



ASSET-BASED APPROACHES IN SERVICE SETTINGS: STRIKING A BALANCE

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Today...

- Some quick reminders
- Our approach and key findings
- Throughout –
 - **Partnerships, relationships and collaboration**
 - **Working differently and sharing power**
 - **Flexibility and sensitivity**
 - **The role of the workforce**
- After tea – opportunities for further thinking, discussion and action

Asset-based approaches in Scotland - where are we now?

- Fundamental changes to way service delivery is and thought about
- Not universal panacea
 - Opportunities exist to re-orientate and re-shape care and delivery
- Working 'with' rather than 'to' – potential to transform delivery – better positioned
- Not ignoring structural or material issues – redress imbalance that favours focus on need – opportunity to be part of an alternative narrative

The Deficit Model

- Based on pathogenesis
- Focuses on problems and needs
- Tends to define communities and individuals in terms of what they can't do, do wrong or don't have
- Encourages dependency
- Potential to disempower people who are intended beneficiaries

The Assets Model

- Based on salutogenesis
- Focuses on existing strengths and capabilities
- Defines communities/individuals in terms of the resources - stay healthy
- Encourages people to take control of their own health
- Promotes self esteem and ability to cope

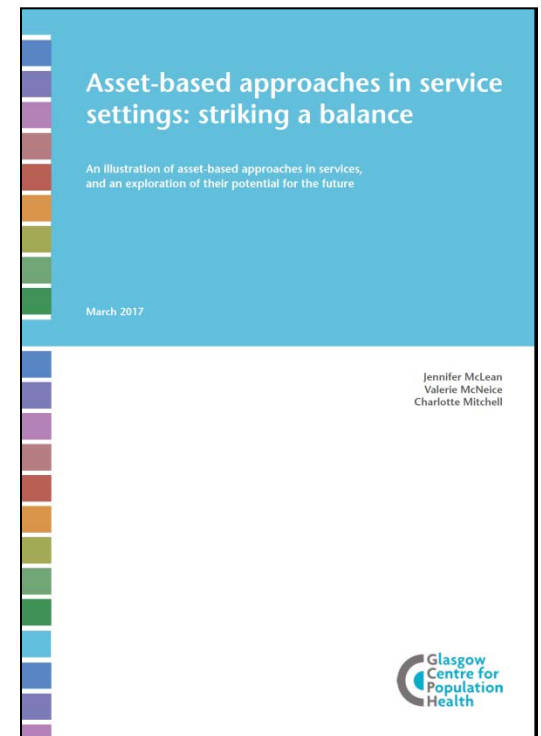
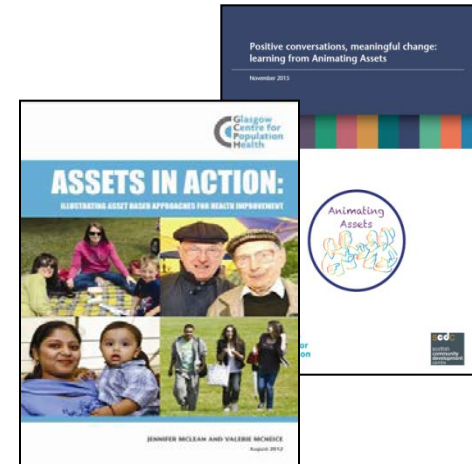
‘Asset-based’ features of services

- Person-centred
- Empowering and supportive
- Flexible, sensitive and responsive
- Focus on sharing power
- Relationship and partnership focused
- Building skills, confidence, self-esteem and coping abilities
- Building skills, creating opportunities
- Supporting individual and community connections



What we wanted to find out

- Build on existing learning
- Explore what embedding asset-based principles look like
- Extend the conversation – potential for the future
- Relevant to service planning and delivery



Our aim

Illustrate how asset-based principles are being applied within a range of services that impact on health and wellbeing, and; to further explore the potential application of asset-based principles within such settings.

- Explore the characteristics of applying asset-based principles
- Explore the potential application and implications
- Synthesise the learning to identify common themes and features
- Identify policy implications and make recommendations for the future development

Our research approach

- 2 phase approach
 - Multiple case study investigation
 - Support illustration of asset-based approaches
 - Documentary analysis (9) / semi-structured interviews (89)
 - ➔ nine services
 - Semi-structured interviews (10)
 - Explore the potential of asset-based approaches
- Identification of key themes and learning

Illustrating asset-based approaches in services



Our cases...

Primary Care Learning Disability Local Area Co-ordinators	Supported learning disabilities service
The Bridging Service	Supported employability service
Healthy Minds	Mental health support service
Family Nurse Partnership	Supported early years service for young mums
MusicALL	Music service for children with ASN
North West Recovery Communities	Recovery from drug and alcohol sustainment service
Nurture approach and Smithycroft Learning Community	Education services approach
Cassiltoun HA & Trust	Housing association and community trust
Violence Reduction Unit	Supported community engagement

What did we learn – key themes

- Shifting the balance
- Creating the conditions
- Building relationships and partnerships
- People and skills
- Leadership and influence



Shifting the balance

- Enabled active service user involvement
- Mutual relationships, shifting the balance of power

“Taking a more rounded approach, taking into account different issues going on in people’s lives.”

“It’s about involvement; it’s about them doing it, deciding what’s important to them.”

“People really valued being involved in a process where they feel they can shape something and it leads to improvement.”



Creating the conditions

- Flexibility, sensitivity and adaptable

“Everyone deserves a chance. Without the right help and support people won’t achieve their potential.”

- Working differently within existing services – services which ‘fit’ people

“Not creating systems and boxes – need to deliver a way that people will access.”

- Finding a balance – financial tensions with development and innovation



Building relationships and partnerships



- Connections, interaction, trust, respect
- Value relationship-building aspect of role

“Relationships are the thread that runs through – in every contact with a child or an adult.”

“It all comes down to relationships – between professionals and between professionals and service users.”

- Time, *“patience and perseverance”*
- Focus on collaborative endeavour



“... embraces a model of partnership working, knitting services together.”

People and skills

“There is often the desire to just fix things... but we have to take a step back and help them identify the strengths they have to address the challenges they face.”

“Having the right people involved, the right staff who can balance the person-centred approach within the real world.”

- Staff as our greatest assets
- Core skills, personal characteristics
- Implications for staff/organisations
- Facilitating and brokering



Leadership and influence

“Initially mixed attitudes to a different way of working, but strong management helped embed it in the team.”

- Leadership...in its many guises
- Inspiring, influencing, advocating for change
- Staff supported, enabled and trusted



“Ability to be able to take time to listen – let’s see where we can go and make a difference.”



Exploring the potential of asset-based approaches



What did we learn?

- Interpretation
- Attitude or intervention
- Possibility, power and responsibility
- Resources and reporting
- The workforce
- From policy to practice



Interpretation

- The language: *“It’s jargony...”*
- Scepticism – just too rosy?



Attitude or intervention

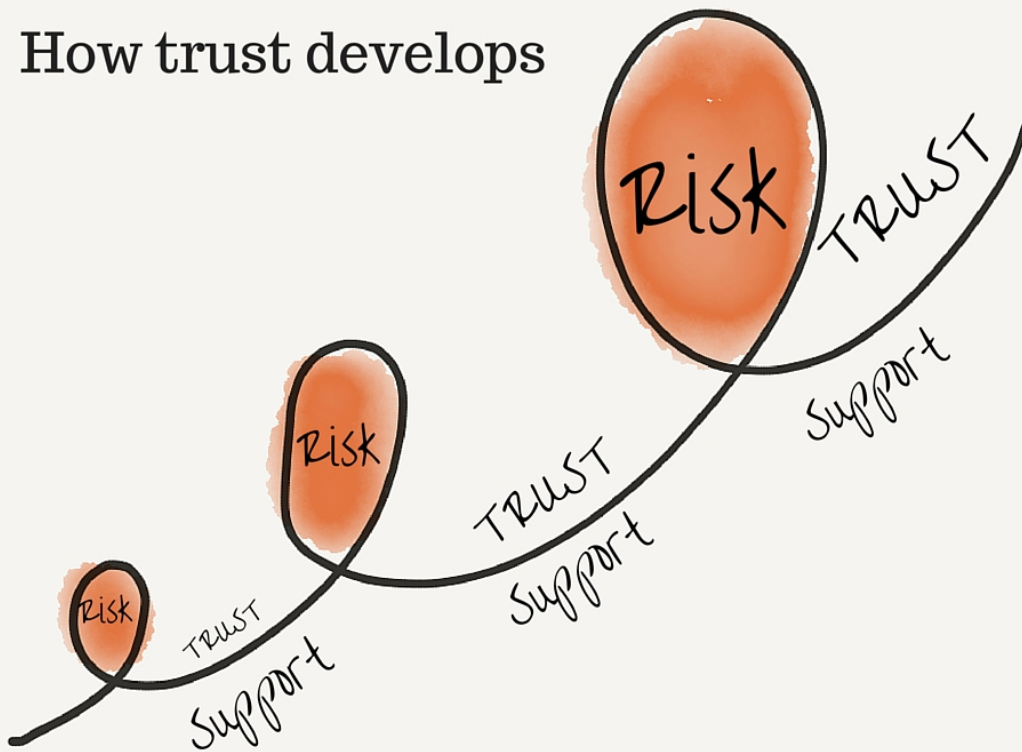
- What does it mean to take an asset-based approach?
 - Mindset or targeting



- *“...you can’t make a generic model for asset-based approaches.”*

Power, possibility and responsibility

How trust develops



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“It’s a very different approach that assumes that people are OK, assumes that people have to be nurtured to allow assets to be seen, drawn out and valued; especially the most vulnerable.”

Resources and reporting

“There’s a tendency to address [changed circumstances] by doing a slight reshaping. But now we need transformational change.”

“In order to develop the assets of the individual we need to change lots structurally.”

- Scale
- Re-framing and re-investing
- Sustainability
- Measurement



The workforce

- Reciprocal relationships
- Circumstances rather than conditions



“Led by leaders who model that way of working.”

“Can’t work in an assets-based way unless you are in that space yourself – appreciative in nature.”

From policy to practice

“It’s everywhere in policy.”



- Investment
- Strong leadership
- Learning / peer support
- *“...the right people...”*

“...it should be part of the way we work with people, which isn’t dependent on the setting in which you work. All services should keep people well for as long as possible.”

SHARING EXAMPLES OF ASSET-BASED APPROACHES IN PRACTICE

: THE 'NURTURING' APPROACH

: NORTH WEST RECOVERY COMMUNITIES