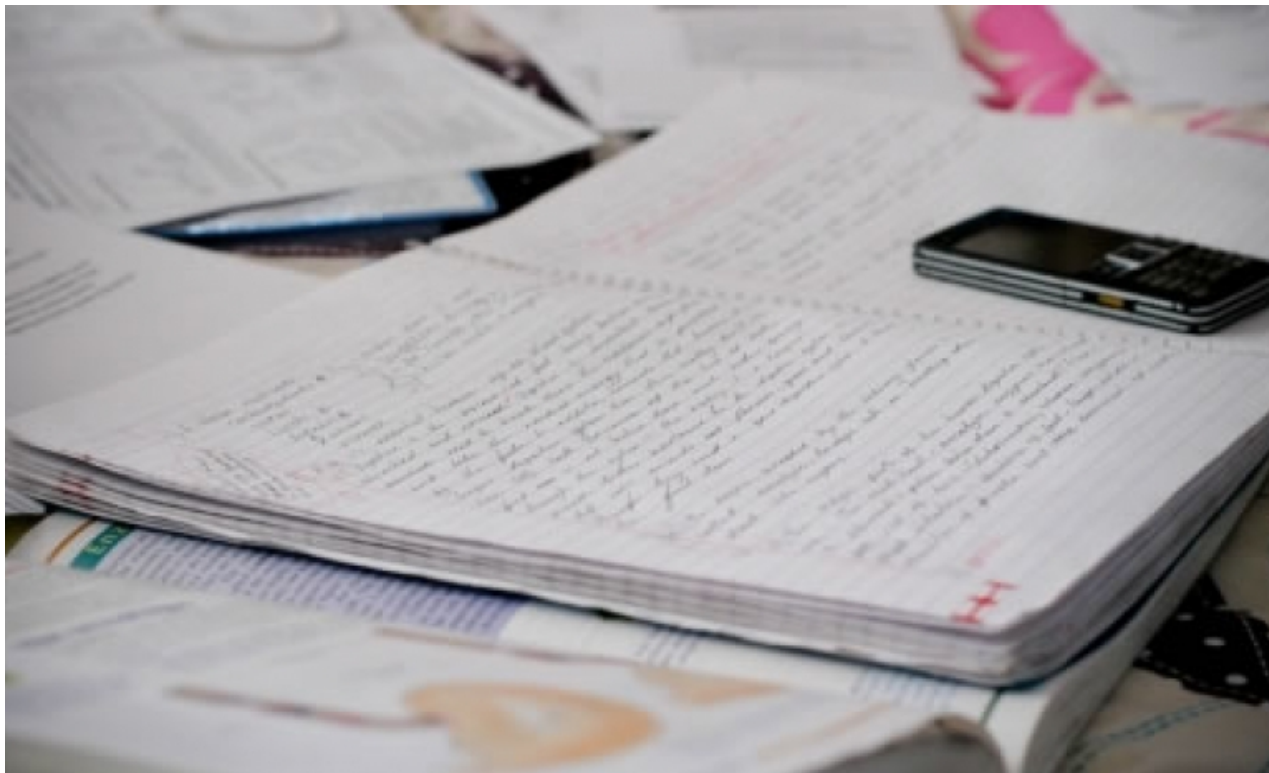


## Big Local: bringing positive change



10/03/2016 - 13:34



When I first started to volunteer at Big Local Revoelution just over two years ago, I was very timid and shy. Having social anxiety and bipolar disorder made me very isolated and I wouldn't leave the house or even my bed for weeks at a time. From the first day I set foot in the Revoelution hub, I haven't been away.

### Kathryn Andrews

Submitted by F Pere Tarrés on Mon, 10/03/2016 - 11:39

**Description:**

Administrator and Revoe resident.

**Vertical photo:**



Square photo:



Twitter: [@BPLRevoelution](https://twitter.com/BPLRevoelution)



Horizontal photo:

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Revoelution is part of [Big Local](#), which is administered by [Local Trust](#) using over £200m in funding from the [Big Lottery Fund](#). It was launched in July 2010 to **support 150 small urban and rural communities** to come together to make their areas even **better places to live**.

The Big Local project is unique in that they have put residents in the 150 areas in control which in itself has raised issues. For us here in [Blackpool](#), **residents have been sceptical**, they have never been offered opportunities like this, to voice their opinions, have them heard and then have them acted on positively.

We have had to work tirelessly and consistently to assure people that our partnership is resident lead and it is actually those who live, work or volunteer in Revoe and sit on our partnership panel that have voting rights. That could be voting on particular projects, who should deliver them and when they should be delivered or voting on local issues that the partnership thinks need addressing. After all, we live in the deprived area and witness the deprivation in all forms on a daily basis. **Who else would be better equipped to identify the needs of their community** other than the residents themselves?

From starting by making teas and coffee for drop in's **people around me were able to identify my transferrable skills** such as my IT skills. From making refreshments, I then started to work on the newsletter which then lead to me taking minutes, controlling social media and arranging meetings.

Local Trust realise that in deprived communities people may not have all the tools that are needed to run projects like this so **provide a lot of free training** for residents in the 150 areas. It's this training that has helped me understand the third sector, governance and best practice, how to make meetings successful and present with confidence and clarity.

I now know people within my community to stop and chat to in passing or to say Hi to. I now feel a part of my community and **a contributing member to positive change** for my family, my children, my friends, neighbours and future generations.

The third sector has lost a lot of funding and organisations are finding it increasingly difficult to access even small pots of funding so £1 million over ten years is a brilliant foundation to work with. It also means we are looking at **new and invigorating ways to work in partnership** with other services that fulfil all our objectives, which I think is really exciting.

Big Local means opportunity to **improve**, improve yourself, your area and the lives of those around you. It means **change**, changing attitudes and perceptions of your area and those you live amongst. It means **freedom**, freedom to express your experiences and take risks with new ideas and projects and it means **hope**, hope for the future, hope that the changes we make have longevity and positively affect the area, hope that every tomorrow is better than today.

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