



Community Development for Older People in Greater Brislington

Evaluation of the Bristol Charities Bristol Ageing Better project

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ABOUT THIS REPORT >>

This report is a collaborative effort between BAB Community Researchers Carol Fry and Christopher Orlik and UWE researchers Mat Jones and Amy Beardmore.

We would like to thank everyone who agreed to be interviewed or take part in discussion workshops for this report, including the Bristol Charities staff and partners, BAB Community Researcher team, BAB staff and UWE staff.

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Acronyms >>

ABCD	Asset Based Community Development
BAB	Bristol Ageing Better
BCC	Bristol City Council
CDOP	Community Development for Older People
CDW	Community Development Worker
CKSF	Community Kick-Start Fund
CMF	Common Measurement Framework
CR	Community Researcher
GBT	Greater Brislington Together
SDM	Senior Development Manager
UWE	University of the West of England

Executive Summary >>

ABOUT BAB AND ABOUT THE PROJECT

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A successful application from Bristol Ageing Better (BAB) led to the award of National Lottery Community Funding of nearly £6m in 2014. Volunteer Community Researchers (CRs), themselves aged over 50, were subsequently invited to join the evaluation of the BAB programme and were recruited in the autumn of 2014. Thereafter, the CR team met every month with the BAB team and colleagues from the University of the West of England, and CRs were assigned to individual projects within BAB in order to conduct peer-led research into reducing social isolation and loneliness for older people in Bristol.

One aspect of the BAB programme was the commissioning of projects in strategic parts of the city with the aim of working with older people in order to make those communities engaging, vibrant and age-friendly places to grow old. The aim was to empower older people to participate in the co-production of their own activities, as well as to provide opportunities for those individuals to engage in their communities through volunteering or by organising and actively participating in groups within their local area.

Greater Brislington was one such locality, having been selected due to a lack of previous investment in the area. Bristol Charities subsequently submitted a tender to deliver the work, and were successfully awarded the Community Development for Older People (CDOP) in Greater Brislington contract in 2017, to be delivered over a three year period.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FOR OLDER PEOPLE IN GREATER BRISLINGTON

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The Greater Brislington area benefited from a number of successful initiatives over the period that Bristol Charities were running the CDOP project, and the Community Development Worker (CDW) was a consistent presence in the area throughout. The CDW began the project by walking the area, getting to know it, finding out what was already going on locally and where appropriate venues and resources could be found. He built strong relationships with local people, and as a result was later able to provide compelling evidence of impact through successful completions of the BAB wellbeing questionnaire with older residents.

One of the many successes of the CDOP work in Greater Brislington was the publication of a number of local resources, including a 'What's On Guide' that included information for the over 50s; a toilet map of the local area; and a leaflet that aimed to address some of the perceived barriers to participation in activities for older people. The CDW managed to find sponsors for the 'What's On Guide' which helped it to be sustainable after the project was concluded, and had the added benefit of widening the audience (and therefore advertising revenue) by including the details of all activities for all ages in the area. The project had also begun to develop some innovative ways of reaching out to isolated older people towards the end of the project, such as using local tradespeople who may come into contact

with such individuals in their homes as a first point of contact to signpost to local activities.

The project was successful in holding a number of taster days and pop-up events in order to showcase local activities and these proved to be effective in increasing attendance. The CDW was mindful of sustainability and consciously built in strategies from the start of the project to ensure activities were viable long-term. If some activities proved to be unpopular they were adapted accordingly, or if attendance was low then participants were encouraged to bring friends and family along.

Having originally started the project with the idea of creating a steering group for older people, when numbers of those attending these meetings started to decrease the group was incorporated into the wider 'Greater Brislington Together' group. This - along with the popularity of the less segregated 'What's On Guide' (as opposed to one specifically for the over 50s) feeds into a recurring theme across the BAB programme about whether it is necessary to single out older people for targeted activities.

Using validated before and after questionnaire measures, the Greater Brislington project was able to show positive outcomes for reduced loneliness, and improved health, wellbeing and social contact. This was a good achievement for the project given the limited time and resources and the challenges involved in measuring change for individuals in community development practice.

Finally, where other CDOP projects struggled with staffing or management issues, the Bristol Charities staffing structure remained strong throughout the funded period, allowing consistency in delivery across the three years. The CDW was well supported by his line manager during this time, and was given

sufficient support and freedom to deliver a project that fully embraced the BAB 'test and learn' ethos.



Introduction >>

Bristol Ageing Better (BAB) is a partnership of individuals and organisations. It is funded by the National Lottery Community Fund to develop and deliver a 5-year programme (over £5.9 million) that identifies the best ways of reducing both the isolation and loneliness of people over 50. The funding runs from 2015 to 2020 (recently partially extended to 2021) and is part of the National Lottery Community Fund Fulfilling Lives: Ageing Better programme.

BAB aims to create an environment in which partner organisations can deliver effective services, share their knowledge of what works, and be noticed by the people who matter. The partnership is led by Age UK Bristol and the programme aims to reduce isolation and loneliness in older people in Bristol through commissioning projects across four main themes:

- 1) Creating the conditions to reduce and prevent loneliness
- 2) Identifying and informing older people at risk of loneliness
- 3) Working with communities to increase the services and activities available
- 4) Supporting individuals to live fulfilling lives

In Bristol, a key element of the programme is Community Development for Older People (CDOP), with ten such projects taking place under this theme across the City. The aim of these projects is to create vibrant communities that meet the needs of older people and provide them with a range of social and cultural activities to take part in as they age (Bristol

Ageing Better, 2020). The CDOP projects use a 'test and learn' model in which different community development approaches and techniques are employed in a range of contexts in order to develop theories of best practice.

WHY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FOR OLDER PEOPLE (CDOP)?

With the number of people in the UK aged 60 or above set to rise to an estimated 25% of the total population within the next 20 - 40 years (Dickens, Richards, Greaves and Campbell, 2011), creating 'age-friendly' environments is an increasingly important part of the public health agenda. A key priority is to create local settings that can positively influence the lives of an ageing population (Lui et al, 2009), and there is increasing recognition that consulting older people on what that should look like is integral to this process. Older citizens can - and frequently do - make a positive contribution to their communities, and therefore constitute a valuable asset to communities. It is estimated, for example, that contributions made by older people in a voluntary capacity are worth over £10 million a year to the economy (Klee, Mordey, Phua and Russell, 2014).

However, increasing levels of social isolation and loneliness present a major potential setback to successfully engaging older people in the communities in which they live, and could represent a major risk to a person's health and wellbeing. Some have even suggested that loneliness could be as dangerous to a person's physical health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day (Holt-Lunstad et al, 2015).

The terms 'loneliness' and 'social isolation' are often used interchangeably, but it is important to differentiate between the two states as they can mean different things to different people, and may be dependent on personal circumstances or other contextual factors. Loneliness is defined by Age UK as:

» "A subjective feeling about the gap between a person's desired levels of social contact and their actual level of social contact. It refers to the perceived quality of the person's relationships. Loneliness is never desired and lessening these feelings can take a long time."

Whilst social isolation is said to be:

» "An objective measure of the number of contacts that people have. It is about the quantity and not quality of relationships"

- Age UK, 2019

Whilst these issues can affect people of all ages, older adults are particularly vulnerable. The risk factors for social isolation and loneliness may be broadly the same for the whole population, but importantly they are more likely to occur amongst individuals who are in older age. They include:

- ▶ Issues associated with housing tenure (ownership, renting)
- ▶ Living alone and the potential impact of a lack of social interaction on health and wellbeing
- ▶ Marital status (especially if divorced or widowed)
- ▶ Those who report being in very bad or bad health (these individuals are 2.5 times more likely to report loneliness)

- ONS, 2015



These problems are further compounded by the fact that this age group are much more likely to experience more than one risk factor at the same time. It is therefore imperative that strategies are put in place to support the development of inclusive communities that encourage participation for all older adults in order to increase levels of inclusivity and interaction before they impact negatively on an individual's quality of life. This will not only help to address problems associated with social isolation and loneliness (perhaps even before they start), but will also make our communities safer, friendlier and healthier places in which to grow old.

With evidence to suggest that older people are increasingly likely to age 'in place' and now tend to stay in their own homes for longer (Gardner, 2014), developing communities that can support and empower older people during this time is key to them living fulfilling and rich lives. Much of this work involves utilising Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approaches that build on what already exists within a community, connecting groups and services and using them as effectively as possible (Klee, Mordey, Phuaré and Russell, 2014). Community development has therefore been integral to BAB since its inception and is a key element of the overall programme.

The CDOP projects therefore exist to tackle the issues of loneliness and social isolation in six specific communities within the City of Bristol, using various approaches to community development dependent on local need and existing services. Different providers were invited to tender for the CDOP work in each area, using a 'test and learn' approach tailored to the local community receiving the intervention.

This report is an evaluation of the CDOP work undertaken by local organisation Bristol

Charities in the Greater Brislington area of the city, and the evaluation of that work, led by a small team of Community Researchers. The report identifies activities available to older people in the area, the strengths and weaknesses of the organisational approach and reflections on whether the project has successfully delivered meaningful community development for older people locally. The evaluation draws on various pieces of fieldwork and project documentation, a detailed breakdown of which can be found in the methods section.

Context >>

GREATER BRISLINGTON AREA PROFILE

Greater Brislington is a suburban area situated to the south east of the City of Bristol. It has historically had little significant funding focused on local organisations. Greater Brislington covers a large area that incorporates the two wards identified by Bristol City Council (BCC) as Brislington East and Brislington West. There is some disparity between these two areas, with the ward in the East amongst some of

the most deprived 10-20% in England (Greater Brislington Project Summary) Despite this, most people living in the wards report an overall satisfaction with life, and 'Quality of Life' data for the area tends to be consistent with the feelings of the wider Bristol population (see Table 1).

Table 1: Brislington statistical ward profile and quality of life data

Source: Quality of Life survey 2019-20 and Brislington East and Brislington West Ward Profile Data 2016-2018

	Brislington East	Brislington West	Bristol as a whole
Satisfied with life	71.1%	79.5%	75.3%
% People reporting below average mental wellbeing	12.4%	11.5%	14.7%
% People reporting that they feel they belong to the neighbourhood	57.2%	62.3%	62%
Life expectancy (females)	84.6 years	83.4 years	82.6 years
Life expectancy (males)	81.5 years	77.9 years	78.4 years
% Who feel lonely because they don't see family or friends enough	1.7%	2.8%	3.4%
% For whom transport issues stop them from getting involved in their local community	6.8%	9.8%	8.4%

Although residents generally report a good quality of life, initial scoping exercises conducted by the UWE and BAB teams identified Greater Brislington as an 'area of exceptional need' for the project (Woodspring, 2016). This was primarily due to the fact that – as mentioned previously - neither charitable organisations nor the City Council had a history of investing funds in the area. It was also in recognition of the slightly above average proportion of residents living in the area who were aged 55+ (24% of Greater Brislington is over 55 while the average for Bristol is 22% - see Table 2).

Table 2: Older People in Greater Brislington
Source: ONS, 2017

Age data	Brislington East	Brislington West	Bristol as a whole
55 - 64	9.7%	10.3%	8.9%
65+	14.5%	12.9%	13%

Both Brislington East and West have a lower percentage of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) people than the Bristol average. Each ward has 8.7% BAME population while the Bristol average is 16.5%.

Figure 1: Old and new houses in St Anne's



DESCRIPTION OF THE GREATER BRISLINGTON AREA

Greater Brislington falls within the BS4 postcode, but it is large and split by a major A road, the Bath Road. The area is largely residential with a diverse mix of housing, ranging from areas such as the Broom Hill Estate - high density social housing - to the more affluent area situated in West Brislington in Sandy Park.

Greater Brislington runs from the south bank of the River Avon in Broomhill, and includes the whole of the St Anne's estate, council housing built in the 1930s but now consisting of mostly privately owned properties. Lying between the west side of Newbridge Road/Wick Road (a continuous road) and the Bath Road at Arnos Park are privately owned houses, some of which date from the start of the 20th century, others from the 1930s. West of the Bath Road and up the hill towards Knowle are a number of 1960s houses and early 20th century homes.

Figure 2: Shops in Sandy Park shopping area



Sandy Park Shopping area sits within the centre of the two wards, and close by is the 1990s Avonmeads development, an out of town Retail Park, consisting of superstores, a cinema and bowling alley, for which a car is essential in order to visit.

The Bath Road runs from Arnos Vale through Brislington village, an area with very few shops. To the right of the Bath Road after Brislington Village is a large 1930s council estate and some newer houses.

There is one large comprehensive school at the south-western edge of the ward, two

junior schools in Brislington West and one in Brislington East. There is also a small faith-based secondary school on the industrial estate. A health centre is situated in the north of Brislington West ward and serves the whole of the Greater Brislington area, and there is also a dental practice on the Bath Road.

There are five churches and one community centre in Brislington East, with a Community Hall on Hungerford Road in Brislington West.

A map of the area identifying all major local facilities can be found in Figure 4.

Figure 3: Out of town complex of Avonmeads, with cinema, bowling alley, shops and restaurants



ASSET MAPPING

Prior to the setting up of the community development project, volunteer researchers from Bristol Ageing Better (BAB) undertook a Social Capital analysis of the area entitled 'The Greater Brislington Mini Project' (2016) which revealed the area to have relatively few community-based activities for older people. The project was a largely desk-based piece of research that created an initial profile of the area, individual wards, councillors, key neighbourhood partnership staff and voluntary groups. This did not constitute a full asset mapping exercise due to the lack of resources available at the time of the project, but through searching the internet, noticeboards and cards

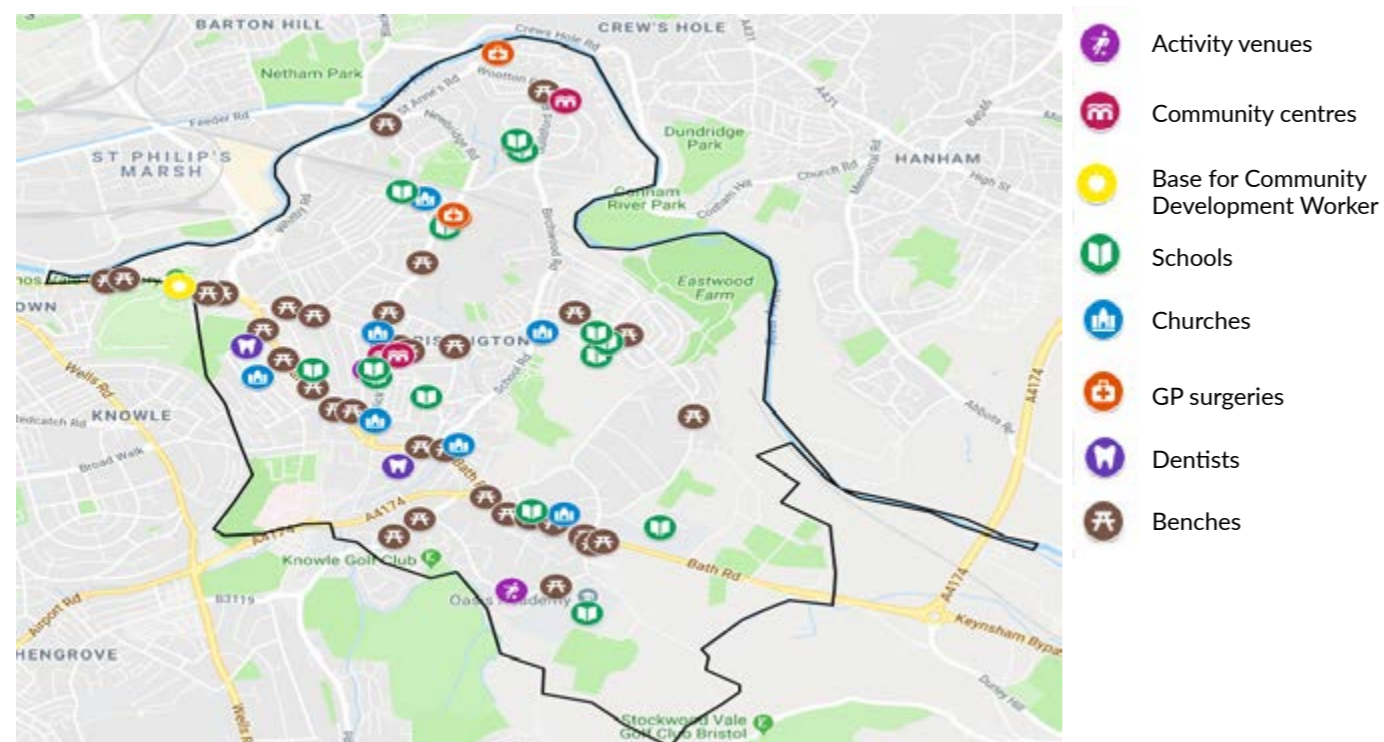
in shop windows the CRs were able to identify around seventy-three local organisations. Ten of these were then chosen as the subjects of the Greater Brislington Mini Project, with six agreeing to participate.

The asset mapping and mini project did not focus purely on older people, but aimed to get a general feel for the extent of community involvement and knowledge of the needs of older people and the BAB project. One of the key issues identified through this piece of work was a lack of transport and the recent or impending closure of some venues and activities.

» *"Brislington is quite a problematic place as it has no real community hub, and it is fragmented into a number of discrete areas... a lot of old people are unwell, disabled and isolated. It is difficult to reach out to them and many are not equipped with computer technology."*

- Local Councillor

Figure 4: Map of the area with local facilities



Overview of the project >>

BRISTOL CHARITIES

Following an invitation to tender for the CDOP projects, in 2017 the Greater Brislington contract was awarded to Bristol Charities who appointed a Community Development Worker (CDW) on a three-year contract, originally for 25 hours a week. However, funding was soon found within Bristol Charities to extend this contract to a full working week, to the end of the project in April 2020.

Bristol Charities was already working in partnership with LinkAge Network in the north of the City at the time of their application, and had experience in delivering community development services to older people in that area. It was also in the process of setting up a community development hub for older people in the Hotwells area, so was therefore deemed well qualified to deliver the project (Original tender submission – 2017).

The overall aim of the Bristol Charities CDOP work is to 'support and empower local older people to develop activities, meaningful occupation and volunteering opportunities that improve their community and address social isolation and loneliness'. Their approach is to bring older people together in order to identify concerns and empower them to make decisions on local developments. Subsequent groups and activities are then set up in consultation with older people, ensuring that the intended users lead provision.

Bristol Charities' Greater Brislington Community Development for Older People (CDOP) project aims to support the following

key priorities identified by The Greater Brislington Partnership and the four forums across the area, as follows:

- ▶ Giving older people access to the services they want
- ▶ Helping and supporting existing community events
- ▶ Promoting local volunteering opportunities
- ▶ Increasing the amount of local activities (and information) available to older people

The project sought to fulfil this by engaging with people over 50 in Greater Brislington in order to tackle isolation and loneliness. Specifically, the aim was to provide opportunities for the development of new activities for improving the quality of life of older people, as well as supporting existing groups. Activities have been designed to be fun and educational and include some training activities. The prevention of loneliness and supporting resilience is key to the project.

The CDW started in post in April 2017, and is full-time. He is based at the Bristol Charities office in the central location of St Augustine's Reach, and also at Arnos Vale Cemetery in an office above the gift shop. At the latter location, he is within walking distance of much of the local area.

Research questions and design >>

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The overarching aim of the evaluation of BAB CDOP projects was to explore the elements of good community development for older people. In this context, the following research questions were used to inform and guide the direction and focus of the evaluation.

Research questions
1. What is the added value that the Bristol Charities CDOP project brings to community development activity in Greater Brislington?
2. What is the role of the Bristol Charities CDOP project in changing issues for older people and their communities?
3. What are the key successful elements of the Bristol Charities CDOP project's model for community development?
4. What aspects of Bristol Charities CDOP project activity are associated with core BAB outcomes for older people?
5. What are costs and benefits of some elements of the Bristol Charities CDOP project?

However, at the heart of all the CDOP evaluations is the overarching primary research question:

>> "What does good community development for older people look like?"

This therefore guided the evaluation process above all other sub-research questions.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This was a mixed methods evaluation that consisted of both fieldwork (including informal interviews, meetings and ethnographic observations) and the analysis of project documentation (see Table 3 below for details).

A team of community researchers (CRs) conducted the fieldwork and attended a broad range of activities across the three-year funding period. These CRs were recruited at the start of the BAB evaluation in order to lead the fieldwork and report writing processes across all project streams. Two of those CRs were assigned to work specifically on the Greater Brislington evaluation.

In the context of the CDOP evaluations, 'ethnographic observations' refers to classes or project activities involving older people that were attended or observed by the CRs in order to witness community development in action. Meetings and interviews were conducted with key people and informal conversations were had with numerous project staff and participants. The notes and observations from these sessions were used to inform the findings of this evaluation, along with a transcript from interviews with the Community Development Worker (CDW) and his management.

Methods >>

Table 3: Project fieldwork and documentation

Fieldwork		
Date	What	Research Type
June 2018	Initial meeting with Bristol Charities CDW & Service Development Manager (SDM)	Meeting/informal interview
September 2018	Meeting with CDW, SDM & CRs	Meeting/informal interview
October 2018	Tai Chi class (n=6)	Observation and informal discussions
October 2018	Taster day	Observation and informal discussions
October 2018	Over 50s forum	Observation
November 2018	Lunch club (n=15)	Observation and informal discussions
November 2018	Walking club	Observation and informal discussions
April 2019	Meeting with CDW	Meeting/informal interview
April 2019	Meeting with Councillors (n=2)	Meeting/informal interview
June 2019	Lunch club (n=17)	Observation and informal discussions
June 2019	Chair exercises (n=6)	Observation and informal discussions
October 2019	Interview with CDW, SDM & CRs	Formal interview (audio recorded)
Project documentation		
Date	What	Research Type
November 2016	Original tender submission	Project documentation
December 2017	Successes & Challenges Year 1	Project documentation
April 2018	Quarterly reports Year 1	Project documentation
January 2019	CMF progress report	Project documentation (quantitative data)
May 2019	Quarterly reports Year 2	Project documentation

With the assistance of research staff at the University of the West of England (UWE), the CRs developed an evaluation plan that included a range of fieldwork opportunities that would allow them to observe activities, as well as talk to older people and those involved in the project. One of their first tasks was to meet with the Senior Development Manager (SDM) of Bristol Charities and the Community Development Worker (CDW). They did so at the Bristol Charities office in central Bristol in June 2018, and again at his Arnos Vale office in Spring 2019. A final meeting was held with both the SDM and CDW at Arnos Vale in October 2019, when the pair were formally interviewed prior to the production of this report.

Between January 2018 and June 2019, the Community Researchers attended various activities within the Greater Brislington CDOP area including lunch clubs, a walking group, a taster day, a chair exercise club and the Over 50s Forum. The Brislington Local Councillors were interviewed either in person or by email when not available. Attendees were asked similar questions according to an agreed topic guide in order to elicit their responses (see Appendix for a list of these questions).

Attendance for the Community Researchers at events was arranged via the CDW and always with the consent of the group leader or facilitator. Group members were clearly informed at the start of discussions about the evaluation and how their comments would be used, and all were happy to give verbal consent to participate. There were around 40 attendees at the taster day, and roughly 20 were spoken to; other attendees were spoken to during the various activities that the researchers took part in, along with local Councillors.

Project documentation provided to Bristol Ageing Better as part of the application, and project monitoring processes were assessed

and taken into consideration in writing up the findings for this report. This includes data from quarterly reports submitted to the BAB team, as well as participant monitoring data which is routinely collected for each project via the Common Measurement Framework (CMF) forms. The CMF was developed as part of the national Ageing Better programme. Participants completing baseline and follow-up questionnaires responded to questions using twelve sets of validated measures that covered isolation, loneliness, social contact, health and wellbeing.

Quantitative findings on participation and outcomes >>

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS

Drawing upon the registration records of 186 participants, table 4 shows that the mean age of participants was 69 years, with a majority female (77%), heterosexual (85%), White (93%), and Christian (64%).

Table 4: Demographic characteristics of participants

	Greater Brislington CDOP	BAB programme
Age (based on 186 Greater Brislington participants)		
Average age (mean)	69 (range 48 - 89)	71 (range 41 - 102)
Gender (based on 199 Greater Brislington participants)		
Male participants (%)	22%	28%
Female participants (%)	77%	69%
Identifying as a different gender	0%	0%
Prefer not to say	0.5%	0.4%
No response	0.5%	2%
Sexual orientation (based on 199 Greater Brislington participants)		
Heterosexual	85%	83%
Gay/lesbian	0.5%	1%
Bisexual	0%	0.5%
Prefer not to say	5%	7%
No response	10%	8%

Table 4 continues overleaf...

Table 4 continued:

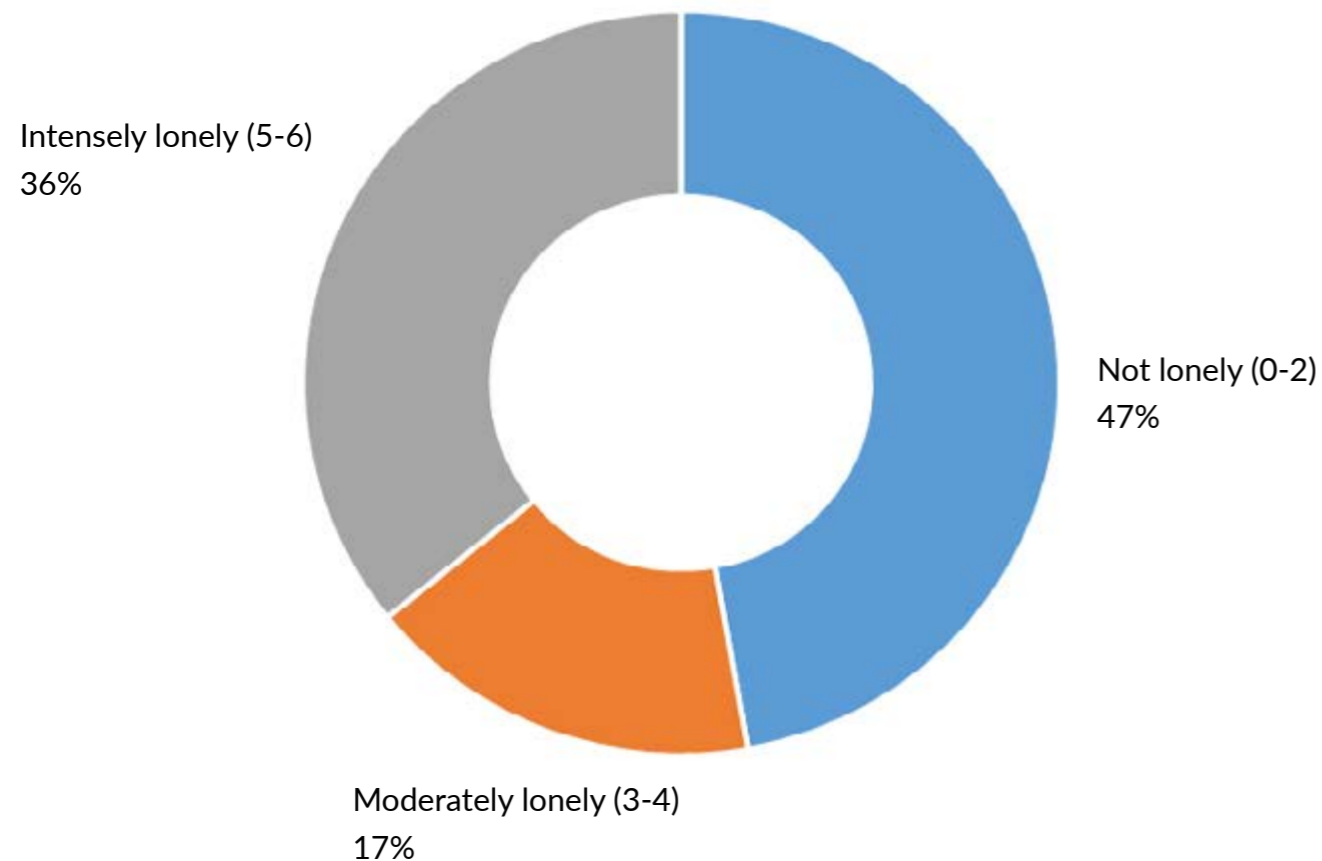
	Greater Brislington CDOP	BAB programme
Ethnic background (based on 199 Greater Brislington participants)		
White	93%	72%
Black or Black British	1%	10%
Asian or Asian British	0.5%	11%
Mixed	1%	1%
Any other	0%	1%
Prefer not to say	1.5%	1%
No response	3%	4%
Religion (based on 199 Greater Brislington participants)		
No religion	23%	24%
Christian	64%	49%
Buddhist	0.5%	2%
Hindu	0%	0.4%
Jewish	0%	0.2%
Muslim	0%	8%
Sikh	0%	0.4%
Other religion	1.5%	4%
Prefer not to say	6.5%	6%
No response	4.5%	6%

REACH AND ENGAGEMENT: ADDRESSING SOCIAL ISOLATION AND LONELINESS

For the Greater Brislington project there was baseline and follow-up data for over 50 participants. At baseline, the score for the 0-6 De Jong Gierveld (DjG) scale for loneliness shows a mean of 3.09. This is similar to the BAB programme overall (3.37) and the national Ageing Better programme overall (3.2). Figure 5 shows that over one third of participants (36%)

scored as intensely lonely, 17% moderately lonely and 47% not lonely. The data provides evidence that the projects were reaching individuals that were the focus for the BAB programme, bearing in mind that the CDOP projects were all designed to work with a range of older people rather than a focus only on those experiencing loneliness.

Figure 5: Scores for the De Jong Gierveld Loneliness Scale at the beginning of taking part in CDOP projects (n=53)



OUTCOMES FOR PARTICIPANTS

Table 5 presents a summary of the outcomes for CDOP project participants alongside the outcomes for the BAB programme as a whole and the national Ageing Better programme. At baseline, the overall pattern is that participants in the Greater Brislington project were - on average - scoring somewhat better scores for health, wellbeing and social connections, and were less isolated than the averages at city and national levels.

For the primary outcome, the UCLA measure shows that there was a statistically significant improvement in scores for social and emotional loneliness. With the mean dropping from 5.40 to 4.51, this equates to a shift from 'lonely' to

'not lonely' for the group as a whole. The DjG measure showed the same change.

The other measures show statistically significant positive changes for wellbeing and health (EQVAS). There are also positive changes for social contact with family and non-family members; social participation in clubs etc.; participation in social activities; involvement in activities (co-design) and ability to influence decisions. It is notable that for social contact with children, family and friends and for co-design, the Greater Brislington outcomes are stronger than for the BAB programme as a whole.



Table 5: Outcomes for participants in the Greater Brislington CDOP project, alongside outcomes for participants in BAB overall and the national Ageing Better programme

Statistically significant change highlighted in bold red text.

Area of measurement	Measure	Greater Brislington CDOP				BAB programme overall				National Ageing Better		
		No. of matched pairs	Baseline mean	Follow up mean	Significance (p value)	No. of matched pairs	Baseline mean	Follow up mean	Significance (p value)	No. of matched pairs	Baseline mean	Follow up mean
Social and emotional isolation	DEJONG	53	3.09	2.42	0.020*	753	3.37	3.16	0.001	8290	3.2	2.9
Social and emotional isolation	UCLA	55	5.40	4.51	0.000*	897	5.66	5.35	0.000	8277	5.5	5.1
Social contact with children, family and friends	CONTACT	58	3.48	3.71	0.012	808	3.27	3.30	0.442	8059	3.00	2.89
Social contact with non-family members	SPEAK-LOCAL	59	6.88	7.29	0.000	1020	6.70	6.82	0.033	9576	6.68	6.89
Social participation in clubs etc	SOCIAL-SCORE	50	1.34	2.34	0.000	966	1.35	1.52	0.000	9477	1.1	1.3
Taking part in social activities	TAKEPART	59	1.08	1.85	0.000	1015	1.40	1.58	0.000	9456	1.49	1.73
Co-design. Activities involved in	INVOLVED	59	0.36	1.17	0.000	843	1.02	1.10	0.082	-	-	-
Ability to influence local decisions	INFLUENCE	62	2.32	2.90	0.001	915	2.85	3.00	0.004	-	-	-
Volunteering, unpaid help	HELP	60	0.92	1.48	0.001	981	1.26	1.41	0.002	-	-	-
Wellbeing	SWEMWBS	53	22.41	24.39	0.000	865	21.10	22.18	0.000	8493	21.5	22.9
Health/Quality of Life	EQ5DIndex	60	0.813	0.799	0.523	787	0.64932	0.66762	0.042	4485	0.61	0.63
Health	EQVAS	60	67.72	75.63	0.000	828	62.41	67.31	0.000	4477	63.05	67.00

* Significant change. Confirmed with a Wilcoxon Signed Rank test (p=0.006)

Qualitative findings >>

By undertaking fieldwork and through discussions with the CDW and the SDM throughout the project, the CRs were able to gain a good overview of the key elements of the CDOP work in Greater Brislington. This section summarises the main components of the project and any issues that arose through the delivery of project activities, building a picture of the successes and challenges involved in establishing a community development project for older people in this area of the city. The implications of these findings are discussed in detail in the discussion section of this document.

THE 'WHAT'S ON GUIDE' AND OTHER PUBLICITY

One of the first tasks undertaken by the CDW was to establish what groups and activities were currently available to older people in the area at the start of the project, and to gauge levels of awareness of such activities amongst the target population. Through conversations with local people, groups and organisations, the CDW found that people in the area didn't seem to know what was going on due to a lack of publicity, and he therefore decided to put together a list of activities for older people taking place in the Greater Brislington area. The CDW mapped current groups and activities, speaking to the organisers and collecting names and contact details. This information was then collated by the CDW who subsequently produced a booklet listing all the activities for older people that were currently available, along with times and venues. He also leafleted the area asking people to get in touch with him with suggestions for new activities that they would like to see available locally.

The original booklet contained advertisements by some local businesses, and this supplemented the cost of production to some extent (in addition to the funding already provided by BAB and Bristol Charities). Despite this additional income, the booklet remained a costly endeavour and was therefore not delivered to every house in the area, but instead a leaflet was included in the 'What's On Guides' that were delivered asking people to contact the CDW if they knew of anyone else who would like a copy.

This first edition was aimed specifically at the over 50s and focused solely on groups and activities for that age group. This was intended



to be a trial run in order to see whether this method of disseminating information locally was successful. It did indeed appear to be a popular publication, with feedback from local people positive, copies of the booklet disappearing quickly, and attendance at local groups remaining steady or improving as a result.

Subsequently, later editions were widened out to include a 'What's On Guide' for all ages, with sections included under four specific section headings: Children and Young People, General Groups and Activities, Health and Fitness, Over 50s Groups and Activities. This was intended to make the booklet more sustainable, as local businesses were more prepared to sponsor a booklet with a wider readership than one aimed purely at the over 50s, and were more proactive in contacting Bristol Charities and the CDW in order to pay for that publicity. This approach has also proven to be more cost effective for Bristol Charities, and has enabled local people to get all of their information in one place. The directory is also available online, which cuts down on printing costs.

The latest edition - 'What's On Guide, Greater Brislington 2019' - is printed on glossy paper, is 50 pages long and features 107 groups and activities listed covering all ages. At the back of the directory are listed 25 groups and activities specifically for older people, including lunch clubs, Zumba, Tai Chi and many others. The booklet also includes details of local libraries and surgeries. The CDW has made copies of the directory available to churches, cafes, pubs, as well as at Wicklea Health Centre, dental practices, in church halls and in Wick Library. The directory needs to be updated regularly in order to remain current and this is currently done every quarter.

Through conversations with individuals attending activities, the CRs found that the

'What's On Guide' was generally thought to be excellent and, without it, many felt they would only know of a few activities in their area. However, despite it being sent out to those who responded to the advertising flyer, there were still people unaware of its existence.

In addition to the booklet, the CDW produced a 30-second video with case study about the project including his contact details. He also set up a Facebook page to promote the project, and the CDW estimated that on average 2,000 people per week had seen the Facebook advertisement for the booklet. As the booklet has proven an effective means of communication, the CDW is also in the process of creating additional materials, including a leaflet that addresses the barriers that people may face in attending groups and how these can be easily overcome, the aim being to take away or pre-empt any fears or concerns people may have. He also hopes to develop further materials for people who often enter the homes of older people, such as local tradespeople.

Using the information available in the booklet, the researchers were able to suggest groups and events to attend in order to make ethnographic observations, and in some circumstances talk to attendees. Subsequently, one CR attended a Greater Brislington Over 50s monthly forum and another a lunch club.

Throughout the fieldwork, the CRs tried to establish how important the directory was in alerting people to the activities they were attending. At the lunch clubs, most people had seen the directory but were attending because they always had, and because it had preceded the CDOP project. Some had not heard of the directory, but were keen to take a copy, whilst others cited South Bristol Voice (a free local magazine) as their source of information for activities and information about what's on locally.

» "I attended two of the health taster days and enjoyed doing Chair Yoga and other activities."

- Local Councillor

ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE

The researchers arranged to attend some of the activity groups listed in the directory, with one attending two lunch clubs and a Tai Chi group. The second researcher went to the over 50's wellbeing 'taster' days where people can get information and advice, look at stalls and have taster sessions of some of the activities. The same researcher also went on one of the 'Twalkers' walks where people of all ages walk and talk.

Some of the activities on offer – such as the Twalkers walking group - pre-dated the booklet, whilst others – such as the Good Neighbour Scheme (for more information see below) – had been started with the CDW's help and support. There were many different activities and classes available, including Bingo, dance, walking, arts, crafts, knitting, history, and the CDW had also helped to set up other classes such as Tai Chi and 'Tea and Tech', all of which are now publicised through the 'What's On Guide'.

At the April 2018 meeting with the CDW the researchers learnt that the CDW was starting a film club at St Cuthbert's Church, Sandy Park. This is a central location on two bus routes. However, there is no storage space in the church and the CDW was having to carry the equipment to show films in the boot of his car. Unfortunately, at a later meeting the CDW reported that the film club had not been successful, having not attracted enough attendees. He believed that this might be because people were not keen on coming to a 'dark and gloomy building' when they could watch DVDs at home or increasingly stream films through Netflix or other providers.

WELLBEING TASTER DAYS

Two wellbeing days ran in September and October of 2018, with the aim of allowing local people to try some of the activities on offer without having to commit to attending a class. It was also an opportunity to meet other local people and see the variety of groups and classes available.

The first taster day was held in the Hungerford area in 2018, and around 12 people attended. There were information stalls on offer, such as WE Care & Repair and RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Programme), along with taster sessions of Zumba, Tai Chi, massage and relaxation. Unfortunately it was difficult to get things going at this first event, and people were initially wary of engaging.

Later that same year the second wellbeing day was held at Holymead Primary School on the Wick Road and this was far more successful. Some 60-70 people attended and there was a similar range of stalls and taster sessions on offer. There were also cards available with a tear-off slip containing details about the project and asking local residents about what they would like to see happening for older people locally. The cards also invited attendees to leave comments and their contact details. These cards were also placed in local libraries and public spaces after the event.

Figure 6: Participants try out activities at one of the taster days



LUNCH CLUBS

Generally, attendance at the local lunch clubs was good, and 15 participants were observed at St Anne's and 17 at St. Christopher's on the occasions the CR attended. The organisers of the lunch clubs have previously advertised by leafleting houses in streets that are known to have a higher population of older people, but this appeared to have yielded little return in terms of extra attendees. Many people that the CR spoke to felt that transport and a lack of drivers and lifts to lunch clubs were the reason for others not attending. Another participant suggested that there may even be a matter of pride involved for some, and that they may not wish to accept 'charity' (although the meal in the lunch clubs cost between £3 and £5).

Those attending lunch clubs tended to be over 70 years of age, with most in their late 80s or early 90s. Each person a CR spoke to had had different experiences, but the majority of attendees did not see others outside of the club, which again could be due to a lack of mobility or transport options.

In terms of accessing information about local activities, one participant talked of the M Shed (a local free museum) having a very good advertising service for 'What's on in Bristol', but explained that you had to be online to hear about their events and historical walks. At the St Anne's lunch club one participant said they had heard about it from their daughter who lives in Essex - most likely on the internet.

Another participant was also a member of the Good Neighbour Scheme (see below for more details), so was already involved in activities supported by Bristol Charities. Lunch club members also talked about lunch club days out, which were very popular. Although most people at St. Christopher's stated that they do

take part in other activities outside of the lunch club (such as bowls, line dancing and a local choir), those who didn't attend other activities expressed no desire to do so.

The lunch club at St. Anne's has been running for over 30 years and is staffed by volunteers (one volunteer described how this was the norm, and that another local lunch club had closed due to there being no cook available. Another attendee expressed concern that this could happen to the St. Anne's club too). The volunteers felt that most people had heard about the club by word of mouth more than anything else, although a couple of attendees did have a copy of the booklet with them.

Generally people came on their own and met friends at the lunch, and all reported making new friends since joining the lunch club. All of them said that it had made a big difference to their lives, meeting people and getting out of the house once a week, and most had been attending for two or three years (even moving to a new venue when the club moved from its previous location to St. Anne's Church Hall). Generally, no one had joined other activities or clubs as a result of coming to the St Anne's lunch club.

OVER 50S FORUM AND CONSULTATION WITH LOCAL PEOPLE

Until 2016 Bristol City Council provided officers to attend Neighbourhood Partnership schemes, and the two wards - Brislington East and West - were part of the Greater Brislington Neighbourhood Partnership. The wards met quarterly and made suggestions for a larger Partnership Meeting where councillors voted to spend small sums of money on projects suggested by the forums.

Since the abolition of Neighbourhood Partnerships, areas have mostly 'done their own thing'. In Greater Brislington an over 50's Forum was set up with the purpose of giving local older people a voice, as well as offering a space in which to meet socially whilst planning and coordinating local activities. When the CR attended the forum there were approximately 20 people there. The forum was held at St Cuthbert's Church Hall in Sandy Park Road, and two of the four local councillors for the area were in attendance, along with local residents, most of whom were predominantly over 55 years old. At the most recent meeting it was reported by the CDW that 32 people attended, one of whom was also a member of the Greater Brislington Forum which the community worker set up at the start of the Greater Brislington Community Development Work.

In June 2019 the project successfully delivered a 'Celebrating Age Festival' in conjunction with the Greater Brislington Over 50s Forum. Events on the day included walking rugby, a local music event, an arts & crafts fair, an information event and a local history walk. More recently

still, Bristol Charities have formed strong links with a local organisation named Greater Brislington Together (GBT), a group formed 'to help Brislington community groups and volunteers obtain funding and work together to help the area flourish' (GreaterBrislington.org, 2019). The CDW reported that this was a positive connection, and that working with GBT has helped to foster a spirit of joint working with local groups. It has also allowed project information to be disseminated more effectively through existing GBT channels.

» *"Older people continue to be involved in the design, development, delivery and evaluation of the project via the Greater Brislington Over 50's Forum. The formation of the Over 50's Forum as an independent body in Brislington supported by the project should significantly help and assist the delivery of the project in its final year...The Forum also allows older people greater opportunities to provide insight and discussions regarding issues identified within Brislington, as well as initiatives developed by the project."*

- Quarter 2 report, 2019 - 2020

GOOD NEIGHBOUR SCHEME

The Bristol Charities Good Neighbour Scheme has been established by the CDW to support people over 50 living locally who need a helping hand with daily tasks or who are lonely and would benefit from some company. It is supported by volunteers in the local community who are matched to local beneficiaries of the service. Progress with this particular initiative has been slow yet steady, with two new participants joining the scheme and being successfully matched to older people in quarter one of 2019-2020, and another volunteer signing up in quarter two (Quarter 2 report, 2019 - 2020). At the time of writing there are more volunteers than there are beneficiaries registered with the scheme.

Volunteers are required to sign a volunteer agreement and are told that they cannot accept money from recipients (for example if helping them with their shopping). The CDW is currently looking at ways to sustain the scheme and it is hoped that there may be an opportunity to do so in conjunction with local GP surgeries as part of a local social prescribing offer.



TRANSPORT AND MOBILITY

The CRs found that people who attended only one activity usually did so because of restrictions due to mobility or transport issues. These individuals also appeared more likely to attend groups aimed at people with mobility issues, such as chair exercises.

Transport and mobility systems are lacking in the area (as is the case across the city) and this needs to be addressed in order to help people attend activities. The CDW reported that he has been putting pressure on the local bus company and the Council to try to improve connections for local people. He has also been trying to recruit volunteers for transport, shopping and gardening through the Good Neighbour Scheme, which would at least go some way towards helping people access the things they need locally through a third party.

It is clear that mobility is a major barrier to attendance at activities. All the attendees at the lunch clubs live very close or are able to get lifts from friends, but travelling further afield can be problematic for people. Many of those attending the lunch clubs for example walked to the church, whilst others arranged lifts with a volunteer driver to whom they paid £3.00. The lunch in these clubs cost between £3 and £5, making them a relatively expensive 'day out.' The project has attempted to set up a volunteer driver scheme, but this is not yet well developed. Indeed, many of the people attending events talked of the need for volunteer drivers locally.

However, there were exceptions and one of the attendees (who does not own a car) actually travelled to other parts of Bristol by bus to run keep fit classes. Despite this, most participants appeared to not use the bus service since the local bus routes tend to only go down main

roads, which still require the individual to walk from the bus stop to their destination. None of the clubs the CRs attended were on a main road.

TOILET MAP

Due to budget cuts at Bristol City Council, many public toilets have now been closed in the city. Instead, various cafes, pubs, shops and so on are encouraged to open their toilets to the public. The CDW had spent some months calling at businesses and shops in Greater Brislington to ask if they would mind people using their toilets and used this information to produce a toilet map of the area, which was circulated along with the 'What's On Guide' in 2018. Bristol City Council added toilets to their 'Welcome to Bristol' map for visitors and locals, which appeared in summer 2019. Although invaluable for older people in particular, this map is also useful to all members of the local community.



TRAINING AND SUPPORT FOR ORGANISATIONS

The CDW hoped to offer training for Treasurers, Secretaries, and key community leaders, by introducing, for example, a presentation delivered by a key local speaker, along with an offer of tea and cake followed by a discussion. In March 2019, he ran a course on fundraising which eight people attended, and is planning a similar course early in 2020. He has also run Food Hygiene training for the lunch club cooks in 2018 and 2019, with 19 people attending.

LOCAL COUNCILLORS

Two local Councillors attended the first Over 50s Forum, together with speakers from local organisations such as LinkAge Network, Bristol Energy and Bristol City Council. One of the CRs also attended this forum, whilst the other visited the Saturday surgery of two Councillors in Wick Library. However, neither Councillor attended so questions were emailed to them instead (see Appendix).

The first of these Councillors responded to the contact from the CR by stating that he had attended an activity and that he thought the project had been well received. He felt that the classes and activities on offer locally would be beneficial to everyone. He knew that the 'What's On Guide' was widely available in the library and local surgeries.

The response from the second councillor indicated she had met with the CDW on various occasions, attended several meetings, two taster days and enjoyed chair yoga. She said the 'What's On Guide' had been incredibly useful, and also went on to say that Greater Brislington is quite a problematic place as it has no real community hub, and it is fragmented

into a number of discrete areas. She felt that the CDW did his best to move around the area using different venues such as the Hungerford Centre, St. Peter's Church and St Cuthbert's Church, but that there are challenges inherent in this as a lot of older people in the area are unwell, disabled and/or socially isolated. It is therefore, she said, difficult to reach out to them because of these challenges, and many are not equipped with computer technology and are therefore unable to access information on the internet.

FUNDING AND SUSTAINABILITY

Since the start of 2016 Bristol Ageing Better was able to offer additional money to organisations providing activities for older people in the city through their Community Kick-Start Fund (CKSF) initiative. The CKSF is a fund operated through the BAB programme that enabled organisations to apply for small amounts of funding for their activities. The CDW publicised this fund widely and consequently four CKSF projects started in Greater Brislington this year, 2019.

Additionally, where clubs were struggling to sustain themselves, the CDW has been honest with attendees and encouraged them to bring friends along in order to keep them running. This has been beneficial and in some cases has saved an activity from closure. The CDW believes that in order for groups to continue in the longer term they need to be less targeted at a specific age group. He felt that this would also encourage intergenerational connections in the local community.

The CDW has always been mindful of continuity of provision beyond the end of the project and stated during the October 2019 interview that sustainability had been built

into the project from the outset. This has meant establishing systems that will ensure services can continue in some form beyond the funded period. For example, it is hoped that connections made with the Greater Brislington Together group will mean that the 'What's On Guide' can continue and be hosted on their website. Opening it up to a wider age group has also assisted with this and expanded the appeal for local advertisers. However, as the booklet still requires someone to update it annually and collate the information (estimated to be a week's work every year) there is still some uncertainty about how this will be managed.

The Greater Brislington Over 50s Forum was started by the CDW in May 2018 and it is now an independent group, and it is hoped that it will carry on after the project ceases to operate in March 2020. As previously mentioned, the CDW has also successfully set up a Good Neighbour Scheme which he hopes will also be sustained beyond the BAB funding period, most likely through the growing links that are being established between the local social prescribing services run in GP surgeries.

There is currently no funding available to continue the CDW's work beyond the project end date, although different options are being explored.



Discussion >>

PUBLICATIONS AND PUBLICITY

One of the greatest successes of the Greater Brislington CDOP project has been the 'What's On Guide' produced by the CDW, and it is clear from speaking to local people that those who had seen it found it very useful. Equally, individuals who were not aware of its existence were keen to get hold of a copy when they were told about it, and the uptake from distribution points such as libraries and doctors surgeries has shown that people are keen to have the information to hand. The CDW has clearly been committed to publicising the 'What's On Guide' by leafleting many homes in Greater Brislington, telling people about the guide and asking people to contact him if they would like one. This strategy appears to have been effective in both saving on the cost of unnecessary dissemination and spreading the word about the booklet's existence.

The extent to which ownership of the 'What's On Guide' has had an impact on numbers of people attending activities is difficult to quantify given that no data has been gathered on how people attending events and regular clubs came to hear about them in the first place. However, it is likely that - at least in part - the general increase in the awareness of and attendance at activities can be attributed to the guide, either in physical form or via the Facebook page (the CDW estimates that 2,000 people have seen this advert for the guide). The majority of the people to whom the researchers spoke had heard of the guide or seen a copy. However, this is perhaps not surprising considering these people were attending the activities advertised.

Since the guide was first published in July 2018, it has been updated five times. This commitment to keeping the information up to date and to establishing the guide as a reliable source of information has increased its readership and credibility locally, however there are concerns for the future of the publication if no one is found to continue this work. There is also a clear need for someone to co-ordinate and source potential advertisers, as revenue raised through advertising in the guide is the key to sustainable publication of the information. There is therefore a danger that the guide will no longer be updated or reprinted due to a lack of resources going forward. It is however hoped that someone in Greater Brislington Together may take on the work, which - now the initial set up is complete - may not be too time consuming if repeated only at six monthly intervals.

The production of a toilet map for Greater Brislington is another success for the project and predated Bristol Council's eventual production of their own citywide toilet map. It is a welcome resource, not only to the older generation, but to wider members of the community, such as those with young children or disabilities.

It is clear that in general good publicity, executed in the right way and produced across a range of media is key to advertising clubs and activities as widely as possible. Although most reported hearing about activities through local publicity or word of mouth, the example of the participant who was recommended a group via their daughter in Essex is perhaps positive proof that a mix of advertising platforms can help spread the word far and wide. The CDW is also using the last stages of the project to try

some innovative techniques for engaging the lonely and socially isolated, including reaching out through local tradespeople and using leaflets to break down barriers to participation. This is a good example of the CDOP 'test and learn' approach in action.

TRANSPORT AND MOBILITY

During the course of the fieldwork, both researchers learned that transport is a big issue for participants and is a problem that is not particular to the older population or even to the Greater Brislington area specifically. Transport infrastructure across the city is problematic for all ages across most areas, with the majority of bus services in Bristol following main roads. This is inconvenient for the more mobile, but is often prohibitive for older or less mobile citizens. Bus services in Greater Brislington are

limited, with only one bus serving Sandy Park and Broomhill. Although all the activities take place within a mile of Sandy Park, there are no direct bus routes from there to many of the locations.

One suggestion for mitigating this lack of flexible transport options is a volunteer driving scheme, although this carries with it a number of inherent problems, such as obtaining suitable insurance. It also requires mainly retired people with their own transport to give up their time in order to pick up and collect local people. This can be an inconsistent and erratic voluntary role and the CDW expressed concern when interviewed by the CRs about the popularity of such a scheme for potential volunteers. However, based on our conversations with participants it appears that if problems with transport could be overcome then participation at events could be increased.



TASTER DAYS

The CDW ran two taster days, which were well attended and did result in some people taking up activities that they had not done before. However, this is another outcome that is difficult to quantify as attendees at activities were not asked where they had heard of the class or why they were attending.

It is clear however that taster days are an excellent opportunity to showcase what is available locally, and attendance at the second of the two days was very positive. This could be due to the weather conditions affecting turnout, as the first taster day took place during heavy rain, whilst the second was a sunny summer's day. Venue choice and event publicity may also have been a factor in the success of the second and not the first. Whatever the reasons for the differences in attendance, again it is clear that perseverance and commitment to trying a range of strategies as part of the 'test and learn' approach has been a contributing factor to the eventual positive outcomes.

ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE

As with all of the CDOP projects across the BAB programme, the Greater Brislington project has demonstrated a need to provide a range of activities for all 'older' age groups. It is clear that within the category of those aged 50+ there are at least two sub-age groups (perhaps best referred to as the 'younger old' and the 'older old'), within which exist a range of mobilities, interests and levels of health and fitness. At one end of this spectrum are the younger, more active people for whom activities such as the Twalkers group proved popular, and it may even be the case that there is a need for more activities for this younger cohort. The lunch clubs, on the other hand, seem to cater for those primarily aged 75 and

up, for many of whom the club was their main point of social contact.

The project has therefore demonstrated the clear need to cater for the sub-age groups when planning activities for older people, the youngest of whom may not even identify as belonging to the broader 'older' category at all. We did not examine in detail the differences between activities that are available to men and women in the area, and generally men and women attended most activities. However, other areas have been able to specifically target the particularly isolated group of older men through activities such as men's sheds, and this may be something to develop further in the future.

FUNDING AND SUSTAINABILITY

The CDW has been proactive in building in sustainability from the start of the project, and many of the activities and project outputs are likely to be successfully sustained beyond the life of the project as a result. However, as the project enters its final stages, attendees at all activities will need to be proactive in encouraging their friends and neighbours to participate in activities on offer in order for them to remain sustainable into the future. The engagement of local people in order to continue the work of the CDW will also be crucial in terms of longevity of the project outputs.

The CDW has also successfully established a number of partnerships with local agencies, and these will also be key to sustaining projects into the future.

REACHING LONELY AND SOCIALLY ISOLATED OLDER PEOPLE

The most significant challenge to the success of this project – as with the rest of the BAB programme – is in reaching lonely and socially isolated older people. For every person attending groups it is likely that there are many others living in households where they feel isolated and unable to attend activities for a variety of reasons.

Although great efforts were made by Bristol Charities to distribute promotional materials as far and wide as possible, inevitably there will be members of the over 50s community who do not have the motivation or resources (physical, practical or emotional) to attend activities. It may also be the case that some do not want or need such services and may stay at home and not engage with services as a conscious choice.

Although the BAB funded Community Navigators project served the whole of Bristol – including Brislington – the CDW made informal attempts to set up a similar local scheme specifically for Brislington. He has also begun advertising a 'Good Neighbour Scheme', but unfortunately the success of both of these initiatives has so far been limited. The CDW has advertised to find volunteers who can be matched with isolated older people, but has so far had more success in sourcing volunteers than in finding beneficiaries. The problem as always is that many people living alone – perhaps either through choice or apprehension – do not take up offers like these. This may be due to pride in not wanting to seek help or accept what they perceive to be 'charity', or it may be that they do not recognise themselves as potential recipients of such as service.



CMF DATA

There has been a clear commitment to data collection within Bristol Charities which has meant that there are demonstrable outcomes as a result.

The CMF results for this area are very positive and this is one of the few CDOP projects that has had enough completed forms in order to statistically demonstrate a change as a result of the intervention. The resulting decline in loneliness and increased contact with friends and family for participants can be noted as one of the quantifiable achievements of the project.

It is worth noting however that even with the project intervening in the lives of people who chose to avail themselves of the variety of activities on offer, at the end of their

involvement in the project older people in Greater Brislington still had higher levels of loneliness and isolation than the wider UK population. They were also still having far less contact with children, family or friends than the average older UK population and still less participation in clubs, organisations and societies than the average levels of social participation for the UK. However, it has to be borne in mind that the project was not aimed at the 'average' older person but by contrast was aimed at those who were already experiencing social isolation and loneliness and were therefore starting from a lower baseline.

STAFFING AND MANAGEMENT

One of the key successes of the project has been the well-defined management and support structure within the organisation of Bristol Charities. It was clear through all of our contact with the organisation that the CDW felt well supported in his role and was well-supported by his employer. The SDM was also always available to the researchers and this consistency in management and staffing has no doubt contributed to the continuity of the standard of the service delivered.

Further to the organisational support and support of the SDM, it has also been clear from our conversations with the CDW that he has brought a wealth of community development expertise to the role. He has had a clear strategy from the start, and to our knowledge no time has been wasted on unnecessary activities or indecision. The CDW has fully embraced the 'test and learn' model and has not been afraid to try new activities, or to let them fail when necessary. As a result of this, many new groups have been started at the instigation of the CDW.



Conclusion >>

The evaluation of the Greater Brislington CDOP project has uncovered a number of successful approaches to community development for older people that could now easily be transferred to other parts of the city and beyond. Many of these are based on a format that can be adapted to any area, namely the production of a 'What's On Guide', toilet maps and the Good Neighbour Scheme. Other activities are clearly more dependent on local need, and having a regular meeting where older people can be consulted about what they want and need within their communities is a key element to addressing this need.

Many of the successes of the project have evolved through embracing the 'test and learn' approach, and this has clearly been a good starting point for initiating activities for this age group. It is also worth considering the needs of sub-populations within this demographic, as it is clear that not everyone over the age of 50 has the same interests or desired platforms for social interaction. Further experimental aspects of the project – such as producing leaflets to dispel myths about activities or to encourage tradespeople to spot when an older person is isolated – are clearly also showing positive early results.

Many of the challenges that the project has faced have largely been beyond its control, such as transport and cuts to funding. However, the CDW and SDM have done their best to mitigate these or to try ways of improving the situation for local people. Where the project has faced these issues – for example the closure of publicly-funded toilets – the CDW has done his best to deal with the consequences and to find workarounds (such as the toilet map).

The strong managerial structure, organisational support and lack of staff turnover within the project have allowed consistency throughout the life of the project. As a result the CDW has been able to build sustainability in from the outset, and it is hoped now that members of the community can take ownership of the clubs, events and activities that have been developed through the project in order to continue them into the future.

LIMITATIONS OF THE EVALUATION

The mixed methods approach to this evaluation has allowed the CRs to explore a range of data, opinion, anecdotal accounts and project documentation in order to assess the successes and challenges inherent in a project such as this. However, as with any project there were inevitable limitations to what was achievable, particularly as the evaluation was led by CRs who were volunteering their time whilst balancing other commitments. As such, the project might have benefited from further interviews with participants, and in particular with older people themselves.

KEY LEARNING POINTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- ▶ 'What's On Guides' with a specific section for the over 50s age group are a very effective way of advertising activities. These can fund themselves through advertising.
- ▶ Over 50s forums can be an effective way to both consult with older people but also to publicise local activities. Care must be taken to ensure that people stay engaged however, as there can be some drop off if people are solely attending for information purposes.
- ▶ Sustainability needs to be embedded in projects from the start. This is perhaps best achieved through successful community engagement.
- ▶ Need to support a wide range of activities to suit as many people as possible across a range of sub-categories within the 'older' age group.
- ▶ Innovative ways of reaching out to the lonely and socially isolated need to be tested and embraced (for example the layman's guide aimed at hairdressers, cafes, local handypeople, etc. to signpost issues in their clients to key agencies).
- ▶ Older people need to be encouraged to be proactive in the recruitment of new members to activities if they want them to be sustainable long term.
- ▶ Continue to build links with social prescribing services locally in order to ensure that some project activities are sustainable through project partners.
- ▶ Increase the number of intergenerational activities – this will allow diverse groups to socialise together whilst also sharing the funding across different funding streams.
- ▶ Taster days can be a great way to pique people's interest in activities.
- ▶ Better transport links need to be established for specific activities that are aimed at the less mobile, but also on a broader level to increase accessibility for all through the existing transport network.

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Appendix >>

Examples of questions and prompts used at events and in conversation with stakeholders

Questions asked of the Councillors:

- ▶ Had they seen the 'What's On Guide' and met the Community Development Worker?
- ▶ Had they attended any activity and, if so, which one/s?
- ▶ Did they feel that older people were better served in Greater Brislington since the beginning of this project?
- ▶ Was there anything else they felt could be done to improve the area for older people?
- ▶ What did they think of the Age-Friendly City initiative?

Questions asked of the attendees at activities:

- ▶ Had they seen the 'What's On Guide' (produced in 2018)?
- ▶ Did they attend only this activity or others?
- ▶ If only one, was there a reason
- ▶ Was transport an issue?
- ▶ Was mobility an issue?
- ▶ Had they made any new friends since joining the activity?



