

Ashfield Cost of Living

Transformation Programme: Community

Area: Mid-Nottinghamshire

Project Lead: Mark Yates

2022 - 2023

AT A GLANCE: LESSONS LEARNT

- There is strength in working together to achieve a collective aim.
- Agreeing shared principles and impartial branding ensures all partners feel valued and empowered.
- You can create something meaningful without funding.

“When we work together, we can make a huge difference to the people of Ashfield.”



PROJECT AIM

To support the residents of Ashfield during the cost-of-living crisis. We agreed to do this by creating a ‘brochure’ telling residents what services were available to support them, which we cascaded across the district.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Ashfield Local Design Team (LDT) focused a 50 day cycle on considering how we could work together across the system to support the residents of Ashfield through the cost-of-living crisis.

The project had no funding to draw on, so a key challenge was what could be achieved with existing resources.

The LDT’s took place fortnightly and were attended by colleagues from the NHS, County Council, District Council, AGE UK and Ashfield Voluntary Action, Tackling Loneliness and other cross sectors organisations.

The first meeting focused on getting to know each other, removing barriers and agreeing principles for working together. Everyone agreed that speaking to the people of Ashfield was key!

By talking to people in the community we identified that whilst there were services available, people didn't know about them. Existing methods of communication were not working!

We asked students at Nottingham Trent University (NTU) to identify how people wanted to receive information. They did this through desk based research and by going out into the community to speak to Ashfield residents.

We collated a list of the services available which Ashfield District Council and Ashfield Voluntary Sector turned into a brochure. This was circulated to residents electronically (via text message) and in paper form.

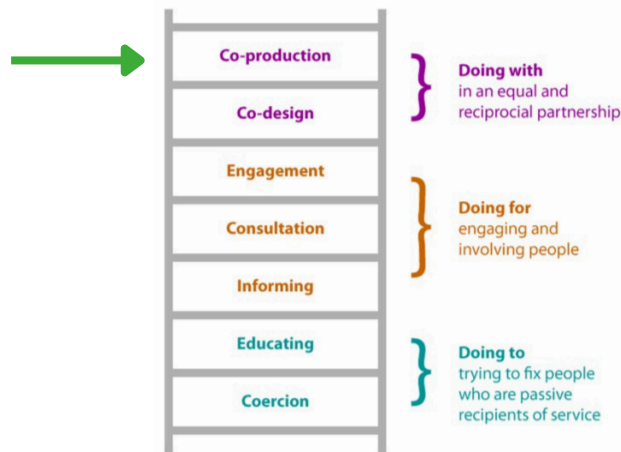


OUTCOME OF THE PROJECT

A key outcome was identifying residents' preferred methods for receiving information, and using these to promote the services available to support them with the cost of living.

Using the feedback collected by the NTU students we are also creating a Heatwave app. This will be an online directory of services that staff and residents can access to identify what services are available to meet their needs.

LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION



The Think Local Act Personal version of Arnstein SR. A ladder of citizen participation. Journal of the American Institute of planners. 1969 Jul 1;35(4):216-24

PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES

- Fortnightly LDT meetings
- Community conversations with residents



“Evaluate each project cycle, identify learning points and implement them”.



Mark Yates

LESSONS LEARNT

- Invite colleagues from all relevant partner organisations.
- Have a focused 50 day cycle on one subject.
- Capacity constraints might stop some colleagues from participating, even if they want to.
- Principles - agreeing them at the start of a project makes partners feel valued and empowered to have ownership of the group.
- Language - be consistent and if acronyms are needed, explain what they mean.
- Branding - organisational logos were identified as a barrier to partner involvement. We asked local school children to design an impartial logo based on the concept of friendship.
- Chairing - whilst the person Chairing the meeting doesn't need to stay the same, the Chair needs to have the confidence to empower colleagues to take actions.
- Feedback - to all relevant stakeholders and residents. This makes people feel valued, respected and demonstrates where change has happened.
- Share resources and knowledge.
- Share learning.
- Lack of funding is not a barrier to achieving something meaningful.

