

# GET RESEARCH READY WITH ME

## OUR BLOG

ISSUE 2: APRIL 2025

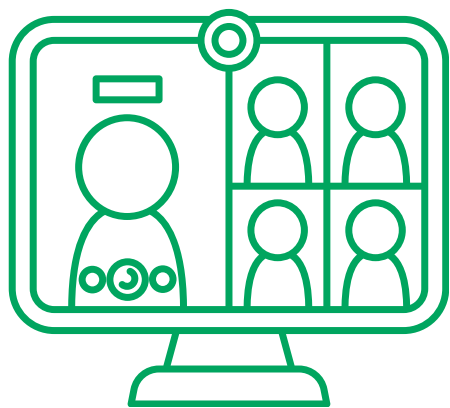
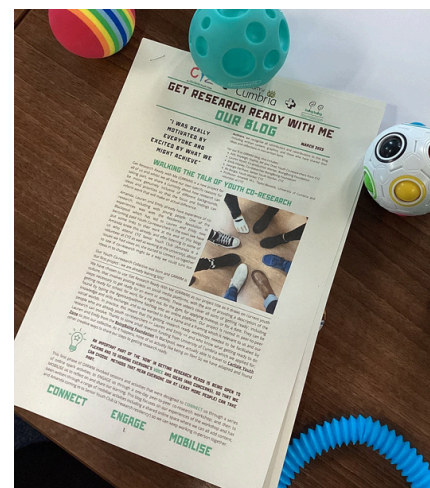
### "WHAT WOULD MAKE A MORE YOUTH FRIENDLY COMMUNITY?"

**Authors:** As an evolving co-research collective, we recognise all contributors and contributions to this blog, including written content, graphics, and those who have shared their ideas and reflections in non-written form. Our collective includes:

- Ash, Charlie, Sophie, MF and Oriel; Youth Co-researchers from CYZ
- Lauren Wyatt, Co-production Worker, BoingBoing Foundation
- Emily Hopley, Co-researcher BoingBoing Foundation
- Georgia Denham, Senior Youth Worker, CYZ
- Ro Borgia, Youth Worker, CYZ
- Professor Amanda M.L. Taylor-Beswick, University of Cumbria and volunteer at CYZ

## RESEARCH READY, STEADY, GO... HOW WE MOVED TOWARDS BECOMING RESEARCH ACTIVE

In our first [blog](#) we introduced how this new project has come about and the journey we have started to get 'research ready'; how we **CONNECTED**, **ENGAGED** and started to **MOBILISE** as a research collective. In this blog, we are going to share some highlights and learning from our second Get Research Ready with Me (#GRRWM) workshop, which was on Saturday 22nd March 2025, and share the very exciting news of our first funded research engagement project!

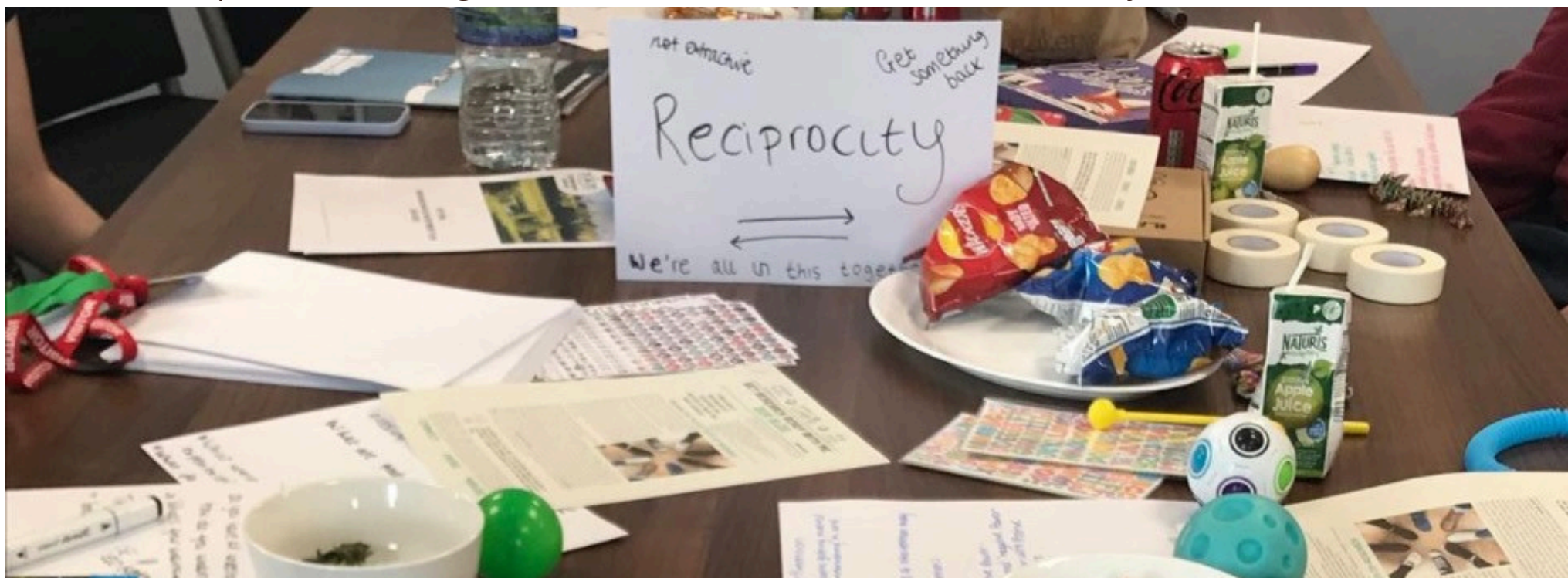


Leading up to the second workshop, some of us got together for a planning session – we did this hybrid with those of us already gathered at Senior Youth Club joining with Lauren, Emily and Amanda online. This was an important step for this second workshop as we wanted to share the activities and roles amongst our new collective - building on the ideas of 'co' that we had started to explore in workshop one - and be ready to welcome new people. We made a plan of action for what we needed to complete in time for the 22nd, identified who felt comfortable convening which activities, and created a resources list which Georgia agreed to help sort.

On the workshop day itself, just like on our first workshop, we started with brunch! Amanda picked it up for us all on her way up to **Carlisle Youth Zone**. Amanda works at the **University of Cumbria Lancaster campus**, so like Lauren and Emily, needs to travel to Carlisle on days and evenings when we are working together.

Our first blog flagged just how important it is to make **SPACE** for what some might look in and think is just hanging around, but spending time **CONNECTING** and getting to know each other, building relationships, trust and understanding, is essential ground work to any 'co' activity, including co-research. Plus, some people in our group have been to research events and conferences before, and shared how it is quite normal to enjoy some food and refreshments as a part of getting ready for a long day of work together. For most of us this is quite a new experience - a very enjoyable one - and it has really helped make us feel valued.

Once we had settled in to the space and as a collective, we moved into CYZ's Board room, where the long table had been set up with all the things we would need to **ENGAGE** in our research day.



**CONNECT**

**ENGAGE**

**MOBILISE**





It was at this point that Caroline (the CEO of CYZ) joined us and gave us the good news that our ideas have been put forwards to a funding panel, and we had secured our first bid.

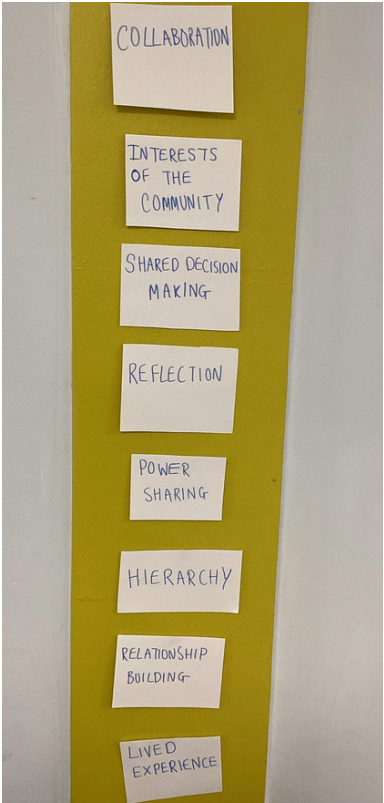
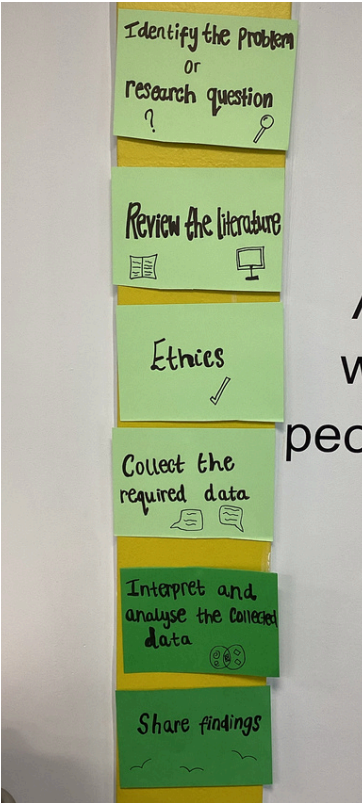
**A BID IS A DOCUMENT WHICH PEOPLE / ORGANISATIONS HAVE TO WRITE TO APPLY FOR MONEY TO DO THINGS.**



This bid was to Cumberland Petteril Bank Community Panel, who have selected ‘children and young people’ as one of their priorities in their neighbourhood plan. Our bid said that in order to inform what this priority should focus on, that we could do some peer research engagement with young people in the area.

But before we got too distracted by this exciting news, Lauren and Emily facilitated a refresher of the research process. This was a really helpful way of reminding ourselves of the various aspects that need to be thought about to develop a research project. It was also useful for those new to our youth co-researcher collective, who were quick to grasp all the vital elements, and added some really useful thinking to our collective understandings.

We know that young people are not always involved in the whole process of research, even when it is packaged as co-research. Often young people are brought in (or invited to take part) when it’s time for data collection. But as you will read below, we all got really stuck in to the the research step of defining and refining our research question, and we each learnt something from one another in the process. We are convinced our research project will be better from this collective approach at every stage / step.



**WE LEARNT A NEW WORD, RECIPROCITY, THE PRACTICE OF EXCHANGING THINGS WITH OTHERS FOR MUTUAL BENEFIT.**

We were ready, steady, go....and **MOBILSED** by looking at the research brief and and thinking about what research question(s) would define our research engagement project. We came across some challenges straight away, as we found some of the wording in the research brief difficult. We plan to share more about this in our research report and poster, but for example we found words like ‘intervention’ and ‘preventions’ too sophisticated and uninteresting, and thought that the word ‘thrive’ was too vague. We believe that if young people are going to engage in shaping the priorities, and then understand if they are being fulfilled, we will need to find language which is more meaningful to us and to the adults who are also engaged in making decisions about action. We really enjoyed this task of testing our understanding of different words, and learnt how important it is to select the most suitable words for a research project - their meaning matters! We are proud that we managed to reach a proposed research question by the end of the day!

We did of course take plenty of breaks >> time to walk about, there was even some dancing with Ro and Lauren introducing us to a ‘GLEE’ musical performance, and there was of course a good supply of snacks and drinks!





Our time together flew (again) and it was really motivating to be working on an actual real project. Whilst we did have fun (that’s important!) we also worked really hard and managed to think through our research engagement project by:

- ✓ Refining the research question.
- ✓ Considered literature.
- ✓ Considered participant engagement.
- ✓ Discussed ethics.
- ✓ Thought through the methods we will use.
- ✓ Wrote out a list of possible research interview questions.

We also made a list of what we need to do next:

- ★ Write the blog from this session, review it, and publish it.
- ★ Get together to work on designing the forms we will use for the engagement survey.
- ★ Get together a schedule of dates for the project.







We are looking forward to our next session together, and to putting our ideas and plans in to action!

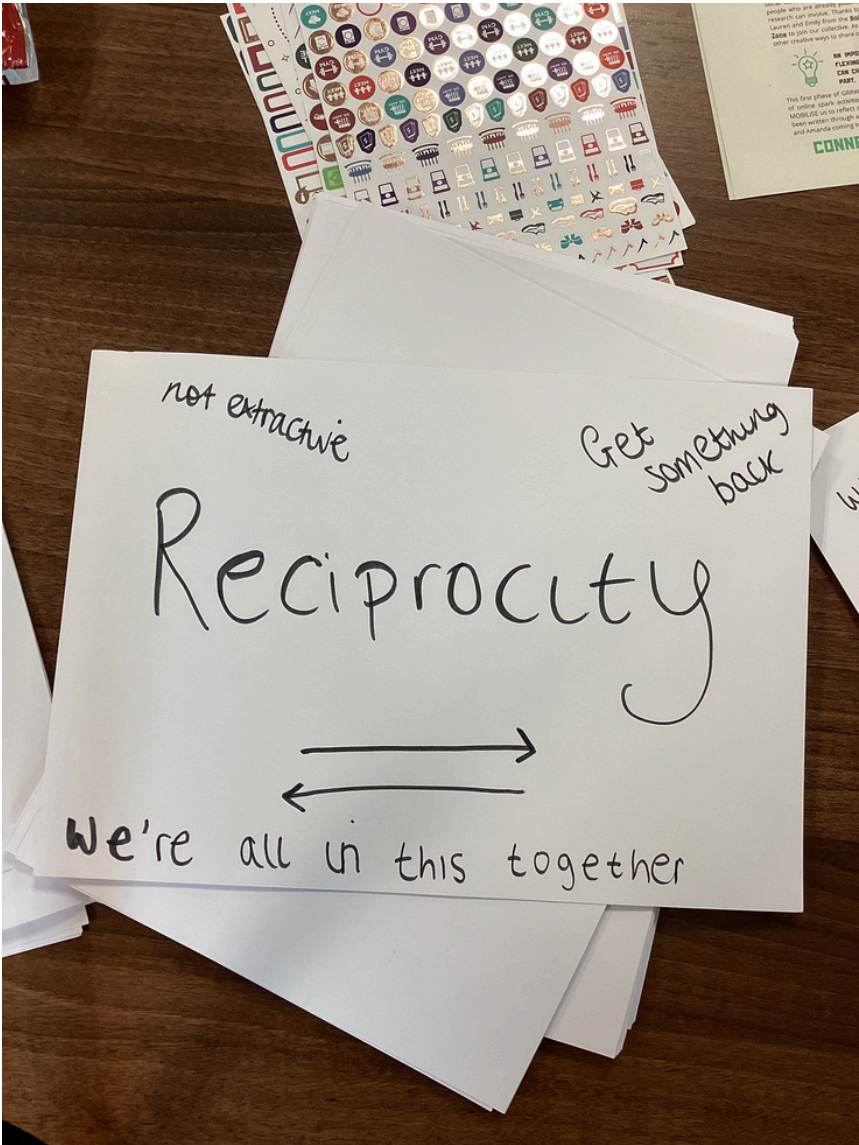
We also want to say thank you to Cumberland Petteril Bank Community Panel for believing in us and giving us the chance to progress in our ‘Get Research Ready With Me’ journey - having the opportunity, right from the start, to put our learning into practice. We are also excited to hear from other young people, and to find out more about what matters to our peers.

## JOIN US - CUMBRIA YOUTH CO-RESEARCH COLLECTIVE

If you are interested in what we are learning and doing, we would love to hear from you, to connect, and to join with other young people involved in research. If none of these things apply but you can use your role, position, voice to share our project, please do like, share, repost or circulate our blog post, across Cumbria, and far and wide!

For those working with young people to do research work, here are some more of the things we have found to be helpful, adding to those we suggested in our first blog:

-  The **creation of an environment** (including drinks and snacks) that is safe and open to learning about and doing good research work
-  Spending **time (re)connecting** as a co-research team
-  **Co-designing** the structure and timings of the day
-  Spending time **recapping** on each aspect of the research process
-  **Reflecting** at the end of the day, on what was achieved, what still needs to be done and deciding a clear set of next steps – including a date to **connect** again
-  Remembering to sort **payment for the work** – we have agreed that a voucher that can be used in a host of shops is a good alternative until we can become salaried researchers



This Get Research Ready With Me project was again established through internal research funding, made possible through UKRI, from the University of Cumbria, secured by Dr Amanda M.L. Taylor-Beswick, a Professor of Digital and Social Sciences, Institute of Health, or just simply Amanda, to us!

THANK YOU FOR READING OUR WORK!

