

Appendix E – Partner reflections on shifting to asset-based approaches and co-production

Title	Developed with	Focus on	Area
Building Capacity, Not Dependency	Bassetlaw Community and Voluntary Service (BCVS)	Helping residents establish community groups, strengthen social connections and address issues that matter to them.	Manton in Bassetlaw
Building Strong Foundations	Adult Social Care	Building a strong platform for better conversations between senior leaders, elected members, staff and the public through a co-production group made up of people with lived experience.	Countywide
Cotgrave Young People's Subgroup	Rushcliffe Borough Council	A co-design approach to addressing gaps in opportunities and support for young people.	Cotgrave in Rushcliffe
Lived experience at the heart of service development	Broxtowe Action Network on Dementia (BAND) and Community Friendly Notts	A sustainable partnership embedding coproduction into practice to deliver improvements for people living with dementia and their carers.	Broxtowe
Putting Power in Communities	Ashfield Voluntary Action (AVA) & Public Health and Communities Team	Developing sustainable local resident's action groups, giving residents the skills, confidence, opportunity and authority to identify issues, influence decisions and take collective action.	Coxmoor and Greenwood in Ashfield
Resident voice informing local community change	Active Notts, Newark and Sherwood District Council and YourCVS	Partnership working enabling residents to identify barriers to physical activity and access to services, informing environmental improvements and service planning.	Hawtonville in Newark & Sherwood
The 'Feeling Great Passport' co-designed with children of Warsop parish	The Small Steps to Feeling Great in Warsop Parish Partnership	A co-designed whole school approach to health and wellbeing for local primary schools	Warsop Parish in Mansfield
Young people's voice through relational prevention	Positively Empowered Kids CIC	Building trust, identifying needs early and creating safe spaces where young people can belong and thrive, through detached outreach, trusted relationships and youth-led activities.	Arnold in Gedling

Building Capacity, Not Dependency

What happened?

Through the Investing in Communities programme, Bassetlaw CVS focused on Manton, to help residents establish community groups, strengthen social connections and address issues that matter to them. Three years of funding provided the dedicated time, flexibility and resource needed to build trusted relationships with residents who had become disillusioned by short-term projects. BCVS combined support for new community-led initiatives with work alongside existing services, ensuring they were visible, accessible and responsive to local needs.

What was the approach?

Using co-production principles and the Building Blocks of Health model, partners engaged residents through community conversations, regular local events and door-knocking. By listening to what residents felt was “pants and tops” about Manton, BCVS built trust and empowered local people to shape solutions. This approach led to stronger partnership working, bringing together organisations including Bassetlaw Food Bank, Manton Family Hub, National Trust Clumber Park, Active Notts, Aurora, FOYPIB and others to co-design a coordinated programme of family activities. The partnership reduced duplication, improved access and addressed barriers such as transport, food insecurity and awareness of services.

What was the outcome?

As trust developed, momentum followed. The number of community groups in Manton more than doubled, with residents progressing from social isolation to active participation, volunteering and even leading their own groups. Local people played a central role in designing activities for families, helping create inclusive opportunities that connected residents with services they may not otherwise access. Key outcomes included:

- Improved access to free, local and inclusive activities.
- Stronger community connections and partnership working.
- Increased participation in physical activity and outdoor activities.
- Reduced duplication through coordinated delivery.
- Greater awareness and uptake of local services.

The programme also delivered significant personal impact, with residents gaining confidence, skills and connections, including a Manton resident receiving the Young Volunteer of the Year 2026 award [The Young Volunteer of the Year 2026](#).

What next?

The relationships and trust built through Investing in Communities continue to support resident engagement and voice-gathering, influencing wider initiatives including Worksop Together, Pride in Place and Move More Bassetlaw. Learning from the programme has demonstrated the value of investing in locally trusted organisations that understand community needs and can respond flexibly to inequalities. Some examples of these are available here <https://www.youtube.com/@bcvs/videos> and <https://www.facebook.com/reel/2149136522565832>

BCVS's new strategy, **#GrowingTogether (2025–2030)**, provides a framework to build on this work. The key lesson is that successful co-production requires long-term commitment, genuine partnership and sustained presence in communities. As residents repeatedly told us, trust is built through **deeds, not words**. Lasting change happens when people remain at the centre of decision-making and are supported to develop sustainable, community-led solutions.

Building strong foundations

What happened?

Our Voice Strategic Co-production Group is made up of people with lived experience of adult social care, including family carers. They meet regularly with senior leaders to make sure people's voices are central to what adult social care does. The group created the [Our Voice Co-production Strategy](#) and its action plan. They also play an important role in shaping the department's Adult Social Care Plan. The group is not there to speak for everyone. Instead, it helps make sure the plan is shaped through the [Big Conversation](#), so senior leaders can hear directly from local people about what matters most.

What was the approach?

The work was co-produced from the start. An independent organisation supported the work, and the group helped to recruit them. The group shaped the design of seven district listening events and wrote questions for two surveys: one for carers and one for people who draw on care and support. They also thought carefully about whose voices were not being heard and how to reach them. This included helping to create an accessible one-page guide so support groups could run their own conversations. Group members also went out to speak to people directly in day services and residential services. Everything people said was written up by the independent organisation in the [Big Conversation report](#). The group then used this to write the draft priorities for the new local plan. These were sense checked with a wider group of people with lived experience at the department's Making It Real forum before taking the local plan for approval.

So what changed?

This work has built a strong platform for better conversations between senior leaders, elected members, staff and the public. It has helped people understand what co-production should look like and why working together matters from the top to the bottom. Conversations have led to work in different areas, including a named social care worker pilot, work on Direct Payments, people with lived experience forming part of the Prevent Group and a D/deaf celebration event, with more to come.

Next stage

The next stage is to make the new local plan something people can see and feel. This means keeping strong strategic oversight in place but building more relationships through a refreshed forum and over time, more local Our Voice co-production groups across Nottinghamshire.

What we have learnt so far

- Start with small, practical pieces of work before asking people to shape big strategic plans that take a long time to create.
- Be honest when things are confusing and work together to make them clearer for everyone.
- Accept that co-production can feel messy, because people are working through things together.
- Use plain English and accessible methods, so everyone can take part in a way that works for them.
- Finally make time to celebrate what has gone well as it is too easy to focus just on what still needs to be improved.

Cotgrave Young People's Subgroup

What?

The Cotgrave Young People's Subgroup was established through the Integrated Neighbourhood Working (INW) programme to address gaps in opportunities and support for local young people. Recognising that young people's voices were missing from decision-making, the subgroup adopted a co-design approach to shape future priorities. Through a programme of free holiday activities, over 40 sessions engaged more than 150 young people and families, alongside over 80 surveys. Feedback was gathered through activities and interactive engagement sessions, ensuring young people's experiences and aspirations directly informed future plans.

So What?

The engagement highlighted key priorities for young people, including access to activities, education and skills development, and opportunities to socialise in safe, welcoming environments. A recurring theme was the need for a dedicated space where young people could spend time with friends, feel safe and develop a sense of belonging. The work also demonstrated the value of creating meaningful opportunities for young people to influence local decision-making and investment.

What Next?

The subgroup has secured Sport England Place Fund investment to increase youth worker capacity and extend provision. Plans are underway to develop a youth-led space, co-designed with young people, where they can access support, develop skills and shape activities. The initiative also responds to evidence linking higher levels of antisocial behaviour to periods when youth services are unavailable. Learning from Cotgrave is now helping to embed co-production in place-based approaches across Rushcliffe, supporting improved health and wellbeing outcomes for young people.

Lived experience at the heart of service development:

Broxtowe Action Network on Dementia

What happened - through the Community Care Transformation Programme, Nottingham West Primary Care Network identified dementia as a priority in Broxtowe and established a Local Design Team. Bringing together people with lived experience, carers, the County Council, voluntary & community organisations, Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, and Nottingham & Nottinghamshire ICB, the group adopted a co-production approach to identifying challenges and co-designing solutions. Over six 100-day improvement cycles, the group focused on improving access to support, strengthening links between services, and reaching people who were not currently engaging with existing provision.

So what - the approach delivered significant and lasting improvements for people living with dementia and their carers. Referral pathways were simplified, a network of Carers Champions was established, a local dementia directory was co-designed (now widely available through libraries across the area and on the [YourNottsDirectory](#)). New community- led initiatives were established, including a [Memory Café in Stapleford](#) and the [Forget Me Nots carers support group](#) in Beeston. Three, annual 'Listening Events' have been organised, bringing together service providers and service users to learn from each other and set priorities for BAND activities, and led to improvements to hospital mealtime procedures for patients with dementia and helped shape a more accessible [Blue Badge application process](#) for people experiencing cognitive decline.

What next - this success led to the creation of the **Broxtowe Action Network on Dementia (BAND)**, a sustainable partnership embedding coproduction into practice.

The development of the BAND highlighted the importance of meaningful engagement with communities, residents, carers and people with lived experience to identify the issues that matter most. By taking the time to listen and build relationships, partners were able to understand challenges that may not have shown in the data, including barriers to accessing support, gaps in community provision and practical issues affecting daily life. Involving residents as equals has increased participation and community ownership and empowered individuals to become advocates and leaders for change within their communities.

As BAND develops, maintaining strong links with communities is essential for meaningful and lasting improvements. The annual Dementia Listening Event will serve as a key platform for gathering insight from residents, carers and people with lived experience, ensuring that local voices continue to shape priorities, influence decision-making and guide the direction of dementia support.

Putting power in communities

What?

Residents were supported by Ashfield Voluntary Action (AVA) to set up local resident action groups – CRAG (Coxmoor Resident Action Group) and GRACE (Greenwood resident action and community engagement), as part of facilitated feedback based around what they wanted to change about their community, to focus on steps they would want to take to address an issue and improve their community.

What was the approach?

In Coxmoor AVA listened to residents' voices about how they felt in and about their community. Residents shared their views and were then asked 'What they felt they could do about it? What resident action they wanted to consider? The local community decided to set up a local resident's action group – CRAG (Coxmoor Resident Action Group) – shared at the Health and Wellbeing Board in March 2026.

So what?

- Group members were supported with governance and infrastructure by AVA to form the group.
- The resident action groups lead on organising several large-scale community events.
- The momentum attracted additional investment from local businesses to support resident action – a community pulling together.
- The residents developed skills in bids writing, financial processes, governance and community engagement.
- Sustainable residents action groups, self-supporting community voice, community decision making.

What next?

- The same approach has informed further work through AVA facilitating with residents on the Leamington Estate, forming the 'Friends of Leamington Group' (FLAG).
- FLAG being in community partnership meetings to inform and challenge.
- Greenwood Resident Action and Community Engagement (GRACE) start up events and litter picking.
- AVA is also involved in other initiatives in Leamington and across Ashfield.
- This work has seen the development of a Community Kitchen, Men's Mental Health Group and successful funding bids into the Resident Action Groups.
- Partners have taken on board the new thinking.

Learning/recommendations for others involved in co-production?

Community action - they are the "architects and builders in their own future" to leave sustainable skills within communities themselves. Empowering communities to become self-supporting involves the giving of power - community empowerment is the process of giving residents the skills, confidence, opportunities, and authority to identify local issues, influence decisions, and take collective action to improve their communities.

This work was the precursor to the successful and more intensive Reaching Communities National Lottery bid by AVA across 6 wards in Ashfield.

[CLEO - Community Led Enabled Outcomes - Ashfield Voluntary Action](#)
[Ashfield Voluntary Action](#)

Resident voice informing local community change

What happened?

Investing in Communities funding enabled YourCVS to establish the **Best Years Hubs**, providing people aged 65+ with peer support, social activities and opportunities to reduce isolation. Through partnership working with Active Notts, Newark and Sherwood District Council and other local organisations, residents helped identify barriers to physical activity and access to services through neighbourhood “walk and talk” sessions. Community feedback informed environmental improvements, service planning and a joint action plan, leading to initiatives including a **Boys Panel**, targeted youth work and a school uniform bank. The success of the programme attracted additional funding, including support for a new **Community Connector** role funded by Sport England.

Approach

- Place-based, neighbourhood-focused working
- Co-production with residents and communities
- Strong partnership and relationship-building across organisations
- Use of community insight and health data to drive action
- Whole-system collaboration involving CVS, Public Health, District Council, Active Notts and housing partners

Impact

- Increased engagement from older residents
- Reduced social isolation and improved wellbeing
- Stronger relationships between communities and services
- Improved cross-sector partnership working
- Better understanding of local barriers and needs
- Evidence-based action planning
- Additional funding secured through demonstrated impact
- More coordinated support to address health inequalities

What next?

The Hawtonville model is informing wider neighbourhood approaches by:

- Using health data to target support for priority groups
- Expanding work with children and young people
- Embedding a Community Connector role to coordinate activity
- Replicating place-based approaches in other communities and neighbourhoods.

Video: <https://youtu.be/EEc5mvx88ZI?si=zUPCG1vCPn3lo11x>

Report: <https://makingourmove.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/Active-Neighbourhood-scan-Hawtonville.pdf>

The 'Feeling Great Passport' co-designed with children of Warsop parish

In 2024 The 'Small Steps to Feeling Great in Warsop Parish' partnership (a collaboration of 8 partner organisations listed in the impact reports) co-designed a whole school approach to health and wellbeing for the local primary schools, linked to the Partnership's Logic Model towards 'Destination Feeling Great' and the new 'Health Hub'.

The partnership wanted the whole school approach to:

- Be centrally linked to the partnerships' 'Why Small Steps' approach
- Be developed via a co-design process involving primary school children as the designers
- Ensure co-design was centrally built into the ongoing use of the programme by children
- Ensure the programme was self-sustaining in schools

The programmes' aim was to involve children in learning how to 'make, and sustain, healthier choices' and in July 2024 Each Amazing Breath CIC and Vibrant Warsop CIC ran focus groups with Eastlands Primary school and Church Vale Primary school to explore this.

Key outcomes from the focus groups were:

- Children understand the 'Stages of Change' process and they came up with their own words to explain it. For example, they used the word 'Clueless' to describe the pre-contemplation stage.
- Children also appreciated why small steps were important, especially the first small steps and the importance of moving out of 'comfort zones'

The outcome was the development, over the autumn of 2024, of the 'Feeling Great Passport'. The passport was then piloted in Church Vale Primary in 2025 and an impact report produced. The programme is now self-sustaining in Church Vale Primary and Birklands Primary. It is also ready to be used by other schools across the county as a programme that centrally places each child at the heart of their own journey of deciding which 'Feeling Great Destinations' they want to choose and what small steps they can practically take to get there.

Key learning points to share with others about our co-design approach:

To us there are some key decisions to be made as you embark on a co-design process:

Decision 1: Are we going to explore with the children what is broken and how they think it can be 'fixed', or, are we going to explore the destination they would like to get to and how they think we could get there together?

We decided to use the latter approach as it is strength-based and focusses on positive outcomes that the participants can explore jointly achieving.

Decision 2: Are we trying to get some initial input from people so these can be taken into account when you re-design a system?, or, are we going to build co-design into the whole process ie. From initial focus group/ community discussion and then through the very fabric of how the programme delivers on an ongoing basis?

We choose the latter, as we wanted co-design to be inherently part of the Feeling Great Passport.

Impact reports available at: <https://www.vibrantwarsop.org/our-impact-reports/>

Young people's voice through relational prevention

What happened – A Relational Prevention Approach

Next Move's Relational Prevention Pathway™ is built on a simple principle: young people engage when they feel seen, heard and valued. Through detached outreach, trusted relationships and youth-led activities, we reach young people who are often disconnected from services, experiencing poor wellbeing or at risk of anti-social behaviour. By going to young people rather than waiting for them to seek support, we build trust, identify needs early and create safe spaces where they can belong and thrive.

So what? – Why it matters

Relationships are the intervention. By investing in connection first, we prevent issues from escalating and create pathways into participation, volunteering and leadership. Our place-based (PB), community-led model brings together schools, health, police and community organisations to wrap support around young people. The result is increased resilience, reduced isolation and stronger, safer and more connected communities.

What next? – Learning for the Future

Our learning is clear: relational prevention and place-based working should sit at the heart of early intervention. The Next Move Relational Prevention Pathway™ offers a scalable model that can reduce demand on statutory services while improving outcomes for children and young people. By investing in trusted relationships, community presence and youth-led solutions, we can create communities where every young person feels they belong, has someone they trust and has opportunities to thrive.

Next Move is more than a project; it is a Relational Prevention Pathway™ that demonstrates how place-based, relationship-centred practice can transform outcomes for young people and strengthen communities across Nottinghamshire. Prevention starts with connection—because connection saves lives and reduces demand on services.