

Children of Lincoln Launch Event Report

Sue Bond-Taylor and Dr Anna Tarrant



Introduction to Children of Lincoln

The School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Lincoln have been working with City of Lincoln Council and Lincolnshire County Council since 2016 to launch a child rights initiative for the city of Lincoln. Our aspiration is to be recognised by UNICEF as a 'Child Friendly City' alongside a number of other cities in the UK. Our plan is to raise awareness of children's rights in Lincoln, by holding events for children and families; building a children's rights agenda through establishing a network of stakeholders across Lincoln including academics, the council, the third sector, businesses and children and families; and conducting research. Our eventual aim is to seek recognition as a UNICEF Child Friendly City.

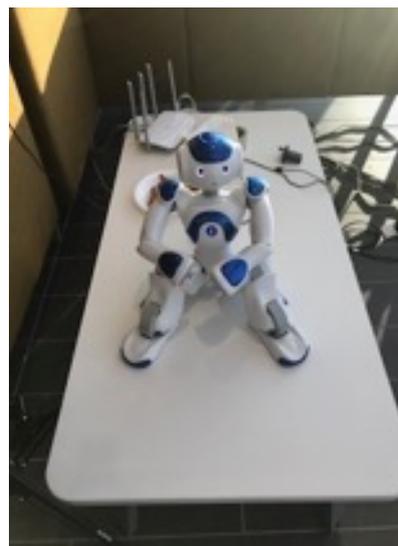
We have an established project website for [further information](#).

The Launch Event: *Imagining a 'Child Friendly' Lincoln*

We officially launched the initiative on Saturday 4th November 2017 at the University of Lincoln. Funded as part of the [ESRC Festival of Social Science 2017](#), our aim was to launch the project; to introduce our work as social scientists; and to begin consultation with children and families in the city, using creative play methods to encourage children's contributions. We also provided a number of free activities for

children just for fun, to help market our event, and to reflect our support for children's rights under the UNCRC to play and leisure. These included:

- Lincoln City FC Imps in the Community laser football goal
- Robotics and virtual reality – provided by the University of Lincoln Computer Science department and kindly manned all day by a Computer Science student volunteer.



In addition we hosted the Woodland Trust Tree Charter tree activity. We asked children to stick a 'leaf' onto the tree to represent their signature in order to indicate their support for their right to access green spaces. The leaves were made by drawing around children's hands, then cutting out and decorating the hand print.

We provided refreshments throughout the day including toffee apples, a free lunch of pizza and cupcakes with cake toppers spelling out #ChildRights.

Everyone who attended was given a Children of Lincoln logo sticker, to raise awareness of the project, and to help us count how many people attended. We gave away 199 stickers in total.



We gave away 100 children's goodie bags containing a University of Lincoln College of Social Science pencil case, pen, pencil and stylus and note pad, a Proud to be Lincoln highlighter pen, information about our project and children's rights under the UNCRC, and some Visit Lincoln *Lincoln Loves Kids* information. We also provided Children of Lincoln branded toffee apples and copies of *The Lincolnshire Puppy* children's book for children who wanted them.

So as an estimate of attendance, we had over 200 visitors across the day including at least 100 children. The Mayor of Lincoln attended for a prize giving, as did MP for Lincoln Karen Lee, and a number of City and County councillors.

Awards and Prize Giving

Prior to the event we ran a logo competition. We had already consulted with children attending schools in Lincoln on the name for the project, and they had come up with, and voted on the name 'Children of Lincoln'. We then needed a logo to use on all of our project outputs and materials.

The logo designs were judged by a small project team from the steering group using the following criteria:

- Something recognizable from Lincoln city,
- Something that represents childhood in Lincoln,
- Submissions are welcomed by both individuals and family groups.

Out of over 30 entries from children across Lincoln, ranging in age from 4 to 16, we chose a winner and a runner up.

The runner-up entry was submitted by a group of 3 siblings; Callie-Mai Hind (10), Caleb-Gerald Ward (7) and Elliot-James Lutton (4). They won a family ticket to see Lincoln City FC play at the Sincil Bank Stadium.



The winner was Templar Marshall and he was presented with a prize by Karen Lee MP and the mayor of Lincoln. Templar's prize was an ipod Shuffle, donated by Lincolnshire County Council's Public Health team. Prizes were presented by the Mayor of Lincoln.

Templar's design (below) really highlighted the joy of living in Lincoln for many children and was perfect for developing into a logo. With special thanks to local business, Ruddocks Design for developing the original design into a digital logo in such a quick space of time and without charge!



Sharing Social Science research

One of the reasons we were funded by the ESRC Social Science Research Festival was to showcase some of the research that we do and to share it with the general public. Four of our students showcased their work via research posters, including Bethany Frost and Megan Dalton, Georgina Pengelly and Kathryn Brookfield. All students were funded to research under the University of Lincoln's Undergraduate Research Opportunity Scheme (or UROS) funding scheme. Bethany and Megan in particular, presented the research they overtook, under the supervision of Sue and Anna, with local schools in Lincoln. Called 'Engaging Schools with a Children's Rights Initiative for Lincoln', the study explored the extent of schools' awareness of the UNICEF Rights Respecting School Award. More information about the project, including the research report can be accessed [here](#).



Consulting with Children and Families

As well as providing a range of activities and spaces to showcase the social sciences, we also used the launch event to begin consultation with children and families in Lincoln. We wanted to find out what Lincoln's children and families want for their city. We did this in numerous ways:

- 1) We launched a survey with three questions that sought to find out what is good about Lincoln what could be improved and what children in families wish for their city in the future.
- 2) In keeping with the theme of the day, we asked children to make fireworks and to write their wishes for the city onto labels which we tied to the fireworks.
- 3) A giant snakes and ladders game to find out what helps children to achieve their ambitions in Lincoln and what barriers there may be.
- 4) A 'build a city' station using Lego and play dough to create an imaginary city and promote discussion about city spaces.

The outcomes of these consultations are presented below:

1) Children of Lincoln Children's Survey

Whilst this survey was designed for children, a large number of forms were completed by parents, either writing on behalf of, and following conversation with their child, or providing their own parent's perspective.

Q1. Why is Lincoln a good place for children to live?

"Lincoln is friendly and feels safe. It is a city that is developing and changing and with that brings new things for children to do. It has some good venues (Drill Hall, Collection, LPAC) that does have a variety of activities." James, age 38

"Lots of interesting things; cathedral, festivals, markets. Beautiful scenery. The University to aspire to. You can get gorgeous sunsets. Pretty houses – both old and modern. Secret hidden streets. The friendly neighbourhoods. How approachable people are." Victoria, age 8

"Amazing areas and pockets of community especially in the West End of Lincoln."

"Easy to navigate with the historic separate from the commercial. We love the Collection, which is excellent for children and all the events such as the knights trail keeps things different. We also love the LPAC.", Abbie, age 30, two children, age 4 and 1

"Plenty of open space for them to play", Nicci, age 31

"Lots of green spaces. Generally child friendly", Anika, children age 5 and 7

"Its small and rural, close to nature. Little crime and feels safe"

"My daughter says its got lots of stuff to do, lots of play areas and the best restaurants. I think: Wide range of activities (e.g. dance, drama, martial arts, swimming etc, classes). Relatively safe/low crime rate theatres, cinema, good transport links, range of schools and further/higher ed., opportunities, lots of shops, museums." Daisy, age 9

"Safety, many 'good' schools and good education, equal opportunities, respect to different (other) religions, ways of life. Relatively good health care." Anon, age 39

"Yes, I believe it is safe and quiet. There is a good variety of outdoor play areas"

"We moved to Lincoln from Kent as we feel that there are more family orientated events and opportunities in a vibrant city that is steeped in history and culture and without being too large or overwhelming. My children feel part of the city as they attend events such as today and initiatives such as the light parade and the woodland

charter. We feel safe in Lincoln. We love the mix of vibrant city life and being close to rural and beautiful countryside.” Madeline, age 7

Q2. Why isn't Lincoln a good place for children to live?

“Lincoln is a small city so does have less going on than other cities” James, age 38

“Not much to do on a rainy day at low costs”, Abbie, age 30

“Lots of busy roads (nothing can be done about that though). Not enough activities/ clubs during holidays and at weekends” Nicci, age 31

“Too much traffic. Not enough safe ways for children to travel across the city (cycle paths and foot paths)” Anika

“There are limited activities for children or they are hard to get to. If a child wants to go bowling for example they can't get there easily. If you like museums it's fine but my kids don't enjoy the local museums. We need more festivals and events which are better advertised. For example, this event could have been advertised to all schools, colleges and uni staff but it wasn't” [it was ☺]

“Daughter says “traffic”. I think we need a proper leisure pool. Park equipment gets removed but not always replaced, or replaced with less interesting things. No real industry so many have to move away to pursue careers. Odeon is stupidly overpriced.” Daisy, age 9

“Not enough baby facilities. Not enough breastfeeding friendly places. Cost of after school activities”

“There are not many theatres with plays specifically fo children and clubs they could attend on Saturdays/Sundays”

“I wouldn't particularly say it was very good for younger children as there isn't really much for them around Lincoln. For the older ones who are studying they have a bit more opportunity but only really because of Lincoln University. There isn't a lot for them to doo and education options are not overly great when it comes to schools as opposed to other cities” Deana, age 30

“It's hard for any child to live if they are not being listened to or given something for them to do, enjoy, play and aspire”, Andy, age 52

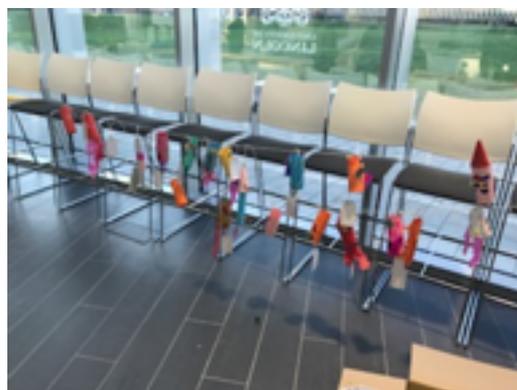
“I feel that my children have witnessed a lot of social and drug abuse issues where we have had to explain why adults under the influence are fighting or lying on the streets”, LN2

Q3. Wishes for the city

1. Better and cheaper access to after school activities,
2. According to my son, age 8, I wish there was no violence and drinking on the streets of Lincoln. Witnessed very recently,

3. More parks with fun exercise equipment in it and things like running courses
4. Creative activities
5. Safe, clean and exciting youth centres
6. More activities like Go Ape, Trampolining
7. Cheaper activities such as the cinema. Uni could start a kids cinema club
8. More safe cycle paths
9. More zebra crossings
10. More green relax and play spaces in the city centre
11. More activities during the holidays
12. Better park facilities
13. More toilets that are open all day, all year
14. Better transport links for rural areas
15. Indoor play area
16. Better provision for schools/clubs and activities. More creative play in all school
17. Breakfast Club, lunch club, after school club. Parents involvement. More clubs for them
18. Toy Library. Tech for young people. University involved in the city. School groups
19. Better schooling
20. More children's centres with better things to offer
21. More options for advanced education for the younger children
22. No more thieves
23. High quality lamps in case people are afraid of the dark
24. Bigger band venue
25. More arts venues
26. More green space
27. Safer/nicer play areas
28. For all parks to be maintained and equipment fixed/replaced when damaged
29. More fun events in the summer i.e. open air cinema
30. Improve busy road, paths and cycling paths so it is safer for children

2) Firework wishes for Lincoln



- "I would like Lincoln better if the parks were more exciting, like new things"
Morgan, age 11

- “I would like there to be more play areas in Lincoln”, Cordelia, age 10
- “Have more stuff like this”
- “I would like a maze”, Luke, age 5
- “I would like a secure play area in town”, Darcy, age 3
- “Lincoln needs more parks and green space”
- “I would like more bins, Eleanor, age 6
- “I want lots of parks in Lincoln please”
- “Making every school its own swimming pool”, Rhianna, age 8
- “Play areas”, Hannah, age 6
- “I would like more nature walks”, Madeline, age 7
- “I wish for better food in Lincoln”, Finley, age 9
- “More free arts and crafts”, Anya, age 2
- “I would like Lincoln to have more shops with toys”
- “I think you can change Lincoln by putting more films on”, David, age 9
- “Indoor Play areas”, Isaac
- “I wish people stopped throwing rubbish on the floor and to put it in the bin”, Zosia, age 8

3) Snakes and Ladders

A giant snakes and ladders board game was developed to provide a fun, interactive activity for children. We used the game as an opportunity to find out what children think helps them to succeed in Lincoln (i.e. the ladders) and what barriers they face (the snakes).



Ladders



Snakes

- Lots of places to shop
- I've got lots of friends
- If I move to a different form I'd never see my best friend ever
- Its small
- It's not too crowded
- Football (2)
- Mr Hodson (our teacher)
- At school I have Art Club and it's after school. I love school
- Lincoln is the best town ever
- Toy library
- Hartsholme park
- Surestart Groups
- Dancing and going to the theatre
- LPAC and Drill Hall
- School
- Show Room
- Shopping
- Safety
- Shopping with grandma
- Cinema
- The High Street
- School
- Nice, friendly
- My school
- Sports and school
- Music
- School
- Show room/LPAC
- Lincoln is flat and the roads are safe
- Central Library
- Park

- Better trains
- Steep Hill
- More outdoor sports facilities
- Want more toys
- Traffic
- Train crossing
- Too small
- Cat fights
- Traffic
- Cinema is too expensive
- More child friendly activities
- It rains a lot
- Nothing (2)

4) 'Build a City'

Good things about the city	Bad things about the city
Wildlife	Prices for days out and events are going up so parents are finding it hard to afford them
Farm	Not that much for children within the city centre
Woodland	Can be difficult to get to activities
Libraries	Activities are very age restricted
Museum of Lincolnshire Life	Soft play area closed down

Local Business / Organisation Support

Several local businesses kindly donated their time and energy at the launch event including Once Upon a Time, the Imps and Children's Links. Businesses provide a vital role in ensuring that cities are child friendly. 'Once Upon a Time', were extremely generous in volunteering their unicorn for the day. The Lincoln Toy Library provided us with a sensory play area, manned on the day by Lucy Watts of Children's



Links, to support children with disabilities. This enabled us to make the event more accessible to more children.

We were also visited by representatives of local organisations who came to find out more about the project, including:

- Lincoln Film Society
- LiNCHigher
- LCC Early Help Team



Social Media and Media Interest

The event attracted the attention of the local media who interviewed Sue about the project and the work we are doing, and also interviewed some children to get their views. The Sunday Politics Show will be running a special feature about children's rights on the 17th December 2017, which will include the footage from our launch event. Our Lady of Lincoln Primary have also been involved in filming, with children posing questions to local councilors, and Sue will be interviewed by Tim Iredale of Look North, on location at the School.

People who attended on the day have also written a blog about the event to provide us with feedback (<https://theminimalpi.co.uk/2017/11/19/children-of-lincoln/>) and there was a lot of activity on Twitter using our Children of Lincoln handle @lincoln_child. See some of the highlights below.

Once Upon A Party @OnceUponAParty Follow

Proud to support the launch of the children of lincoln project!
Look out for our Unicorn Princess in all her sparkly glory 🦄👑



The Mini Malpi @TheMiniMalpi Follow

Do you think Lincoln is a child friendly city?
theminimalpi.co.uk/2017/11/19/chi...
[@lincoln_child](https://twitter.com/lincoln_child) #LincsConnect

Children of Lincoln
Have you heard about the Children of Lincoln project? At the beginning of November Daddy and the two eldest mums attended a family fun day entitled 'Imagining a 'Child Friendly' Lincoln...'
theminimalpi.co.uk

6:07 am · 19 Nov 2017

5 Retweets 7 Likes

Katy Brookfield @Katy_Brookfield · Nov 4

Had a great day at the [@lincoln_child](https://twitter.com/lincoln_child) launch event sharing my research on young people's experiences of policing in Lincolnshire.

2 2 8

Katy Brookfield @Katy_Brookfield Follow

. [@lincoln_child](https://twitter.com/lincoln_child) is an amazing project aiming to get Lincoln recognised as a 'Child Friendly City', give them a follow! #childrights

11:14 am · 4 Nov 2017

3 Retweets 9 Likes

Karen Lee @KarenLeeMP Unfollow

at launch of Imagining Child Friendly Lincoln
#Esrfestival @lincoln_child



5:30 am · 4 Nov 2017

Lincoln Mums @LincolnMums Following

Pleased to be able to support the [@lincoln_child](https://twitter.com/lincoln_child) launch today. Great event, fantastic project. Look forward to hearing more in the future 👍

3:48 pm · 4 Nov 2017

1 Retweet 3 Likes

Tina Haux @HauxTina Follow

Amazing initiative!

Sue Bond-Taylor @SueBondTaylor
Not long now & still lots to do, but privileged to be launching this for the city's young people. #childrights#ChildLincoln #ESRFestival [twitter.com/lincoln_child/...](https://twitter.com/lincoln_child/)

8:32 am · 29 Oct 2017

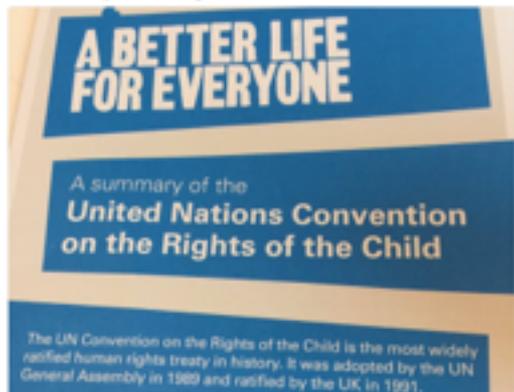
2 Retweets 3 Likes

 Tweet your reply

 Tweet your reply

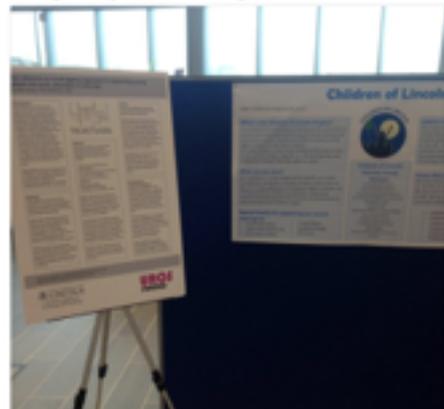
Rosie @Rosieeray
Following

I'm at @lincoln_child launch event at Lincoln University reading about :



The Network Lincoln @thenetworklincoln
Following

At @lincoln_child launch today! Learn how Lincoln is becoming more child friendly and recognising children's rights #lincolnshire



Children of Lincoln @lincoln_child - Nov 4
Our imagining a 'child-friendly' Lincoln event has kicked off! #ErcFestival #childrights

1 7 10

AJ @eden2636 - Nov 4
We're here! Daughter is having a lovely time!
1 1 1

AJ @eden2636 - Nov 4
Also, thank you for providing vegan food! We weren't expecting that! Makes a nice change for my daughter to be included :)
1 1 2

Children of Lincoln @lincoln_child - Nov 4
Thank you for coming! We hope you had a fun day!!
1 1

AJ @eden2636
Following

Replying to @lincoln_child

We did! I shall be following you to see how we can get involved in the initiative :)

10:12 am - 4 Nov 2017

Special thanks

We'd like to extend our special thanks to the students, organisations, businesses, families and funders that made this day possible. These include:

- City of Lincoln Council
- Lincolnshire County Council
- University of Lincoln
- Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)
- Lincolnshire Children's University
- Once Upon a Party
- Children's Links
- Ruddocks Design
- Morrissons, Lincoln
- Imps in the Community
- Lincoln Mums
- Bethany Frost, Georgia Pengelly and Kathryn Brookfield (University of Lincoln Undergraduate Research Opportunities Scheme)
- Our 15 University of Lincoln student volunteers, who were fantastic: Lois Bloomfield, Amy Gray, Elizabeth Ogunsola, Alanna Plaats, Anais Higgs, Carla Eastwood, Sophie Darn, Ellie-May Cullen, Victoria Tamburini, Alex Harris, Faatimah Patel, Amy Lambert, Lauren Bateman, Alix Podevin, and Cullen Gaskell.

Report written by:

Sue Bond-Taylor, Senior Lecturer in Criminology, University of Lincoln, Chair of Children of Lincoln Steering Group.

Email: sbtaylor@lincoln.ac.uk Twitter: @suebondtaylor

Dr Anna Tarrant, Senior Lecturer in Sociology, University of Lincoln, Vice-chair of Children of Lincoln Steering Group.

Email: atarrant@lincoln.ac.uk Twitter: @dratarrant

Children of Lincoln Contacts:

Website: <http://childlincoln.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk>

Email: childlincoln@lincoln.ac.uk Twitter: @lincoln_child