

YMCA LINCOLNSHIRE

Final Impact Report

2023 -2025

Community
Development in
Boston Borough,
East Lindsey &
South Holland,
Lincolnshire

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Project Overview

The aim of this project was to develop pride in place, resilience and sustainability within the rural communities of South and East Lincolnshire. Using our hands-on approach and community development expertise, we have supported groups, community buildings and parish councils to grow their skills, confidence and motivation. By providing practical support on governance, funding, community engagement, marketing and promotion, and volunteer recruitment we have been able to provide community leaders with skills and resources to continue to grow and thrive. We have also focused on developing community spaces to become safe, modern, well-equipped and accessible for all - helping provide communities with the quality of spaces that they deserve. This development has translated into a fantastic increase in participation and engagement meaning that more people in these districts have benefitted from community activities, events or volunteering.

Our key learning from the project is that there is a desire to be more connected with others who are leading developments in their communities. This is both online and face to face, and would include opportunities to share ideas and learning. We also see this as an opportunity for communities to work locally in a more strategic way to improve services, work more efficiently and share resources.



Our UKSPF funding has allowed us to capture the impact of our community development work through a series of engaging films. The film linked below highlights all of the important work our team has done across all three districts.

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served by One Team

South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

These projects have all been made possible by the UKSPF

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Headline Outcomes

Boston Borough

	Footfall	Engagement	Volunteering
Target	500	1500	100
Actual	1083	2004	110

East Lindsey

	Footfall	Engagement	Volunteering
Target	2500	5000	500
Actual	4040	5207	494

South Holland

	Footfall	Engagement	Volunteering
Target	1000	2000	200
Actual	1126	2227	195

Case Study

Covenham Village Volunteers



Background

Covenham Village Volunteers (CVV) are a group of volunteers that formed following the closure of their local pub. The aim of the group was to organise social events for the village, utilising the only community space in Covenham, the Parish Rooms. It soon became evident that the rooms had not been well maintained; they were cold, damp and uninviting. The group set to fundraising, applying for grants and taking on the lease of the building to improve the facility.



Support

YMCA Lincolnshire have supported CVV with ideas, signposting, training events, and motivation to help them succeed. This has directly led to a huge increase in engagement. In 2023, the Parish Rooms had 694 people through their doors taking part in events. This has risen to an incredible 2994 during 2024.

YMCA Lincolnshire also nominated Chair, Nicky, and young volunteer, Baize, for an East Lindsey Community Ambassador Award in recognition of all of their hard-work and community spirit, and they both received Highly Commended awards. Nicky said: “being nominated gave me a great sense of pride that what I have achieved has been recognised and it was gratifying that others had noticed”. Baize (aged 12) said: “I feel extremely lucky to be nominated; it made me feel noticed, included and acknowledged”.



Pipeline Projects

CVV have been extremely busy replacing outdated and worn furniture, redecorating the hall, and installing new heating systems to make the venue more appealing. However, they soon realised that they were excluding members of their community due to accessibility issues. Thanks to a second grant from the UKSPF GRASSroots Fund, the next stage of making the building accessible for all is underway. Once this is completed, the next phase is to improve the toilet facilities.



User Feedback

CVV have said our support in finding and accessing further places to go for help has been invaluable. The facilitated networking events with other community groups were extremely helpful to them for the opportunity of being able to bounce ideas off other groups. The support they received from us in designing the lease really helped them and also our suggestions of alternative ways to do things has allowed them to save time and money, leading to a greater success. “We have achieved much more than we could have without the support of the YMCA” - Nicky, CVV.



Grassroots Celebration Events

YMCA Lincolnshire and Lincolnshire Community Foundation invited attendees from the three districts to a “GRASSroots Celebration” event. The events brought together over 130 successful recipients of GRASSroots funding, from 32 organisations, to celebrate and share the fantastic developments they have made to their communities.

The event gave community leaders the opportunity to network with like-minded individuals and share best practice and future plans. The most common feedback we received is that participants appreciated the opportunity to meet new people and discuss projects in a supportive environment; making it clear that more events like this would be a real benefit to organisations and the communities they serve; with 95% telling us they would like to attend more events like the GRASSroots Celebration events.



Community spirit and positivity was the theme of the event with many feeding back on the value of making connections with others.



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Our GRASSroots Celebrations
received a 4.8 star rating overall
from attendees!

Case Study

St. Gilbert and St. Hughes Gosberton Clough



Background

St. Gilbert and St. Hughes got in touch with YMCA Lincolnshire after a recommendation from neighbours at the Marjorum Hall in Gosberton Risegate. The Church of St. Gilbert and St. Hugh was designed by William Bucknall and Sir John Ninian Comper and built in 1902-03. It is unique in that it is the last existing Comper Church in England and was heavily influenced by the 'Arts and Crafts' movement. The Church Hall is available for community activities and events but has been under-used over the past few years. Both the church and the hall need heating systems updating and improvements to make the buildings safe, warm and accessible.



Support

The church and the hall have new committee members who are keen to see the hall used more often by the local community and the church in a position to show its unique heritage to visitors and the congregation. Although great steps have been made to organise fundraising events, they have had very little external support or experience of applying for funding. YMCA Lincolnshire have been able to help the committee to start their development journey by:

- facilitating a funding webinar
- helping to identify priorities for development
- sourcing local funding opportunities
- supporting with grant application
- supporting with sourcing donated decorating materials
- connecting with a council heritage officer for advice and support



Pipeline Projects

There are opportunities to make the church more welcoming to visitors and share the special heritage stories wider. The hall has potential to increase the number of activities and events, engaging more of the surrounding communities. Next steps include:

- volunteer day to decorate the hall
- source funding to improve efficiency and heating in the hall
- update furniture in the hall
- make plans to increase heritage visitors



User Feedback

“Sally has been so helpful and informative in helping us to apply for a grant towards fire doors for our Church Hall, and we hope that we will be successful. Sally has also helped in the securing of some Crowne paint and brushes from Wickes, which we will use to decorate our hall. Without the help of YMCA Lincolnshire we wouldn't have known where to start and we are very grateful for their guidance” - Belinda, St. Gilbert and St. Hughes



Community Webinars

Throughout the year we have hosted several rounds of webinars based around funding applications and marketing tactics. The funding website was hosted by Stephen Wright from Grant Funding Skills and the marketing webinar was hosted by YMCA Lincolnshire's marketing team, Meg & Gemma. Both webinars received great feedback from participants.

“How To Write Compelling Funding Applications” - Funding Webinar

29
individuals
attended



100%
of attendees
said they would be likely or very likely to
apply for funding in the next 6 months



“The delivery focused on the questions asked on grant application forms so was very relevant. The delivery was well paced and gave opportunities for participants to ask questions.”

“Be The Talk of Your Town” - Marketing Webinar



Our marketing webinar received an overall 4.94 star rating from our participants.

“This is the second webinar I have attended and both have provided information and content completely new to me - I have found them really helpful - and Megan was so motivated it spills off into the delivery and is a real inspiration to go out and just do it!”

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Case Study

Fleet Parish Council



Background

Fleet Parish Council is a rural parish that is geographically spread out with its main hub of the parish being Fleet Hargate. There is not a main community building in Fleet, therefore the focus has been placed on outdoor community spaces, specifically making improvements on their playing field. There has been an investment in outdoor gym equipment and goal posts which has encouraged residents to meet and use the playing field, including walking football groups. However, the parish has ambitions for further developments to the playing field.



Support

YMCA Lincolnshire's Community Development Officer, Sally, worked with parish councillors to write and submit a bid to the UKSPF GRASSroots Fund. One of the councillors attended our funding skills webinar and following this, the bid was successful and the council were able to build accessible paths and parking spaces to the playing field. An additional space has also been identified for development as a community garden. YMCA Lincolnshire were able to signpost the parish to the One Stop Partnership and the parish were again successful in their application. After using the funds to develop the garden, partnerships have been made with the local nursery to allow children to develop, learn and enjoy the space.



Pipeline Projects

The parish council have plans to further develop the playing field including developing hard standing for events and the renovation of the changing rooms/pavilion. They are also looking at ways to improve communication throughout the whole parish and recruiting new parish councillors.



User Feedback

“Sally, YMCA Lincolnshire's Community Development Manager, has been particularly supportive. Her visits to our Fleet Community Playing Field were incredibly helpful. She took the time to go through our funding applications, offering detailed and constructive feedback that has strengthened our submissions. Her expertise has been crucial in ensuring our applications are compelling and well-structured” - Fleet Parish Council.



Support with Community Engagement

We have worked with:

50
community
projects



63
community
buildings



YMCA Lincolnshire has supported community projects to engage with and collect insight from their beneficiaries; local people and stakeholders, using a number of means. Communities have been able to use the insight collected to support funding applications and to plan future pipeline projects.

We have provided mechanisms to collect feedback and insight including:

- the facilitation of online and paper-based surveys,
- conducting face-to-face surveys on location,
- compiling summary reports.

We have provided support with promotional activities including:

- the creation of leaflets, posters and social media assets,
- providing support and advice on social media usage and other promotional tactics.

Our community engagement activity identified the lack of youth provisions across the three districts. Following the discovery of this information, our Community Development Team partnered with our Youth Team and created

 **3** new
youth clubs

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Case Study

Fishtoft400



Background

We met Liz Armstrong at the UKSPF's briefing where she shared information about the group she had founded called Fishtoft400. The group had started with less than 10 members who were brought together with the intention of improving the local community. A large sea buoy was offered to Fishtoft Parish Council by Boston Borough Council on hearing that Fishtoft wanted to be included in the Boston and National Commemoration of the Pilgrim Fathers. Through the Parish Council, Liz secured a grant from the UKSPF Fund to purchase mosaics and other equipment to decorate the buoy. The project was open to all members of the Fishtoft Community and also included pupils from the local school (Fishtoft Academy). Through this project - the Fishtoft400 was formed. What started as a group of less than 10 members brought together to decorate the Fishtoft Buoy, has grown into a social community that meets weekly and that has over 50 members.



Support

Since our initial meeting with the founders of the group, YMCA Lincolnshire has provided a wide range of support to further develop the group. This has included:

- sourcing and applying for funding
- conducting community engagement surveys
- formulating a plan of action to assist the group with the next steps
- introductions to external agencies resulting in additional resources e.g. Co-Op Community Activity



Pipeline Projects

Community engagement activity identified a need for specialised physical activities within the group. The intention going forward is to start an additional group to provide targeted physical activities to improve strength, movement and co-ordination, reducing the risk of falls.

As well as providing some much needed supplies, the Co-Operative are involved in promoting training and providing equipment for groups that are interested in promoting physical activity through walking. Following on from the intended delivery of strength and movement classes, the long term plan is for group members to maintain this new confidence and physical ability through group walks with the free training and equipment provided through the Co-Operative.

The group would additionally like to continue to grow and reach those most at need in the local community and apply for future funding to help support existing members.



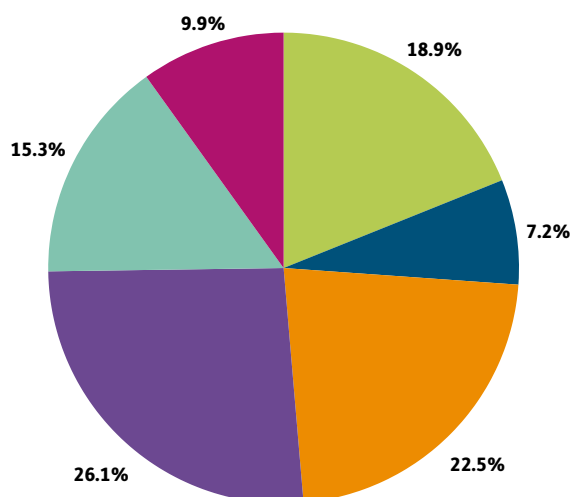
User Feedback

“Beth has been a great supporter of our group and understands what we want to achieve. She has given us contacts and advice which has been a great help in moving our plans forward and building a great community spirit” - Liz, Fishtoft400.



Feedback

The impact of YMCA Lincolnshire's involvement on community projects:

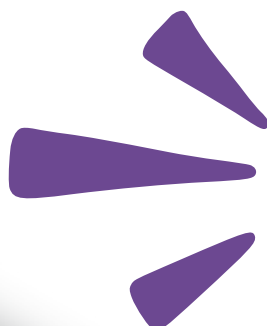


- Increased the number of people attending events & activities
- Increased the number of volunteers
- Improved perception of village hall or community building
- Increased access to funds
- Enabled new activities and events to take place
- Other

"YMCA Lincolnshire's help with our application for GRASSroots funding enabled us to be accepted for the grant and the transformation to the building has been brilliant and positively received by setting users!"



We received a 4.86 star rating on the support we provided to community groups!



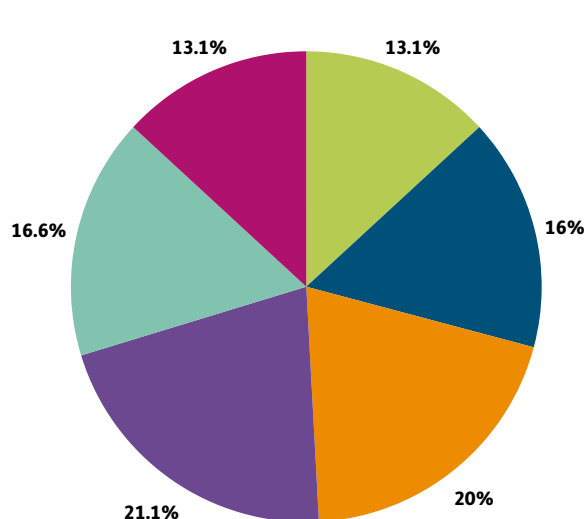
"YMCA Lincolnshire has already made a significant impact on our community, even in the early stages. Their support & guidance have been instrumental in helping us navigate several key initiatives aimed at enhancing our community".

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Feedback

The impact of YMCA Lincolnshire on community leaders and other committee members:



- Increased motivation to make change in your area
- Increased confidence to make change in your area
- Increased access to local information and additional support
- Improved skills and knowledge needed to apply for funding
- Increased knowledge of procedures and policies needed to run a committee, group or community building
- Increased ability to engage with your community

“YMCA Lincolnshire gave us greater confidence in our ability to improve our facilities and just how to do it”.



We received a 4.84 star rating on our communication with community groups!

“The improvements to the village hall has meant that the hall is a community hub. Elderly residents are able to get out of their homes and engage in social activities which led to improvements in social interaction and wellbeing”.

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Case Study

Leverton Church Hall - The Tin Hut



Background

YMCA Lincolnshire met the residents of Leverton at a Community Coffee Morning in the Church Hall earlier in the year. The Church Hall is affectionately known by locals as the Tin Hut due to its tin exterior and has been a feature of Leverton for over 100 years. When we attended the monthly coffee morning, it was attended by 40+ residents who, whilst passionate about the Church Hall and the coffee morning, were aware that the building required some maintenance to modernise it and make it accessible to all. The attendees also confirmed that they would like more community events in the village.



Support

YMCA Lincolnshire's Community Development Officer, Beth, worked with a group of dedicated and passionate volunteers to gather local opinion, plan and deliver events, and find funds for building renovations.

Beth designed, delivered, and collated a community engagement survey which indicated that residents wanted family events where they could come together and get to know their neighbours. The survey also identified the need to modernise and increase the accessibility of the Tin Hut. A summer fete was planned, and with the support of Beth, raised over £750 for the Tin Hut whilst attracting over 234 people from the village and the surrounding area. This success spurred on the volunteer team to continue making improvements. Beth was able to signpost to the UKSPF GRASSroots Fund and support with an application. The team were successful in applying for £24,000 which has been used to improve insulation, install an accessible toilet, and fit a functioning kitchen.



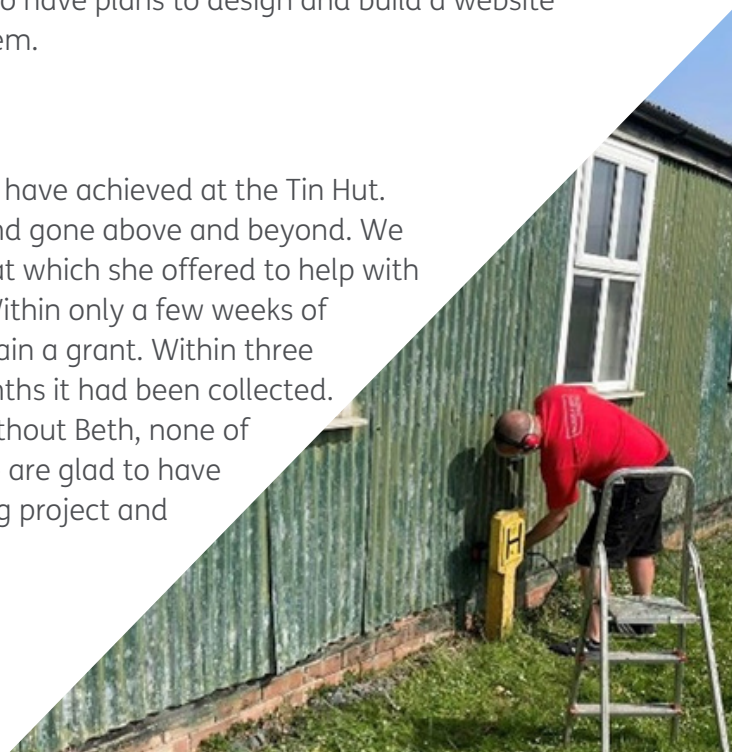
Pipeline Projects

Following on the transformation of the building and the successful community events of the last year, the Tin Hut have several exciting projects in the pipeline. YMCA Lincolnshire are in the process of assisting the events volunteer team in forming a constituted group, planning an open day, and bingo/quiz night to showcase the venue's transformation and to welcome the local community. The team also have plans to design and build a website for the venue with an automated booking system.



User Feedback

"Bethany has been instrumental in all that we have achieved at the Tin Hut. She has worked tirelessly with us as a team and gone above and beyond. We initially met Beth at a coffee morning, a time at which she offered to help with the much needed renovation of the Tin Hut. Within only a few weeks of meeting her, events were set in motion to obtain a grant. Within three months work was started, and within five months it had been collected. This is an unheard of achievement of time. Without Beth, none of this would have been vaguely possible and we are glad to have her continued involvement in both our ongoing project and in our lives" - Leverton Tin Hut.



Case Study

Desire Change CIC - Black Barn



Background

Black Barn, a Therapeutic Rural Community Farm, failed to secure GRASSroots Funding for a yurt project to provide indoor space. YMCA Lincolnshire worked with Angie, at Black Barn Farm, to identify a way to use a partially finished brick building to provide the indoor space for people to attend workshops. Although high numbers of people visit in the summer, in the winter they can only accommodate small numbers due to indoor space restriction. The new bid was successful, allowing the works to be carried out and completed.



Support

YMCA Lincolnshire sat down with project leaders to consider ways to reshape the project according to the needs of the beneficiaries. Our Community Development Officer, Sandra, supported with completing a new, successful funding application. Angie said that it was great to have an 'outsider' look in on what they do, what they have, and how they could use what they already had to increase the capacity.



Pipeline Projects

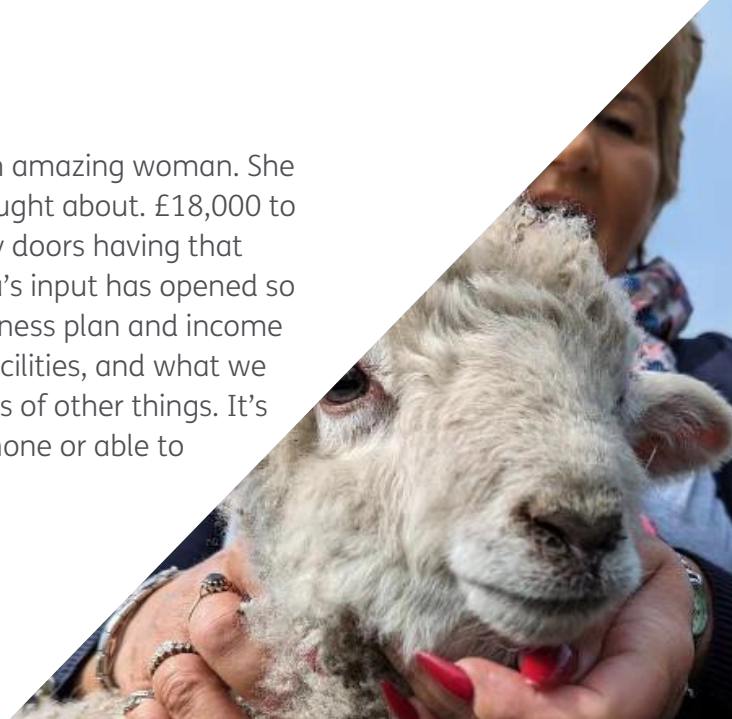
Black Barn plans to develop and renovate a 1930's railway goods carriage to provide toilet and handwashing facilities, using best practice and skills gained from working with YMCA Lincolnshire and UKSPF GRASSroots funding. The £15,000 project aims to preserve railway history and provide essential visitor facilities. Further projects include:

- provision for equipment to be able to enhance the differing workshops and facilities
- developing a plot of land as an allotment for food for the community
- provision of tools to use on the allotment
- moving forward in developing a business plan which can help them focus on the sustainability and funding requests for future projects
- linking up and networking with other community projects who have similar work of a therapeutic nature



User Feedback

Angie from Black Barn Farm said: "Sandra is an amazing woman. She opened our eyes to things we hadn't even thought about. £18,000 to us was a big project, it has opened up so many doors having that facility which we didn't even recognise. Sandra's input has opened so many other doors such as talking about a business plan and income sustainability for the future. Having the new facilities, and what we can do with them, has opened the doors to lots of other things. It's good having someone at the other end of a phone or able to come and meet us".

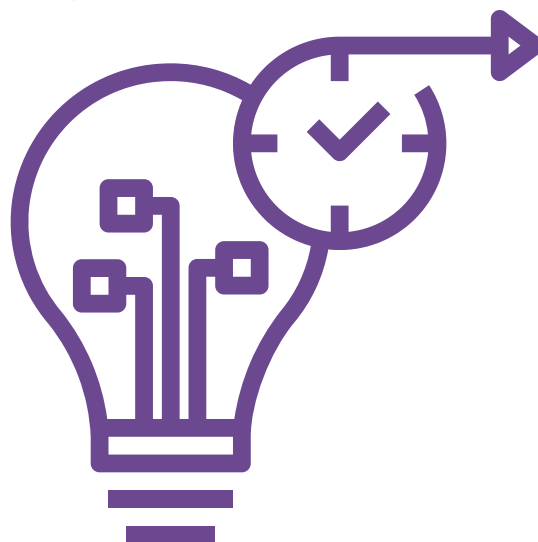


What's next?

Meeting the needs of the future

Throughout our work we heard lots of exciting plans for what we can expect to see from our community leaders in the future, here are some common themes.

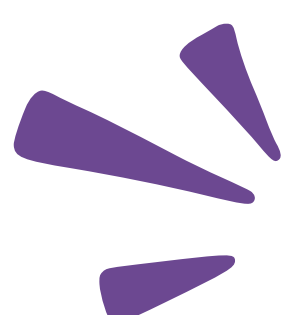
- ▶ Community cafes and warm spaces
- ▶ Wi-Fi and access to digital tools
- ▶ More youth facilities, activities and clubs
- ▶ Energy efficiency for community buildings
- ▶ Accessibility for all - buildings and activities
- ▶ Building renovations and modernisation
- ▶ Improving outdoor spaces



What can we take away?

Following on from feedback we received across our project, we identified the following areas for further support:

- ▶ Face-to-face networking events and opportunities
- ▶ Platform for sharing practical information and resources
- ▶ Media and publicity support for projects and buildings
- ▶ Identifying and applying for funding opportunities
- ▶ Help with increasing community engagement
- ▶ Help with volunteer engagement and recruitment



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YMCA Lincolnshire Community Development in Action

Our UKSPF funding has allowed us to capture the impact of our community development work through a series of engaging films.

Craft Allsorts - Butterwick, Boston Borough

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West Pinchbeck Village Hall & Pinchbeck Community Hub - South Holland

CLICK HERE TO WATCH



Winthorpe Community Partnership - East Lindsey

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① What changes have you made that have benefitted your community?

② What future projects/plan do you have?

Final Impact Report

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