

**Barrow – People in the Lead**  
**National Lottery Community Fund Grant Ref 0010286633**  
**Progress Update – Year 3 February 2020**

The People in The Lead project is now in its final funded year. It is a 3-year project funded through the National Lottery, Cumbria County Council and Barrow Borough Council, both of which contribute £5,000 per annum.

The project was identified by partners to support small and emerging groups in the Barrow area primarily to put together funding bids, but also to offer support with governance, project development and training.

This project has worked with and supported a wide range of groups so far, and the project really gained momentum in year 2. Working alongside partners, particularly closely with local members and council staff has enabled more and more individuals and groups to access support and benefit. The support available to individuals/groups/organisations has proven to be invaluable. The support is varied. Some groups have never put together funding applications before, or run a project, others require support to develop their projects further but require help and guidance to do so. This project has provided them with the level of support tailored to their needs so that they have the confidence to develop projects in the future and become more sustainable

The feedback to date has been great and highlights the benefit the project has made. From positive feedback from partner organisations, case studies on community project and individuals supported and the high demand of support needed by groups, the project it is now looking for funding to continue the project for a further three years and is seeking a contribution of £5,000 per annum from Cumbria County Council. This will be for a Local Engagement Officer for a minimum of 4 days per week to continue to support key individuals, community activities and groups/organisations to develop their projects. This project offers 1:1 support and we feel that the support we have given these groups/people has had a huge impact on the area.

Activities undertaken during year 3:

Project development - Continuing to work with small groups to develop projects, supporting the development of new groups in the town to address issues, such as supporting the development of a community gym, supporting a new community hub to obtain start-up funds, assisting a group to register as a charity and to apply for funds to develop a health App. Providing assistance to groups with developing their ideas, promoting projects and working closely with them to identify funding sources and to apply, such as supporting a nurse to secure funds to build an extension.

Training Events:

A number of training events have been held over the year: First Steps to Fundraising 12 attendees, Choosing the Right Structure 10 attendees, Setting up a Group 8 attendees, Funding Fair – 60+ local groups and organisations.

Steering group meetings are held twice a year and membership has increased, with additional local funders attending and a wider network which has helped build and develop the project further. The feedback on People in the Lead at the last meeting was extremely positive and funders have reported that the project has made a positive impact on the level of support to the them

The project has contributed to the key goals 'sustainable spaces and places' – an example of this is the support given to a horticultural group who urgently needed funding to enable them to rebuild their club house that was destroyed in fire, 'early action' a men's group addressing the health and well-being of men, this group was supported in year 1, 'stronger relationships' have continued to be built and strengthened through events such as the funding fair and training events where people have got to know about the service and support available and also a chance to learn more about other groups delivery in the area which strengthens relationships and raises confidence and self-esteem.

Barrow Networking Event – encouraging groups to attend to share good practice and to develop joined up working – there are 40+ local groups/organisations on the mailing list. People have been involved in developing and delivering activities, which is demonstrated through attending and feeding into the steering group. Evaluation of services, feedback forms etc. all provide people with an opportunity to become involved in the shaping of and the delivery of activities.

Individuals and groups in the community know the needs of their community better than anyone else. This project has continued to build on people's strengths following on from years 1 and 2. This project is not just about a one-off offer of help. It has achieved this by supporting groups to develop their ideas and strengthen community engagement, by providing funding advice, support with governance, helping to put together funding bids successfully and to develop their projects.

The project is working with the people it had planned to. During year 2 it has further identified potential community activists and has supported them with training, governance etc. to meet their full potential and this is continuing to do so in year 3.

The project has engaged with diverse groups of people. It has achieved this through working alongside other organisations; engaging with young people, individuals with mental health issues, sports clubs with a particular focus on tackling health and wellbeing, not just physical benefits but mental benefits also, Barrow Multi-Cultural Forum and through partnership work.

Stronger links have been built up over the last year and recently through 'People in the Lead' it was arranged for some local funders to attend site visits; meeting community projects to gain a 'real sense' of the communities that they are funding. The feedback from the local funders was positive as they found the site visits extremely beneficial, as did the groups they visited who, on the back of the site visits have submitted funding bids. The local funders have asked if future site visits can be arranged.

The networking sessions we have facilitated and mini-training sessions have proved a real success in enabling groups to work more closely together, focus on their main deliverables and benefit from training sessions in a variety of topics. The joint start-up and community events we have hosted have enabled those with 'new ideas' to learn more about what others deliver, or plan to deliver, and therefore work together to reduce duplication and deliver a wider variety of services to those in need in Barrow.

The relationship with the County and District Councils have been strengthened during years 2 and 3, working closely with council officers and local members who have sign-posted many groups and have worked on joint projects together such as the tennis hub, and an application for funding for an

event in the town centre 'Be Well Fest'. Additionally, the project continues to work alongside other organisations to develop projects and to secure funding, for example, Furness Multi Cultural Forum for youth work and anti-hate crime projects and Love Barrow Families.

Social media is used to advertise events and to promote the service as well as posters and monthly E-bulletins.

This project is proud of the support it has offered to small groups and individuals, to see groups develop their confidence and to raise self-esteem so that they feel able to make a positive difference in their community. This has been demonstrated by new groups supported in years 1 and 2 which have grown and are developing their projects further with support of 'People in the Lead'.

Now in year 3 the demand of individuals and groups to increase self-esteem, confidence, skills and knowledge to develop their ideas and to reach their vision is high. The project continues to offer guidance to groups supported when needed.