



# ASSET BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## *Learning Resource Pack*

Developed through learning with and alongside our wonderful communities in East Sussex

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Section Two: Start Small

**Section Three: Build Relationships**

Section Four: Make Connections

Section Five: Support communities to take the lead; communities need allies.

Section Six: Equality and Social Justice

Section Seven: Lead by Stepping back

Section Eight: Demonstrating the value of ABCD

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# BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

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# What does it mean in practice?

**"ABCD BELIEVES THAT RELATIONSHIPS ARE THE CORE OF FLOURISHING COMMUNITIES. RELATIONSHIPS CREATE TRUST AND ACTIVATE GIFTS AND POWER."**

The ABCD Institute

The tools here are about finding ways to meet people, and to maximise opportunities to learn about each other and to share stories. Not everyone is comfortable just chatting; really listening is even harder.

The examples shared in this section illustrate approaches that were successful in encouraging people to relax and get talking, and in drawing out and hearing the things that matter.



# Tools

These tools can help dig a bit deeper and are about creating time and space to meet people and to build relationships and trust.

## Active Listening



## Door Knocking



## Creating Space



## Discovery Walk



## The Tree of Ideas



# Active Listening

Active listening is a skill which involves actively processing and seeking to understand the meaning and intent in someone's words. It requires being mindful, respectful and reflective when listening to another person.

## The 2 minute rant

### The task

- Explain that this task involves keeping confidences.
- Select a controversial question (we chose something which had frustrated us recently in our work environment).
- Get into pairs. One is the speaker and the other the listener.
- The speaker shares their frustration for 2 minutes while the listener listens without taking notes. They may ask open ended questions if necessary.
- After 2 minutes, the listener repeats back the views of the speaker and key themes drawn from the rant.
- Switch roles.

### Debrief

- Who was working harder in the exercise?
- How often do you listen that intently?
- How often are you listened to that intently?
- What was the body language of the responder?
- What does it look / feel like when someone is working hard to be responsive?
- Did the responder notice anything about the questioner?
- How did you feel about the exercise?



*This activity was introduced to the team by Sherry Clark and was adapted from a version shared by the National Centre for Principled Leadership and Research Ethics, University of Illinois*

## Door knocking

A powerful way to meet people and learn more about a neighbourhood is to knock on doors, but there are some key things to think about:

- This should only be done with other local residents and / or with the support of local community groups or community leaders.
- Tell people you'll be coming, why, and when to expect you - put flyers and posters up, and post on social media.
- Keep safe - work in pairs and tell others where you'll be.
- Think about what time of day will be best to find people in and able to chat.
- Think about why you want to talk to people, but also about what they might want to talk about.
- As a starting point, focus on listening. Ask powerful, open questions (as highlighted in section 1 Start Small) to find out what they care about, what they enjoy and what they might want to change.
- Always provide feedback and tell people how to get in touch.

*"It really was quite inspiring, great to meet more of my neighbours and also so many great ideas from residents who all seemed keen to get involved and use the space. I walked the dog later with one of the residents who said after we had been over on his side it felt like a load had been lifted in the flats, he said the flats felt different, maybe because they had been heard and involved in creating a space beneficial to the whole community."*

**Newhaven resident**

## Creating Space for casual conversations

Creating opportunities to have casual conversations often brings out the most amazing ideas. Find places that people might already meet or hang out, and host an activity for people to engage with.

### Ideas!

- Supporting local community events.
- Pop up stall in the park.
- Tea & cake at the community centre.
- Badge making at a community event.
- Craft activities at the school fair.



# Discovery Walks

Discovery Walks are opportunities to explore and learn about an area. You can go alone or link with other local residents, volunteers, project leaders or Councillors.

The experts of an area are those who live there, so it can be a fascinating way to learn about the assets which are present, but also the history and heritage of a place, including the personal memories and stories of local residents.





# Discovery Walk • *Example template*

Location:

Date:

Bumping spaces, social spaces to meet as a community (inside or out):	
Housing conditions, street conditions, other:	
Shops (Where, what kind, how many?):	
Transport routes, where were most people found?	
Networks specific to the neighbourhood (mums and tots, neighbourhood watch etc.):	
Communication channels in use (websites, newsletters, noticeboards):	
Clubs, societies, informal groups:	
Formal churches, schools, community centres:	

# Discovery Walk • *Example template*

<b>Physical assets, natural and built:</b>	
<b>Economic assets, business:</b>	
<b>Cultural assets, heritage, unique identity:</b>	
<b>Environmental assets, landscape:</b>	
<b>Engagement spaces that could be used by MIH - halls playing fields, walls for chalk exercise:</b>	
<b>Obvious areas of opportunity:</b>	
<b>Obvious areas of need:</b>	
<b>Action points for MIH/other:</b>	

# The Tree of Ideas

This is a fantastic tool you can take to events, the park or other public spaces where people naturally meet, in order to capture ideas, hopes and dreams which people are then invited to write or stick onto the tree.

**WHY DO YOU LOVE WILLINGDON TREES?**

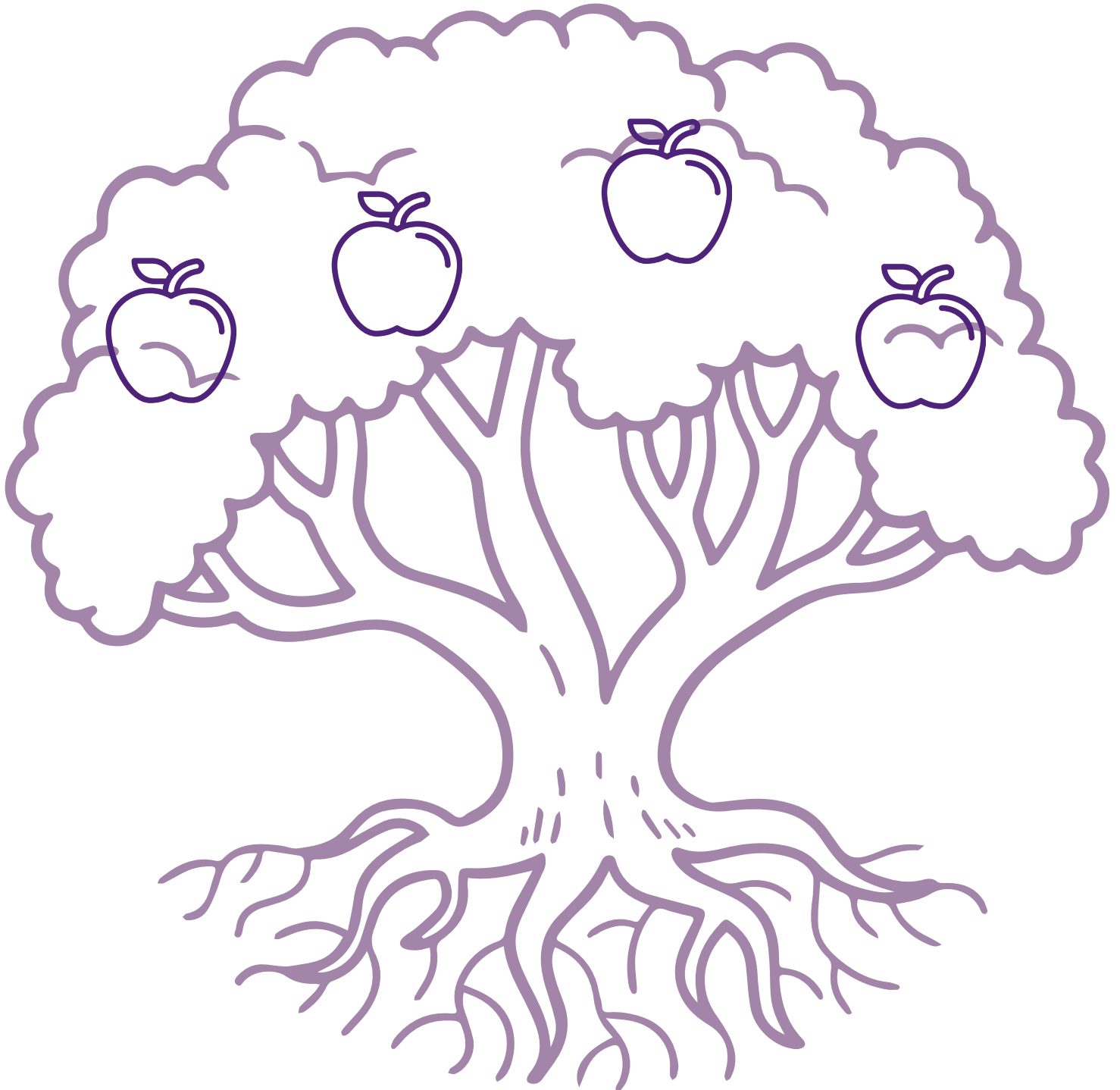
**WHAT IS WILLINGDON TREES' BEST KEPT SECRET?**

**WRITE IT DOWN ON THE LEAF POST IT NOTE AND ADD IT TO THE TREE**



## The Tree of Ideas

Use this tree to gather ideas for your project or area by writing ideas on the apples or post-its and sticking them on the tree.



# Creating Space

*for casual conversations*

Throughout Making it Happen, Community Development Workers and the residents they've worked with have created ingenious ways to **get people talking and sharing stories and ideas**. These are just some of the examples:

- Crafting activities
- Treasure hunts to find local treasures
- Pop up asset mapping
- Pop in for tea and cake
- Pebble painting
- Making stick men
- Creating seed pots



## Giant Duck

In Bexhill the team supported St Michael's Hospice by sponsoring a giant duck, which they towed around the town for people to share messages and drawings. The finished duck was displayed at the Big Sparks event in November 2022.



# Welly boots

## Boot Planters

This is an example of using an activity as a way **to start a conversation** and create opportunities to explore people's interests, passions and aspirations.

The Development Worker came up with this activity during lockdown and explained: "When planting the boots and placing them on the road and public side of the building - I hoped to be noticed doing the activity."

The boots were attached to posts opposite a bus stop. The Community Centre Managers **came out to chat** from a distance, which in turn encouraged people waiting at the bus stop **to join the conversation**. The CDW made some useful connections, learned more about people's feelings about the area and also heard about the community centres plans for lockdown. **Firm relationships were born** and have been maintained ever since.

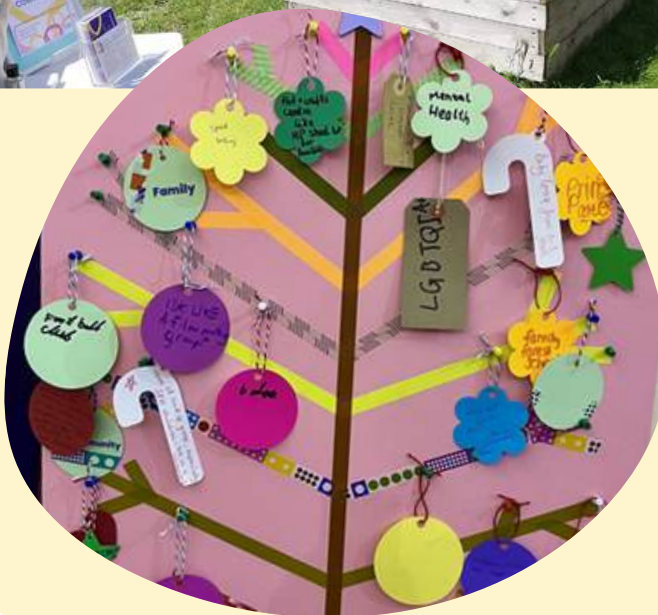
*Where or who are the hidden treasures in your neighbourhood?*



# Pop Ups

## The Pop Up Living Room and the Tree of Ideas

In Willingdon Trees, Community Development Workers created a space at the local family fun day where people could **sit, chat and share their ideas, hopes and dreams** for the area. They used a Tree of ideas to capture these from passers by. The Team also created the “Wishmas Tree” for a Christmas event.



# Discovery Walk

## - Example 1

Location: Pebsham	Date: 28/07/20
<b>Bumping spaces, social spaces to meet as a community (inside or out):</b>	<p>Coop                  Golden Palace parade of shops                  Community Centre                  Green spaces and playgrounds</p>
<b>Housing conditions, street conditions, other:</b>	<p>Mostly very good residential                  Some property sales and purchases, including some building work                  New housing estate built                  (More new developments planned)                  Some poorer quality social housing near the Health Centre                  Poor paving conditions near social housing                  Good housing conditions, mostly residential</p>
<b>Shops (Where, what kind, how many?)</b>	<p>Coop and Pharmacy                  Hairdresser                  Chinese Restaurant                  "Pebsham News"                  No others discovered on this walk</p>
<b>Transport routes, where were most people found?</b>	<p>Bus routes along Seabourne Road                  Few other cars and pedestrians between 11-12.30pm</p>
<b>Networks specific to the neighbourhood (mums and tots, neighbourhood watch etc.)</b>	<p>Neighbourhood Watch</p>
<b>Communication channels in use (websites, newsletters, noticeboards)</b>	<p>Combe Valley Noticeboards                  Pharmacy Window                  Supermarket noticeboard                  Health Centre window</p>
<b>Clubs, societies, informal groups</b>	<p>None seen                  Only ones in Pebsham Community Centre</p>
<b>Formal churches, schools, community centres</b>	<p>None seen                  Community Centre on Seabourne Road</p>



# Discovery Walk

## - Continued

<b>Physical assets, natural and built:</b>	Nice view of the sea Quite hilly which could be a problem for older people getting around Very near Combe Valley for exploring nature A lot of lovely nature trails and walks and not too far from the Discovery Centre
<b>Economic assets, business:</b>	Rural Business Centre Local businesses visible, such as builders Few retail shops, perhaps due to proximity to Ravenside Retail and Leisure Park
<b>Cultural assets, heritage, unique identity:</b>	Equestrian Centre
<b>Environmental assets, landscape:</b>	Wide, quiet roads Next to the rubbish tip, could affect soil quality and other pollutants Play Areas near the Community Centre for both older and younger children
<b>Engagement spaces that could be used by MIH - halls playing fields, walls for chalk exercise:</b>	Outside the Health Centre At the Community Centre Outside Coop, Playparks, Playing fields
<b>Obvious areas of opportunity:</b>	Activities near the Health Centre Activities near or in the Community Centre
<b>Obvious areas of need:</b>	Estate near the Health Centre?
<b>Action points for MIH/other:</b>	Engaging with the Community Centre once it reopens Continue collaboration with Groundwork regarding the Discovery Centre Engage with Pebsham residents on the BEAT group to find out what they want to see happen in their community

# Discovery Walk

## - Example 2

### Peacehaven

In Peacehaven, Community Development Workers wrote to local Councillors to explain that they would be working in the area and requested a meeting. They were invited to present to the Town Council which in turn led to a plan for Councillors to take them on a Discovery Walk of the area.

The walk provided a fantastic opportunity to:

- **Build relationships** with local Councillors.
- **Make connections** with other residents on the walk.
- Hear about the **interests and priorities** of local people.
- Visit the places people **cared about**, and those they wanted **to change**.
- Learn about the **history, culture and heritage** of the town.
- Hear ideas for the future and start to **make plans** and to think about who else the Development Workers should meet.

The walk led to local Councillors and residents organising a bulb planting event, litter picking and a 'spring clean' supported by the Development Workers, with more and more residents becoming involved.

