The Company of Community Organisers

Look at what role community organisers play in inspiring social action at a neighbourhood level

To explore how Community Organisers and Big Local Areas can work together to the benefit of residents

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What is Community Organising?

Community Organising is the work of building relationships in communities to activate people and create social and political change through collective action. It enables communities to empower themselves and harnesses the power of individuals to work together in their shared self-interest.

Community Organisers Ltd
The Company of Community Organisers

- National membership body for Community Organisers
- Provide training for individuals, community organisations and public bodies in the theory and practice of community organising
- Developing local and regional networks to build community capacity across neighbourhoods
- National network to enable citizens to effect change – putting local people in the lead
- Using digital technologies to support Digital Community Organising
inspiring social action in neighbourhoods all across England

Community Organisers Ltd is a Company Limited by Guarantee in England and Wales. Company No. 08180454
Perspective from which we see the world

Communities are full of potential. Special places with special people.

The skills and talents of people and their potential exists – but may lay dormant.

The assets and resources need to be unlocked so that the ‘invisible’ becomes ‘visible’.

Communities are made of people suffering multiple disadvantages.

There are inherent problems with crime, disorder, unemployment and welfare claimants.

People are hard to reach and are not using the services that they should be.
What is listening?

“Listening, in short, is the capacity to discern the underlying habitual character and attitudes of people with whom we communicate, including ourselves, in such a way that, at its best, brings about a sense of shared experience and mutual understanding.”

G. Brodie & N. Crick 2014
Listening – the starting point for engagement

Growing Spaces
Sneinton in Nottingham
So the starting point matters...

... but then what?
It’s the beginning of the journey…
…but what has been found out so far?

Ipsos Mori and NEF Consulting, Evaluation Report - 2014

- 51% of community organiser areas agree that local people pull together to improve the neighbourhood.
- 39% of comparable non-community organiser areas agree that local people pull together to improve the neighbourhood.
- 56% of community organiser areas agree that they have a strong sense of belonging to their neighbourhood.
- 46% of comparable non-community organiser areas agree that they have a strong sense of belonging to their neighbourhood.
Dyke House, Hartlepool – Case Study

- Community Organising broke down some of the perceptions of programme’s from the ‘outside’ and built trust between residents and other stakeholders

- It built a new power dynamic in the community and disrupted the traditional structures that can had tended to centralise power

- The team work from a can-do perspective starting with a position of ‘YES’
Bringing the two approaches together...

1. What has struck you about the work of community organisers?

2. Where could Community Organisers add value to Big Local Areas to...
   ... Strengthen what is already happening?
   ... Overcome some of the challenges that are being faced?

3. If Community Organisers are working within Big Local areas what advice would you give them?