ROOTED ARTS CIC

End of Grant Report

Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Research Fund

August 2025



Our Project

Our project consisted of two community consultation and exploratory events at the unused Monks Abbey Bowls Club (closed during the Covid pandemic). These events initiated conversations about establishing a new local hub for creativity, nature and connection in the East end of Lincoln.

Background

The Monks Road Bowls Club was a formerly thriving Bowling Green that closed during the Covid Pandemic in 2020.
Rooted Arts CIC are working with a group of Monks Road residents to support them in bringing this unused area back into use with a vision to create a new Community Hub, Garden and Creative Space. The site includes a small pavilion with toilets and a bowling green, owned and maintained by City of Lincoln Council, adjacent to a local play area and the heritage site of the Monks Abbey.

There is a perception of a lack of community spaces in the area. The Arboretum is a fantastic natural asset, but indoor spaces are limited to those associated with churches or organisations. We recognise Abbey Access and Green Synergy are active in providing positive services for the community, but feel there is a gap for creative and community led provision.

We have supported the resident group in contacting City of Lincoln Council to explore viable options of how the community could take ownership of the space, including conversations with local councillors.

Monks Road Community

Abbey Ward is the second largest in the City of Lincoln, with 11,310 residents. However, the Monks Road residents particularly feel there is a lack of community spaces in this area.

The Cannon Street/Winn Street areas are in the top 1% most digitally excluded in the country, associated with barriers such as: lower social grade, digital engagement, pension credit, internet, education, transport and unemployment. A number of local LSOAs are also in the top 5/10% for deprivation in the country. Annually, Abbey is usually one of the wards with the highest number of cases of Antisocial Behaviour and Fly-tipping incidences in Lincoln City.

The group recognises a strong desire within the community to enhance the area, making it a more enjoyable and vibrant place to live while bringing it in line with the rest of Lincoln. Among the residents are many talented creatives who are passionate about making a positive impact on their local community.

What we set out to do

In this first phase of the project, supported by the Research Fund we asked the community what they would like the building and green space be used for, undertake some research to explore how this space could have a positive impact on health and wellbeing, and in turn, what the effect on people's wellbeing would be when directly involved in consultation and decision making.

What we hoped to achieve & how

- The project has a positive impact on health and wellbeing.
- The community feels empowered and connected through their involvement in developing a vision for the site, reducing social isolation and loneliness for residents.
- The consultation events presented the community with the potential for the site.
- Artist led activities, workshops and performances gave the community opportunities to play, create and connect, therefore actively becoming integral to the development process.
- Longterm: The site itself will positively impact health and wellbeing through a new programme in the space, both indoors and outdoors. As part of the first phase, we will explore what this impact could be and whether there are specific groups of people who are most in need locally.

Capturing Impact

We used creative documentation to capture ideas, hopes and the difference our project makes. This included photography, video, and visual outputs such as community-created artworks. Participants were invited to share their experiences through surveys, conversations, and storytelling, allowing us to collect both quantitative and qualitative feedback.
Key themes and insights from these responses are compiled into this comprehensive report to demonstrate the project's outcomes.

Measuring success

- A significant number of residents participate in the consultation events, representing the diverse demographics of the area.
- Participants report feeling empowered, connected, and positive about their involvement.
- A clear and actionable vision for the site is developed, supported by the community and key stakeholders.
- Evidence indicates the potential for long-term health and wellbeing benefits through creative and nature-based activities.
- Residents will feel a stronger sense of ownership and pride in their community.
- Social isolation and loneliness will be reduced as people connect and collaborate.
- Longterm: The vision for the site will inspire a collective effort to create a sustainable hub, bridging gaps in creative, nature-based, and community-led provision.

Planning

- Planning meetings with the resident group to determine why - what - how - when
- Planning meetings with Chelsey Everett and Marion Sander from Rooted Arts CIC - event programme & project management

Involving Local Creatives, Businesses & Groups:

- Budget Print - leaflets & posters
- Skye Henson - marketing & design, logo
- Lee Sass - creative onsultation
- The Birdcage Ukulule Orchestra - performance
- The University of Lincoln - photography
- SoundLincs - music workshop
- Max Sander - Drumming workshop, DJ & PA
- Lollypops Face Painting
- Mint Lane CIC - Food
- Liberty Slice - Food Donation
- Creative Heights - performance & Bubble workshops
- Rooted Arts CIC - Planting and badge making workshops
- The residents group - leafletting and event delivery, food
- Dave Mallet - Music Performance & PA
- Circus Starlight - Circus Performance and workshops
- Lincs Loos - Disabled toilet
- Mike Downing - Photography Records of Monks Bowls Club

Consultation
Community
Joy
Creativity
Everyone





East Alive – 12 April 2025

Our first creative consultation event on Saturday 12 April was a great success. The diverse community of the Monks Road area came together for a day of conversations, creativity, planning, planting and joy, and to make their voice heard: young, old, families, ex bowls club members, residents, councillors and supporters.







Artist & Residents group member Lee Sass led our creative consultation activity that was vital to engage with all ages and abilities, supported by an in depth survey and conversations with the audience throughout the day and facilitated by the residents group.

Attendance

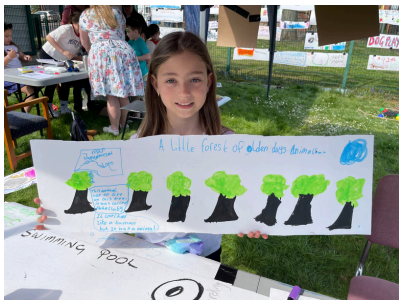
Circa **120**


gymnastics club
DOG


Farm


Dog park
Dog donations
POOL


GARDEN


A little forest of
SWIMMING POOL


Nature Pond with Kayak


SKATE PARK


PERFORMANCE


Swimming Pool


OUTDOOR CINEMA




LIDO
gymnastics club
DOG PARK







East Alive – 12 July 2025

For the second consultation event we chose a Sunday and although attendance figures were slightly lower we spent another wonderful sunny event day with previous and new attendees. This time our consultation delved deeper, asking people not only what they would like to see but also how they would like to get involved











MORE COMMUNITY DAYS LIKE TODAY. IT'S REALLY LOVELY. FRAN + DAN XX



















Attendance

Circa 100

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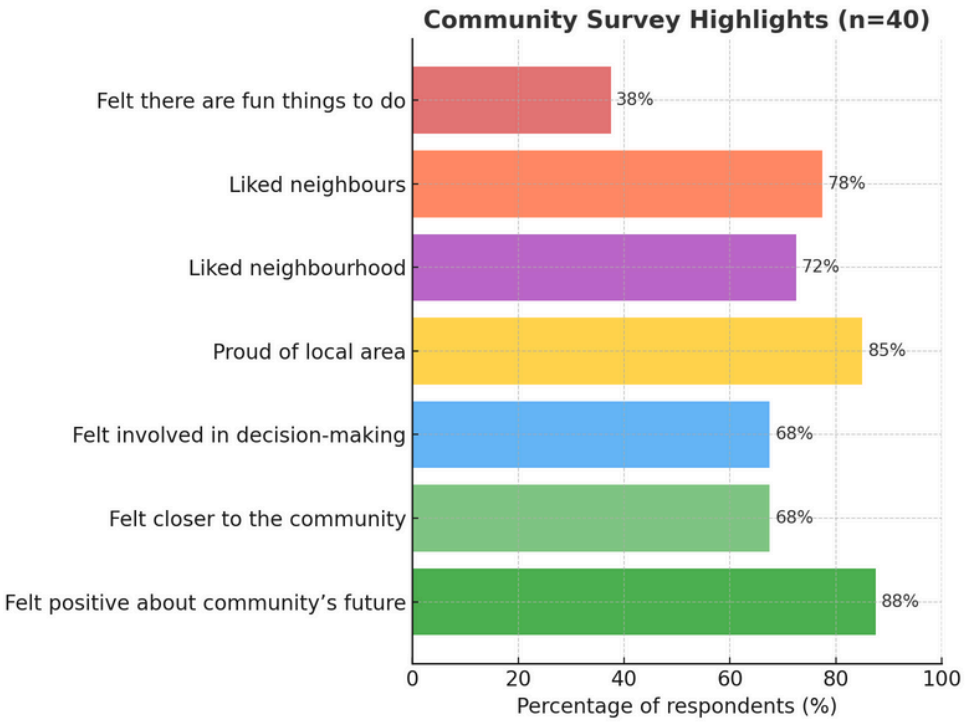
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- Residents will feel a stronger sense of ownership and pride in their community.
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Outcomes

Survey Highlights



A total of 40 surveys were received, with responses from 11 men and 29 women across a wide range of age groups, most strongly represented in the 35–49 bracket (16 respondents). The majority of responses (32) came from LN2 5 postcodes, reflecting strong local engagement.

While the survey captured largely positive reflections on community life, it also highlighted some challenges. Eight participants reported never feeling a sense of belonging to a community or group, and opinions were split on whether people liked where they lived: 18 agreed, while 16 disagreed. Similarly, 21 respondents wished they lived in a different house and 17 wished they lived somewhere else, though most (29) expressed that they liked their neighbourhood and 31 valued their neighbours. Only 15 felt there were plenty of fun things to do, compared with 25 who disagreed, suggesting a gap in accessible leisure or cultural opportunities.

Feedback about the events was strongly positive:

- 35 felt positive about the community's future.
- 27 felt closer to the community and more involved in decision-making.
- 34 felt proud of their local area.
- 31 wanted to explore more about local heritage.

When asked how it felt to be consulted about the future of the Bowls Club site, the overwhelming response was positive (25 positive, 8 included, 3 empowered), though a few expressed concerns (2 anxious, 1 sad about the closure).

This summary shows both the strength of local pride and appetite for involvement, while also pointing to areas for improvement such as belonging, housing satisfaction, and opportunities for activities.

What did you take from the day?



- More people want to make a positive contribution to the local community than I thought
- Information about the possible revitalisation for the previous Bowling Club.
- That it should be a bowls club again first and foremost
- Hope!
- We need a splash park!
- People come together more than you think
- Nice to see old faces and new ones
- This was such a beautiful day and really helped me feel the possibilities of the bowling green and the neighbourhood more broadly. Thank you so much! Ruth xxx
- Sunshine and good people
- Potential for the old bowls club to become something that the people living in the area could treasure and use as a resource
- We live in a multi cultural community and it has been great to see people of all ages and backgrounds coming together. I enjoyed to hear people's views, hopes and concerns and to learn that this community is interested and ready to connect and grow. It's been an uplifting day.
- To be part of the community
- It felt nice to see the area being used
- People do care about the area and what residents want
- It was a nice activity. Hopefully see more events like this in our area
- This place could be amazing - I hope we can do a lot more!
- Community spirit and fun
- The Bowls Club has a future
- Lots of ideas
- That something new could be happening to improve our community and be a part of

What would you like to see happening here?

- Something that's available to all members of the community and not just young people.
- Wildflower meadow
- Community garden
- I would like to see it as a community place that is sustainable and developed for the good of local people. I would prefer for the place to serve a purpose and not be used as a short term project for organisation/s that don't know much about the area and the people that live in and around Abbey Ward. It would be important for me to see local people being involved in the future of this place.
- Something for children with SEND
- It's not an ex-bowls club. It is still a bowls club
- Coffee mornings
- Feed the homeless point!!
- Family craft sessions
- Picnic afternoons through summer holidays
- Family outdoor cinema.
- Family games evenings.
- Local live music for families to sit and enjoy
- Summer fair/market
- Kids groups/youth clubs
- Kids music sessions/group learning
- Men/woman's social afternoon
- Community grow and feed garden
- Shallow/paddling pool for families to enjoy in the summer
- Safe and secure doggy run
- Family crafts sessions
- A lido, an outdoor cinema, a cafe, a rec area...
- Roller skating park, ice rink, swimming pool
- Community activities
- Sports activities (moms/kids), Swimming pool, arts, music, games, painting, cooking



- I would like it to be used to benefit the whole community.
- Splash park!
- Eco garden project! With trees and a wildlife pond. Maybe a cafe in the old club
- Community activities
- Music, community kitchen, arts and crafts for children
- More events for kids
- Something everyone can use
- Remain a community asset. Community garden with outdoor kitchen. Cooking classes with gogrocic. Outdoor performances. Community cafe
- Community garden, artists residencies, live venue, shallow paddling pool, community kitchen
- A community hub with groups for all ages. Community garden. Creative workshops. Events (seasonally)
- Community work and activities for ALL
- Community rooms for activities, events and meetings. Splash zone for kids. Seating area. Cafe and toilets open at weekends.

28 people signed up to get involved

... and more...

- Cafe, one off events like today
- Picnic area, sensory garden. exercise equipment for adults and children
- Keeping the heritage of the building
- Making accessibility key/access to provide clubs etc.
- Kids clubs, Cameras for park area.
- Xmas/Summer event
- More fun for kids
- Something for community
- Opening full time. Community classes & workshops. Be opened up for community events etc.
- Community events, gardening, music, colour, food, socialising!!
- I see this area as a thriving community space. Developing the green into a garden, fruit tree and bushes with some water elements and areas for events, performance, play and reflection. The bowls club house could be used as an activity & meeting room, a cafe and kitchen area in the main building, offering cooking classes and small community events.
- No idea
- Yes
- Community events, more for families and children
- Cafe, garden community, Small cafe
- I'd love to see it being somewhere for kids to go and provide a safe place for them to hang out. Especially older kids - ten upwards
- Local history Group
- Orchard
- Craft market
- Family Fun
- Pet Show
- Talent Show
- Men Shed
- More Community Days









Conclusions

Findings from survey, creative consultation and face to face conversations at our two events strongly suggest that residents:

- are full of local pride
- are committed to get involved
- need more opportunities for activities
- enjoyed the community days
- have developed plenty of ideas
- feel positive about being consulted and the prospect of change
- want to develop this place as a community driven asset
- need a space to come together and socialise
- want to see improvement of the quality of housing
- are unsatisfied with the levels of rubbish and fly tipping in the area

Key themes for development:

- Community Garden, Orchard, Food
- Family activities, events, clubs & groups
- Children and young people
- Splash pool, gym & sports
- Groups & socialising for older people
- Creative events, music, festivals, markets
- Cafe & food, community kitchen

Budget

Activity	Income	Expenditure		Actual	Remaining
PROJECT MANAGEMENT					
Marion Sander		£ 950.00		950	
Chelsey Everatt		£ 950.00		459	£ 491.00
12th April					
Toilets		£ 228.00	1 disabled (Linc	228	
Facepainting		£ 125.00		125	
Lee Sass artist		£ 150.00		150	
Creative Heights - Bubble Workshop and walkabout		£ 350.00		350	
DJ		£ 100.00		100	
Mint Lane Cafe		£ 50.00		34.51	
Tea, Coffee etc. Planting stuff		£ 34.51			
13th July					
Toilets		***£ 228.00***		228	
Circus Starlight		£ 350.00		350	
Max		£ 100.00		100	
Food		£ 50.00	mint lane, local residents	150	
Lee Sass		£ 150.00			
Tea, Coffee etc. Planting stuff					
Marketing and Documentation					
Design		£ 190.00		95	
Print for event 1		£ 205.95		205.95	
Print for event 2		£ 223.50		223.5	
Facebook ads		£ 9.55		9.55	
Other					
Access ramp and first aid kit		£ 55.98		55.98	

Income	
REN viaLVET	£4,500.00
Arts Council England	£44.33
Donations online	£23.79
Donations cash	

TOTAL	**£4,568.12**	**£ 4,500.49**	**£**	**3,814.49**

UNALLOCATED	**£**	**67.63**

Provided in kind by Rooted Arts - to be bought with donations

Gazebos
Rooted Arts Flag
Posca Pens
Badgemaker
Other craft resources

Next Steps

Responding to the positive outcomes from this first phase of the project, we want to build on this momentum, continue to work with residents and Lincoln City Council to seek further funding for a full feasibility study and business case and gain full access for the site by 2026. We intend to deliver more community led events and activities and hope to create and grow a new centre for the Monks Road Community to thrive.

2026 also marks Monks Abbey Bowls Club's 100 year anniversary. There are significant opportunities to explore funding, such as the Heritage Lottery, due to the heritage nature of the adjacent Monks Abbey itself.

About Rooted Arts

Rooted Arts CIC is a Lincoln based community arts organisation, established in summer 2024 by Lincoln resident Chelsey Everatt. East Alive is led by Co-Director, Monks Road area resident, and creative professional, Marion Sander.

The organisation celebrates creativity and growth from the ground up. We connect communities to each other, creativity and nature. Our vision is that vibrant creativity will be deeply rooted in all communities, leading to content Hearts and a thriving Earth. Many of our projects are embedded within Lincoln neighbourhoods, with a particular focus on Moorland and Ermine. Our three branches of activity are: Everyday Creativity (participation opportunities), On Your Doorstep (community decision making) and Creative Nature (events that promote time in nature). This activity ranges from micro festivals in green spaces, regular creative activity such as dance and art sessions for both adults and young people, and commissioning artists to work in communities.

EAST Alive

We thank you for supporting our project

Acknowledgements

We want to thank everyone who contributed to the planning, coordination and delivery of the East Alive consultation days, including residents, creatives, businesses and organisations.

We want to thank all of the attendees and especially those who freely shared their thoughts, hopes and ideas with us and without whom this project would have been impossible.

This report was written by Marion Sander (Resident, Creative & Co-Director of Rooted Arts)

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