

Active Withernsea

Local Delivery Pilot – Organisation Responsible

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Brief background about the place

The vision is to inspire a happier, healthier Withernsea by creating a health promoting community, community ownership and co-production, increasing physical activity, changing behaviour to improve lives, building community trust and positivity and raising aspirations.

The ultimate goal is to change behaviours to increase physical activity in order to improve lives. We want people to live longer and healthier lives by living more active lives. To achieve this, we seek to build health promoting communities. Within three to five years, we want to see a happier, healthier Withernsea where the healthy choice is the easy choice at all stages of the life course. The aim is to develop an Active Withernsea where people taking action to improve their lives e.g. being active, is the ‘norm’.

What is the Withernsea Pilot trying to achieve?

This pilot has a strong community ethos and commitment to build grassroots links in the community. We want to build community trust and inject positivity; raise aspirations and break the cycle of fatalism and negativity, taking people on the journey to build a healthier community that they can be in charge of and empower people to take ownership of.

We have now recruited most of the team to lead the work from within Withernsea to drive the LDP. This will include uncovering and supporting community champions; building a sense of community pride and creating a sense of place.

Our approach will be based around the “life course” concept so as to appreciate the significant events that happen to a person over the course of their life, and how key influences such as their personal behaviour (e.g. exercise level), the environment (e.g. access to playing fields), and family (e.g. parenting skills) can all interplay to affect the health decisions people make and ultimately their readiness to change. We will try to ensure that preventive and supportive action is taken early at each stage and transition point in the course of a person’s life which will hopefully determine the success of the project.

We will use the life-course approach across multiple domains (individual, family, street, community and environment) to better understand peoples’ motivations and attitudes. Using this approach, they hope to demonstrate what they have learned at each stage of the life cycle and enable the methodology for the pilot to be replicable in other areas. Further methodological approaches encapsulating the underlying principles to this work include Theory U (Otto Scharmer, MIT) and Liberating Structures (Henri Lipmanowicz, Keith McCandless).

Our evaluation proposed methods include Sensemaker with Paul Ader from Think Clarity. This method will gather the experiences of as broad a sample of the general population as possible to establish need, experiences of the staff/facilitators as they engage in training / work with communities and with those residents involved in projects on the ground. These are to be mapped over time so as to show change in focus, approach, attitude and achievement both individually and collectively (qualitatively and quantitatively) over the life of the project and beyond.

Who is the target audience?

The whole of the community - we are trying to involve everyone and give them a voice.

The key audiences are:

- Young people - focussing on under 5's, those in the transition period between primary and secondary school and teenagers, those with low aspirations
- Families - especially those that experience high levels of deprivation through low income,
- poor housing etc, and within this, young parents
- Older people (both those living independently and those supported)
- People with long-term conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, COPD, obesity etc.
- People who feel isolated and socially excluded
- Those who have never worked or remain long-term unemployed

Progress in the Pilot (January-June 2019)

What has been happening in the Withernsea Local Delivery Pilot?

The second wave of recruitment to the Active Withernsea operational team has been completed with two Community Support Assistants and a Project Assistant joining the Pilot Manager, Community Engagement Officer, Community Development Officer and Research Assistant, most of whom are residents of Withernsea or from the surrounding area. There was a deliberate approach to attract local people to these roles rather than parachute others in, to benefit from their local knowledge, awareness and create local employment & development opportunities.

The team have continued to build connections with local groups & organisations that are already happening in Withernsea to build trust, establish relationships, demonstrate how 'Active Withernsea' is different. This helps to bring them along on the Pilot journey and foster a strong partnership within the groups by using their knowledge and listening to their voices. To support this, a Facebook page has been introduced to connect people to the Active Withernsea journey and encourage interaction.

A public vote was held to name the pilot and provide an identity and despite some initial reservations on the name 'Active Withernsea', when given a choice, the majority voted to keep the 'Active Withernsea' name. However, by providing an open voting opportunity, it did demonstrate that the team is listening to people's views.

New volunteers have been recruited to support the team working alongside the community to connect with local people, assist with the data gathering and to support events.

Engagement with the community remains a key focus and the team set up regular 'safe to talk' drop in sessions, allowing anyone to come along, have a voice and share their story. A quiz night was held at the local pub with questions based on Withernsea and a specially designed beer mat was used to capture people's views on what they like about living in Withernsea. Free 'playing on the green' sessions have been held in open spaces around housing areas to entice families out of their homes and start conversations with the approach that "you're never too old to come out and play so come join us on the green where we can all be seen". Plus, the team have attended specific local events to engage directly with children & young people including a Play day at the Children's Centre and the High School Careers Day.

A community Let's Connect Showcase event took place over the May Day Bank Holiday weekend. This included a beach clean on the Saturday and then the main partnership event on Sunday involving local clubs, organisations and agencies at various venues across the town. The purpose of the event was to celebrate the town, what is strong and highlight how people can get involved. It provided an opportunity for residents to have a go at many of the activities currently available in the town as well as to connect with them about Active Withernsea, generate a buzz and hear their thoughts on what they may like to see for the future in Withernsea.

Throughout all the engagement opportunities, the team are listening and compiling the views & ideas from the community about the place they live. This insight and evidence will be key to identifying the priorities for what happens next.

The team are continuing to engage contacts/partnerships established through the Community Forum and engage with other key partners to maintain momentum and ensure a collaborative approach.

Recent thoughts and learning

Key themes emerging so far:

- The strength of leadership from Interim Director of Public Health provides strong strategic influence & commitment with & from partners.
- An innovative recruitment approach has led to the appointment of an enthusiastic & dynamic operational team with local knowledge and lived experience.
- Local groups /organisations already have traction and there is a desire & willingness to co-produce solutions and work collaboratively.
- Rich and valuable insight is being captured from the community; issues highlighted include:
 - Safer places to cycle
 - Better mental health support
 - A safe place for young people to play (Playpark/Skate park)
 - Crime (police presence, perceived crime levels)
 - Poor access to health services (GP surgery)

- Transport (too expensive & not much available for getting around Withernsea)
- Cheaper/ more flexible leisure centre membership
- Specific groups support (e.g. medical conditions, children with autism)
- More evening activities/entertainment for people of all ages and abilities

What's coming up

- Establishing a 'shop front' presence for the project on the High Street to provide the opportunity for local people to 'drop in'
- Completion of the voluntary community sector mapping and gap analysis
- Supporting the Summer events programme in the town to connect with local residents and continue the conversations
- Board strategic review
- Development of an Investment plan to address community issues & provide solutions
- Rollout of the Sensemaker work
- Creating our own branded Active Withernsea webpage

Further links to find out more information:

<https://www.activehumber.co.uk/active-withernsea>

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