

## **LiA Showcase report**

### **Intro**

My LiA experience focused on the British Charity sector and its need for constant support to exist. By working closely with two charities Worthing Community Chest (WCC) and the Lodge Hill Centre Charity (LH).

I'm going to separate this blog into multiple sections the first part will explore the background of the project and why I believe it was so important to understand and explore this small corner of the world. While the second and third sections will explore in detail what I did with each charity over my LiA including the roles I played, the issues that occurred, and the lessons I learnt. The final section will be based on my reflections on the overall experience.

### **Part 1: Background**

First and foremost, I would like to stress the importance of these groups more now than ever. The charity sector especially those that work with young people is often overlooked. For me I have already experienced this by working with youth groups for many years and what they have to put up with. This was once again made clear during my LiA as around halfway through my experience Sussex Clubs for Young People, the organisation that local councils and groups use to support youths, after constant lack of funding went bust leaving many groups to wither including the Worthing Youth Council which very sadly ended after operating for over 19 years, raising thousands for its local community and gave young people experiences to help them in the real world. One example of how youth groups are often overlooked and need protection due to their important role in many communities and the often-hidden benefits they hold to keep young people out of harm especially those that are vulnerable.

### **Part 2: Lodge Hill**

LH is where I predominately conduct my LIA and is a charity that works with young children including those with additional needs or special circumstances including young offenders and helps give them social skills, expand their comfort zones, and learn how to overcome fear in a safe outdoor environment.

In truth, they do much more than this and words don't reach the emotional side of what the people at LH do and the important role they play not just for the children but beyond this with their families and community.

My role here was a mixture of working directly with the children leading on average five sessions a day three days a week. Trying to expose them to new challenges and guide them through their experiences to help deal with/tackle the real world. In addition to working on ways to ensure the charity's sustainable longevity on the site. This allowed me to explore multiple aspects of leadership and I have learnt so much from these experiences including the significance of adaptation. Showing me how to overcome both situations and work with different types of people. So that I 'read my audience' to keep my groups engaged and can understand what type of leadership method I should take to help the groups stay on track but

still explore their own creative outlook on problems. Allowing me to develop an understanding between both the team as a whole and individuals.

This gave me the ability to enhance my leadership skills and understand how the charity operates first hand giving me the insights to help develop ideas to improve the site and engage in their constant financial battle to remove waste. One way we did this was by coming up with an idea to restructure their inventory process to ensure the site knows what equipment they actually have so they don't waste money on supplies they already have or can adapt to their needs. We found that instead of a large change a series of incremental changes to their operations worked best to ensure their sustainability and effective operations.

### **Part 3: WCC**

The WCC falls into my LiA by being a grant-giving charity that focuses on raising money to give to local projects and groups such as projects for LH. Allowing these groups to focus on their charitable work rather than raising funds. I entered my LiA with fortnightly meetings with a WCC trustee.

This side of my experience aimed to help ensure their sustainability and their access to resources from the local council which is on the verge of being diminished. My role was to explore the charity's operations and find faults in the work and provide alternatives with the objective to demonstrate that the charity was effective and necessary in the community to ensure they continue receiving their required resources to operate.

In the beginning, it was a bit of a struggle, I wasn't able to access all their resources even after multiple Zoom calls limited the aspects of what I could do at that time which resulted in a lot of frustration both on my part and theirs. Although, as time progressed it became a lot easier to communicate and gain access with the help of a very supportive network of individuals. As I learned over at LH taking a 'one step at a time' approach seemed to be the best method as we came up with different strategies to help the charity to become more effective and reduce waste. Discovering that their systems needed streamlining I spent the predominant part of my time there working on their application process to start as a foundation for future work. By redesigning the process, it is now more accessible to communities and to those who would predominately use it which was often elderly trustees of charities.

Due to time restraints of only having six weeks we carried out multiple meetings where I with a trustee went over the operations of the charity and came up with multiple strategies to ensure the longevity and sustainability of the group which could slowly be implemented over a year period which should help ensure their continuing funding allowing them to support local charities and their surrounding community.

### **Part 4: reflections**

Overall, I worked with children with different abilities and backgrounds including some that had to leave their homes in Kiev. I say this to show the importance of places like LH it gives children the ability to be children when the world around them is so desperately trying to deny it to them. It gives them a break from the world to focus on one thing at a time and

mostly on themselves and their abilities and I feel so privileged to help play a part in their sustained continuation. I was able to grow in more ways thanks to this LiA than I can express in the limited time I had. I have a lot to think about, a lot of great experiences I'd love to share, and a tonne of talks that are worth cherishing and reliving. The simple moments, small talks, interactions, and relationships I formed every day during my journey that added to its richness and limitless value were some of the major lessons I gained. It is something I will always treasure and remember with appreciation.