



What is Asset Based Community Development?

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Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) is a neighbourhood-based approach to community building that starts with what's strong and not what's wrong. Citizens are supported to consider what is best done by the community themselves, what is best done by the community with support and what does the community need outside help with?

ABCD recognises that everyone has assets and gifts. Everyone has something to contribute. It focuses on the assets and strengths of the individuals and community. It identifies and mobilises individual and community assets, skills, passions, and possibilities.

The ABCD approach asks communities to consider:

What is it that people/communities are best placed to do for themselves?

ABCD is founded on the principle that given the tools and the opportunity, small groups of citizens can change things that they believe need changing in their community better than anyone else. It recognises citizens as the experts.

What is best done by people/communities with support?

ABCD recognises that there are things best led by citizens but with support from outside agencies and organisations through collaborative partnerships.

What is it that people/communities need outside agencies to deliver?

ABCD isn't about replacing services or things best undertaken by institutions and agencies with specialist expertise in appropriate and individual circumstance.

What is it that outside agencies need to stop doing so that people/communities can be in the driving seat of change?

ABCD is truly rooted in the community doing things by themselves not having things done for or to them.

The Five Principles of ABCD are:

- Citizen driven
- Relationship oriented
- Asset-Based
- Placed-Based
- Inclusion focused

The model in Leeds consists of:

- **Community Builders** - paid workers hosted by Neighbourhood Organisations
- **Community Connectors** - individuals living locally who may organise and support local activities
- **'Small Sparks' grants** - funds for groups and individuals to support local activity

The Community Builders will work with the local community and the Community Connectors to develop an asset map.

Asset mapping is a useful process that actively engages with local people to ensure people are aware of the work, and to develop an understanding of the community assets. These can be places (e.g. parks, cafes), activities (e.g. networks, community groups), or the skills people have themselves.