

Local Area Coordination Network Newsletter



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Welcome



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The LAC Network

Welcome to the first Local Area Coordination (LAC) Network Newsletter

We hope to use the newsletter as a way of

- * Providing more information about Local Area Coordination
- * Establishing communication links between people
- * Keeping everyone up to date with progress
- * Sharing ideas, gifts
- * Solving problems together
- * Sharing information
- * Giving areas and local people a voice

In future issues we aim to have

contributions from innovative partner organisations linked to strength based approaches and LAC, including Community Catalysts, KeyRing, Shared Lives, the ABCD (Europe) Institute, Inclusion North, In Control, LivesthroughFriends and partner local authority areas.

We are currently contributing to the TLAP Building Community Capacity Reference Group and starting discussions with DH around asset based approaches to “assessment”, building communities and asset mapping.

This is a chance to both make a difference to our local communities AND contribute to national developments.

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Local Area Coordination—History

Local Area Co-ordination (LAC) was originally developed in Western Australia in 1988 to “build individual, family and community self sufficiency so that individuals with intellectual disability can choose to live with their families, or in their local community without compromising their quality of life”. It has subsequently developed across Australia and internationally (including Scotland as a key recommendation of “The Same as

You?”, Scottish Executive 2000). It is now developing in a number of areas in England (Middlesbrough, Cumbria, Stroud and Derby City) and contributing to national discussions around reform, building social capital, prevention and personalisation.

Our thanks to Eddie Bartnik and the Disability Services Commission in Western Australia for their support

“From service users to citizens”

What is Local Area Coordination?

Local Area Coordination is an innovative and evidence based approach to supporting people who may be vulnerable due to age, disability, mental health needs or sensory impairments to pursue and achieve their vision for a good life and to create more welcoming and inclusive communities.

It recognises and supports the value of individual gifts, skills and assets, the powerful and positive role of families and relationships and the contribution local communities can make as alternatives to formal social care and health services for many people.

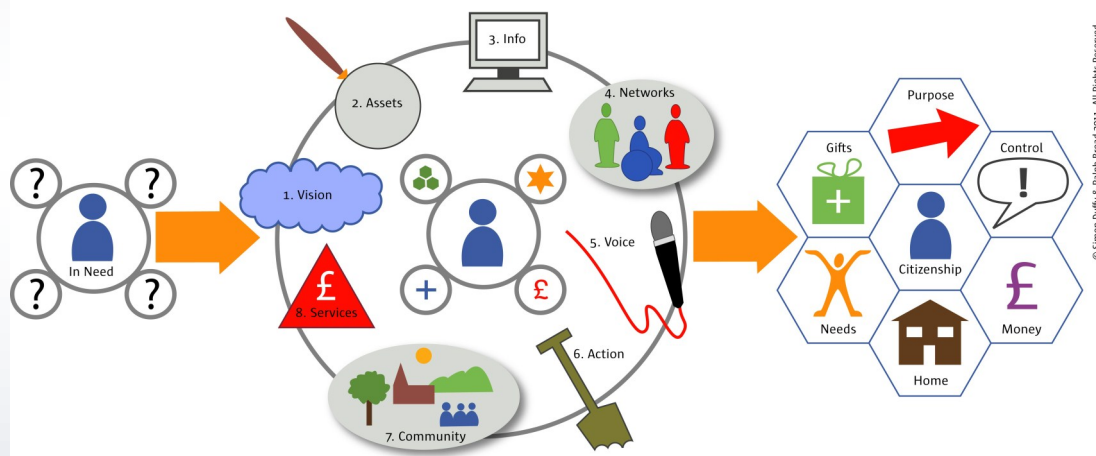
Local Area Coordination therefore aims to reflect this natural authority and assets by moving the

“front end” **from** services and funding **to** “prevention, capacity building and local solutions”.

- * A single, accessible, local point of contact for local people.
- * Building a long term relationship with individuals, families and their community
- * Aims to keep people strong – prevent crises
- * Focuses on assets and strengths
- * Supports people to use or develop practical, non service solutions
- * Building individual, family and community self sufficiency

A single, local, accessible point of contact for local citizens.

Connecting communities—connecting services



What Does a Local Area Coordinator Do?

An LAC is a single, local, accessible point of contact and support individuals (children & adults) and their families in a local community by

- * Getting to know people, families and the local community well – keep people strong
- * Being a single, local, accessible point of contact
- * Supporting access to accurate information – in a variety of ways that make sense to each person
- * Providing support and assistance to identify their strengths, goals and needs – plan for the future

- * Promoting self advocacy, advocate with people, access independent advocacy
- * Assisting in building inclusive, resourced local communities
- * Building partnerships
- * Assisting people to develop and use personal and local networks
- * Assisting people to develop practical ways of meeting goals and needs
- * Assisting people to access support and services

Introducing Neil Woodhead—Derby City

Hello my name is Neil Woodhead and I am the Social Capital Development manager for Derby City Council. My role includes project management for the soon to be launched Local Area Coordination project.

We have been working to establish the LAC project in Derby for a number of months now, so the focus has been on a number of different front, recruitment, partnerships and paperwork.

Hopefully we will have people in post by the end of March and we now have most of the paper work in place. The most exciting work has been talking to people and developing relationships with community members and partner organisations.

One of the most striking things has been the huge wealth of knowledge, passion and commitment there is within local communities, if you just start the conversation off in the right way.

We are also starting to form some really positive partnerships with local organisations. Our colleagues in the libraries are working closely with us at the moment to provide a local base in city wards for our LAC's and are really keen to explore the opportunities that this creates within the community. Derby University is not only going to evaluate the project for us, but is also offering to unleash the social capital they have within the communities of Derby.

All great stuff, and a real challenge to keep on top of, but well worth the effort!

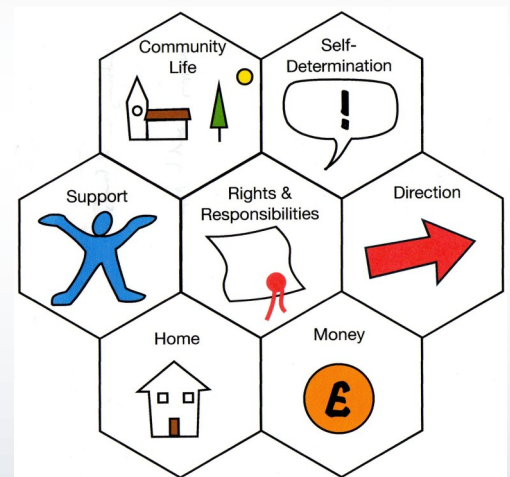
A Good Life

Whilst a good life is a very personal and individual matter, it most often reflects aspirations for

- * Valued Relationships
- * Control and Choice
- * A home of my own
- * Contribution and challenge

* Safety, security (including financial) and confidence in the future

Although services can be very useful for some people, they often can't support people to achieve these key aspirations. Many others increasingly aren't able to get access to services in the first place.



A Good Life

Introducing Patrick Graham—Cam and Dursley

A child of the manse, traveler, former film sound recordist, hospice volunteer, mental health social worker and community development coordinator, currently senior manager in adult social care and part time Laughter consultant.

I was asked to step in at short notice to achieve something akin to Local Area Coordination in a very short time span in Cam & Dursley, Gloucestershire. My experience of vicarage life and community development helped me grasp the principles and work with the local voluntary and

statutory workers and community members to demonstrate the double positives of the project to commissioners and locals alike. Now we have a commitment to my working 3.5 days per week on developing the LAC way of working across the county, starting small, but looking for the permanent changes to how we all work.





Introducing Carol Taylor—Middlesbrough

Hello, my name is Carol Taylor and I am the Local Area Coordination Development Manager for Middlesbrough Council. My role includes the ongoing development of the LAC programme ensuring that LAC principles are embedded, working with communities and partners as well as the day to day management of the Local Area Coordination team.

LAC Middlesbrough has been operational since September 2010. Unlike Australia and Scotland, the Middlesbrough model focuses on all vulnerable people within a specific geographic area. We have retained a 'cradle to grave' approach and although we are employed by Middlesbrough Council's department of Adult Social Care we work closely with the Children, Families and Learning department with external children's services externally too. Vulnerability in this context covers a wide-ranging and very diverse set of issues; it includes people who are suffering or who have suffered

domestic abuse, mental health conditions, age related conditions, learning and physical disabilities and those who are receiving end of life care. LAC is non statutory and therefore we consider it a real privilege to work with people who want to achieve a life that's good for them.

To date we have made some real achievements which have helped people to turn their lives around and look to the future for the first time in a long time. The success of LAC Middlesbrough has been documented in an independent evaluation report produced in August 2011 (PFA: 2011). The report has also provided us with a way forward with one of the key recommendations being that LAC be extended across the town. I am pleased to report that moves are now underway to ensure that this happens in the very near future. More information on LAC Middlesbrough can be found at www.Middlesbrough.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/local-area-coordination.

Next Issue

New Developments

Friends and Partner Organisations

Contribution to

- * Asset Based Assessments
- * Service reform and systems change
- * Spotlight on Catherine Wilton (TLAP)
- * Spotlight on the ABCD Institute—Introducing Cormac Russell

For more information about Local Area Coordination or for help to design & develop LAC, contact Ralph at

ralph@inclusiveneighbourhoods.co.uk

Dates For Your Diary

Thursday 19th April 2012 – hosted by Monmouthshire County Council (Venue TBA)

Severn & Marches Local Area Coordination Study (Learning and Development) Group.

Leaders and Practitioners are coming together to share learning of their innovative work around personalisation, self/citizen direction, and LAC in Monmouthshire, Gloucestershire and Powys. There are also opportunities to meet and learn with and from LAC projects throughout the UK. Colleagues from interested authorities and agencies in the region are welcome.

For further information contact Bob Rhodes at bob@livesthroughfriends.org (01594 826700 – answerphone)

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