

Local Democracy

Hull City Council

Active Citizens

'A world where people are empowered to engage peacefully and effectively with other cultures in the sustainable development of their communities'

In 2018, the Council submitted an application for grant funding from the British Council's Active Citizen UK programme. Hull was successful in this bid and became the UK's first Local Authority to partner with the British Council under this programme.

The British Council is the United Kingdom's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. Active Citizens builds trust within and between communities by supporting people to take action on issues they care about. It connects people locally and globally, developing their knowledge and skills to build fairer and more resilient societies and communities. The British Council worked with Hull as a partner organisation as well as others from around the UK and world to deliver and develop the Active Citizens programme.

Hull worked with the British Council to train two people in its accredited facilitator course, which took place in Ethiopia, bringing together participants from all over the world. Once trained and accredited we were then able to undertake training with Hull residents from a range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds as part of the Active Citizens programme in Hull.

The level of interest was high, and the attendees came from a mix of cultural and ethnic backgrounds – 14 of the 24 originally came from other countries and now called Hull home. The British Council reported this was the highest mix of participants since the programme had been operational in the UK. The main initial goal of ensuring a cultural mix in the participants was met. Feedback at the end of the training surpassed the Council's expectations with many of the attendees expressing profound insights as to how their lives, attitudes and expectations had been changed from attending the course.

Across the world Active Citizens connect with each other to learn, share, collaborate and value difference. These global connections can happen through International Study Visits (ISVs), where Active Citizens come together to inspire and be inspired by social action; global events, where



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Active Citizens showcase their stories of impact; and international workshops, where participants develop their skills and knowledge. The ISV brings Active Citizens together from all corners of the world to share experiences, knowledge and strengthen relationships and opportunities for collaboration. As representatives of their communities they gain new ideas and inspiration for social action, these ideas can then be taken back to their communities to share and develop. The ISV increases peoples understanding of the power of global connections. Every Active Citizen is also part of an online global community.

An integral part of the Active Citizens training programme is that participants develop the skills and knowledge in order to help them plan and implement a Social Action Project, the aim of which is to deliver action that enhances community life. The Social Action Project can be carried out by individuals or groups of people working together for the good of others and not for profit. The objective of the project is to bring about social change that will benefit an individual, communities or society.

In Hull there are currently twelve projects which all embrace working together with the community to bring about positive change. The projects vary from community clean up days in specific localities to projects that wish to support veterans in Hull by training them to use their logistical skills and experience to support other community groups, and music tuition for those from all communities who do not have the financial means to afford music lessons.

For further information contact:

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