistical data so that we can check that we have a good spread of participants and we can produce more detailed qualitative data when required.

VANL development workers and researchers understand that change has to be owned by a community for a project to succeed and services will not achieve the desired outcome if they are not based on the expressed needs and aspirations of the target population. If things are done to a community rather than by it and with it, then local people may feel resentful or the final project may not answer the residents' perceived needs and the results will be less successful. When taken to its logical conclusion, community research works because the community is given a voice and everyone has the opportunity to have a stake in the project.



Carol Thornton interviews two members of the public as part of a participatory appraisal.

Core Research Team:

Carol Thornton, Research Lead CAA



Began training in participatory appraisal techniques in 2000.
Level 4 CAA – @Development Focus course undertaken in 2004
ELC Facilitator
15 years' experience as Community Development Officer
11 years' experience as researcher using participatory methodologies.

Trudy Norris – Research Lead ELC



Experience Led Commissioning Practitioner at the core of co redesign work in health care e.g, for those with Long Term Conditions, People with a Mental Health Condition, People with Dementia.

B.A, MBACP, P.G.C.E

Actively involved in the development and delivery of VCS projects for 30 years.

Victoria Pickett – CAA Practitioner and Volunteer Recruitment lead.



8 years' experience in participatory research methodologies.

Carole Phillips – Contract Lead



BA Sociology, PGCE, CERT Combined Social Sciences.

16 years in Chief Executive position.

30 years' experience in community development at all levels.

Experience of leading contracts with Home Office, Department of Health, Government Office, North Lincolnshire Council, Big Lottery and New Opportunities Fund, v-involved, Primary Care Trust, Department Of Education, Trust Funds.

The Core Team will be supported by **Helen Driffill**, ELC Facilitator.

VANL Research Team adhere to an Ethical Research Policy and Procedures.

Experience

We have carried out extensive qualitative research with communities for many years commencing in 2001, when we engaged a rural area made up of a number of Parishes and a Town in defining their health and wellbeing needs and the actions that needed to happen to improve this, in preparation for a successful Healthy Living Centre bid (value over £1million) carried out on behalf of a partnership led by the Director of Public Health.

As with all VANL research it is premised on engaging the community as active participants and looks at how they can build on the assets of that community to change outcomes, and so is the precursor to community action.

Since that time we have developed and refined research to improve sampling and outcomes using the CAA methodology and finally we are also engaging in ELC methodologies in association with Georgina Craig Associates, working with the Clinical Commissioning Group.

Our portfolio includes:

2000 Investigating Community Spirit in Brigg, North Lincolnshire – resulted in the formation of *About Brigg*, a community newsletter to help with local communication. The publication, now rebranded as *Brigg Matters*, still runs successfully.

A participatory appraisal funded by Conoco provided evidence enabling North Lincolnshire Council, Barton Child Centre and Barton & District Healthy Living Centre to begin projects with children in South Killingholme in 2003.

2004 Action for Living – midterm evaluation of Barton and District Healthy Living Centre involving 170 people in 2 villages. This 6-year project achieved some ground-breaking work as a result of their dedication to listening to what the public said in the various research sessions.

In 2005, research for **Riddings Action Group** resulted in a successful funding bid to launch the Riddings Drop-In.

Investigating Ulceby Research for Ulceby Parish Plan – 2005 & 11 (circa 150 – 200 people engaged). This complemented the Parish Council's own questionnaire research and resulted in a detailed and efficient Parish Plan, owned by the whole community.

Regenerating Grange Lane 2007 – Participatory research to underpin a Reaching Communities Bid on behalf of the North Lincolnshire Local Strategic Partnership (60 people in small area of Scunthorpe).

Rurality issues in North and North East Lincolnshire 2010 – (non-participatory methodology) identifying strengths and needs in the rural area.

Research in 9 Wards of North Lincolnshire using the Local Area Agreement Themes - 2007: The Neighbourhood Community Profiles were researched on behalf of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and the Neighbourhood Action Teams (NATs), beginning at the time the NATs were being set up, to inform their work. 11 Individual reports and 1 overarching report for the LSP, engaging at least 1,235 people.

At the same time, research for **Barton Chamber of Trade** helped them assess whether new services were needed in Barton, and a piece of extension work on the **Lodge Moors** estate focused on the need for a community centre.

We carried out several pieces of research for and with **Who Cares** in the lifetime of the organisation, 2008 - 2013. Who Cares – a LINK (Local Involvement Network) was the precursor in this area to HealthWatch. All the Who Cares consultations are available on our website.

Research in Winterton initially as the basis of a Community Contract and then for Big Local Area Partnership – 2010 (147 people reached) & **2011** (354 people), **2016 skills and employment focused on the Towns most deprived community).**

The Big Local partnership eventually drew up its 10-year Plan and is functioning well, although the process may well last more than 10 years – as people in the research indicated they would like.

20013 to present - Experience Led Commissioning work (on behalf of North Lincolnshire CCG as part of multi-organisational team) on long term conditions (adults and children), end of life, mental health, substance misuse.

CLLD Engagement workshops in North and North East Lincolnshire - 2015

Conclusion:

VANL is an ethical organisation firmly focused on providing quality engagement, consultancy and research services for the benefit of the client and subject communities and individuals. We work closely with the client and community to ensure we are on track in the design and delivery of work. We stop and map participants to ensure we are reaching all sections of the subject population. We offer best value and significant Social Value.

VANL operates on many levels in North Lincolnshire, but mostly as a service provider to the community.

Our work includes training, research, volunteer services, financial services, funding advice and other development work. We have a strong track record of delivering on contracts, especially on those where we have advised on different ways of working. One of the strengths of the voluntary sector is the ability to find new ways to achieve a goal – a strength imposed on the sector through changes in funding levels and methods.

We have experience of working with providers who are looking for a different way of doing things.

For further details of how Voluntary Action North Lincolnshire can deliver your service programme, contact:

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Chief Executive

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The research process

We collect and collate data in many different formats to produce strong, influential and replicable research reports.

We statistically map the demographic profile of respondents to ensure that we are reaching a representative sample of the population we are researching, using non-threatening tools.

We record detail of comments made, produce an appendix of raw data and use such comments and stories to illustrate the themes.

We collate responses into categories to identify the key themes and the more respondents that reinforce the issues of concern, the more confident we can be that the issue is a trend rather than a feature of individual concern, or based on an 'urban myth'.

In terms of the data collected as part of the ELC process it is about collecting an evidence base, both in terms of the co-design processes and the outcomes generated. ELC works closely with academic partners, most notably the University of Oxford who provide access to a data archive that enables the benchmarking of insights generated at a local level with national data about people's experiences over 70 health conditions, increasing confidence in its efficacy.

We have access to IT expertise so are not as vulnerable to IT system failure and we have a bank of laptops, cameras and a video camera to film contributions, with the IT expertise to edit and produce a record of responses.

We have the expertise to help our clients to use the research by drawing up plans and to then use these plans to seek funding for their project.

Relevant experience (all in North Lincolnshire)

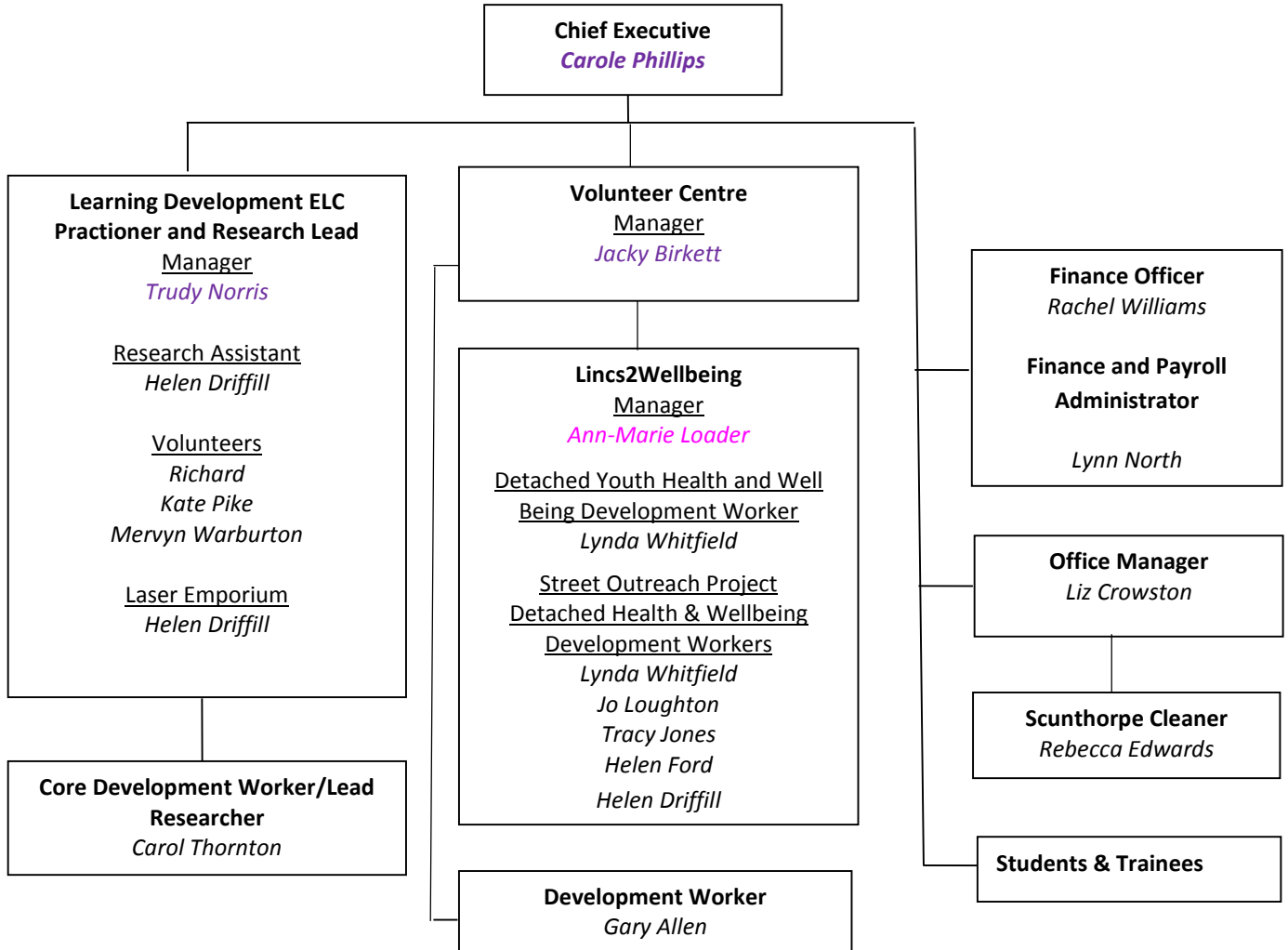
- Working on behalf of the NLLSP (2007) VANL contacted over 1000 voluntary groups as part of a mapping exercise which covered:
 - their legal status,
 - contact details,
 - purpose,
 - beneficiaries,
 - area of benefit,
 - whether they had space for community use,
 - activities,
 - number of staff,
 - number of volunteers

This allowed us to establish a database searchable over all of those categories. This data has since been transferred successfully in-house to a web-based system which is faster and more flexible.

- We have mapped activities and VCS organisations in three different areas and provided a detailed report on strengths and needs of those communities for the Big Lottery when they were researching potential first round Big Local areas. One of those areas was selected in the first 50 programmes.
- 2014 conducted a workforce development needs assessment with the VCS
- 2012-13 created a working relationship with Mason and Baggott and with Tata Steel, resulting in pro-bono legal workshops and a corporate volunteering programme for the support of the VCS.
- 2014 created an employer-sponsored volunteering scheme with DHL for the benefit of the VCS.
- 2002-3 Engaged and trained a number of Parish Councils and community groups to provide civil rights information and sign-posting quality marked by the Community Legal Service at sign-posting level
- Outreach work with the most hard to reach communities e.g. street workers and street drinkers
- Smoking cessation programmes in secondary schools throughout North Lincolnshire
- Focus group work with the local community
- Volunteer engagement in North and North East Lincolnshire
- Engaging young people in volunteering.
- Experience Led Commissioning consultancy work.

Updated June 2016

Staffing Chart



KEY
Managers are in
Purple