



Welcome to the new TH!NK FC blog space...we'll be sharing a little something each month, whether it be one of our tools, something about what we are up to or a hot topic. But we'll start with a bit about us...

TH!NK FC - a funny name for a football club.

Inception

You may have heard of us or you may have seen us at an event but are still wondering what we are all about? Who is TH!NK FC!?

Our roots stretch back beyond our inception as a CIC in 2016 with Deana, who has always been an active citizen, a champion of community work, fountain of ideas and ignites creativity wherever she goes. In 2016, presented with a proverbial fork in the road Deana was beginning a new chapter - fuelled by a passion to make a positive impact in people's lives and to celebrate the everyday heroes among us, she embarked on our mission.

The Hero Project

The Hero Project was our initial name - making a difference takes various forms, but it all begins with the crucial step of acting on a feeling, and contributing in your own time and place. To Deana and her collaborators, Julia, Richard, Kristiana and Victoria this saw everyone as an everyday hero. Collectively, everyday heroes create the rich stories of our community, past and present – and its with these sentiments that Coalville's "Famous Fifty" story was shared. The first WW1 volunteers who landed in France in 1914, all from Coalville, inspired the creation of fifty life-sized MDF figures each adopted by a local community group. We facilitated the exhibition in the Old Market Hall, complete with trenches and sound effects that brought the figures together in a moving modern memoir. This exhibition led to others – Geordie Heroes in Newcastle (funded by the Home Office) and Fabulous Females, in NW Leicestershire (funded by Central England Co-operative). Each project captured local stories and passions with the aim to make creativity tangible and for public display; we believe every public place has the potential to serve as a gallery, showcasing local creativity! (More information about these projects are under "Past Projects", on our website).

It was around this time that Ian met Deana (2018) - we learnt a lot from the exhibition project experiences, those we met and were inspired by, reflecting on what we felt were our own values (Authenticity, Connection & Trust) as well as exploring Britain's Values being taught in schools (Democracy, Rule of Law, Respect and Tolerance, Individual Liberty), our first hand experience and understanding of how people find fulfilment through purpose, working in their communities and unlocking their own potential – all revealed valuable insights that guided us on the next part of our journey. TH!NK was born.



TH!NK FC

• People • Place • Potential

TH!NK FC

We were starting to realise that communities were looking for support through capacity, assets and networks and two significant themes were emerging from our work as The Hero Project. Firstly, the need for a toolkit for a change in thinking and secondly, a desire for organization to increase assets and grow networks. Both naturally leading to the promotion and greater awareness of Community Benefit Societies and these concepts coalesced into our own "Couch to 5k for Citizenship Muscles".

With Ian's experiences in diverse ways of thinking, community enterprises, and co-operatives, we explored practical tools from the business world, distinct from education or mental health approaches that many seemed to find disappointing. Our focus remained on young people and communities, and we connected with a huge variety of different influences going beyond the "ABCD's" including; Jon **A**lexander (Citizen); **B**eing More Pirate (Be More Pirate & How to Be more Pirate by Sam Conniff); The **C**amerados Movement; Edward **D**e Bono; Liberating Structures, Andy Gilbert (Go Mad), Co-operatives and many more.

Thinking differently, our worldview involves a core belief in the true value of people, place and potential. Thinking about people within their unique contexts (communities), finding purpose and wellbeing when taking action, especially alongside others. We found our name The Hero Project confused what we were about; we weren't exclusive to veterans or exceptional individuals (based on our work to date); we aimed to celebrate everyone! We wanted to create a thinking revolution – it seemed only natural we should change our name to TH!NK FC (2020) and so set sail to start sharing these tools and ideas.

We began collaborating with others, running pilots in primary schools, courses in community places, masterclasses with MBA students and it wasn't long before we were inspired to put these ideas into practice on a much larger scale.

Coalville C.A.N

Embodying the TH!NK approach we worked alongside others to form Coalville C.A.N (2020), a Community Benefit Society with the aim to make Coalville a great place to live, work and visit. This work is both rewarding and challenging, fun and frustrating, and requires a 20-year commitment! Awarded National Lottery Funding and with the support and commitment of a local volunteer crew, we have been able to set up an inclusive community space, run by the community for the community – with clubs, talks, workshops, gallery, rooms to hire and a Local Makers Shop (and plenty more!). [What's On – Coalville CAN](#)

This is where Helen finds us, at Coalville C.A.N at a book talk in Nov 2022. At her own crossroads, leaving the corporate world behind she has a wealth of operational expertise and a passion for learning. Inspired by Cormac Russell & John McKnight's book *The Connected Community; Discovering the Health, Wealth & Power of Neighbourhoods*, her energy to get involved with TH!NKs mission finds her as our newest member.



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TH!NK Today

Today you'll find us continuing our work at Coalville C.A.N with our own local community, collaborating with community groups across the county and beyond, at festivals, running workshops, adding stories to our YouTube Channel, involved in national campaigns for change in community power, sitting on panels at a variety of events and projects around the country, continuing to share TH!NKing tools through different courses, summits and short stories, promoting our Journal and working alongside people to support a change in TH!NKing!

**As our exploration continues, we invite you to connect and collaborate with us,
we'd love to hear from you!**

One last thing, about our name - TH!NK, hopefully it makes sense. But why F.C.?

For Children, For Community, perhaps even For Capability or Character? If the current way of doing things has brought us to where we are today, there is a need, a passion, a cry For Change—this is the time to "Flip Conformity."

The TH!NK Team – Deana, Ian & Helen (Jan 2024).

**You'll find us at Coalville C.A.N (Memorial Square, Coalville).
Follow us on social media to discover and download FREE tools
and resources, buy our books or collaborate with us.**

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