

# PEOPLE POWERED HEALTH

The rise of people powered approaches  
across Greater Manchester



A joint venture to support  
the local VCSE sector  
in the ten boroughs of  
Greater Manchester

Edited by Carey Bamber, Ben Gilchrist & Steve Goslyn

This brochure was developed to demonstrate the range and impact of people powered health projects across the whole of Greater Manchester. The stories illustrate a range of approaches that build on the tenets of people powered approaches, but have been developed independently across the 10 boroughs of GM over recent years. They show examples of how local people are addressing local challenges in positive and creative ways. The examples shared here were recommended to us by Healthwatch organisations and voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise organisations working at a local level as fantastic examples of people powered approaches. We hope you will agree, and we hope that they inspire local system leaders, community organisations and individuals to learn more about people powered health, and develop something locally themselves.

This Report was developed at the end of Stockport's People Powered Health journey with Nesta, to share learning from across Greater Manchester.

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## Thanks to

—  
**Healthwatch & VCSE organisations across Greater Manchester who suggested local projects and organisations, and most particularly to the projects themselves who shared their stories with us, in their own words.**

### Find out more in your area:

There are hundreds more voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise organisations taking diverse and creative approaches like those detailed in this booklet in each of the ten boroughs of Greater Manchester. If you would like to find out more about examples in your local area please get in touch with 10GM ([www.10GM.org.uk](http://www.10GM.org.uk)). 10GM is a joint venture to support the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector in the ten boroughs of Greater Manchester and supports groups and organisations like those that you have read about. 10GM provides not only a strong independent voice for the sector in Greater Manchester but an ideal platform to develop communication and collaboration.

# Foreword

This report shows the power of people coming together, across communities, to support one another, tackle disadvantage, solve problems, build friendships and have fun. It is about thousands of acts of kindness, compassion and connection that build into communities of people feeling healthier and happier.

The examples here fizz with creativity and ingenuity, combined with a determination to improve lives. Each of them builds on the best of what is already there: people's skills, talents and generosity alongside physical assets such as pieces of unused land or underused buildings. Many of the organisations and projects work with people who feel very isolated, distressed and unheard. They show that everyone is reachable and everyone can take steps forward with the right support. Sometimes this support comes best from people who understand because they have made the same journey themselves.

At Nesta Health Lab our vision is to see a people-powered and data-driven health system, with new sources of support like this which make it possible for people to be more involved in their health. We are pleased to have been able to play a part in the rise of people powered approaches across Greater Manchester since 2011. For example, we have supported Stockport Together, helping people with mental health conditions develop a local circle of support. And Dadly Does It, working with fathers in Salford to speak up about their problems and share solutions father to father, in ways that improve the wellbeing of them and their children.

Greater Manchester is packed full of vibrant and impactful community-based work. This locally-grown and community-driven change is essential to a healthy civic life and needs to be supported to flourish. I hope that by making them more visible, these projects and programmes will be able to secure the support they need to continue their valuable work. And we look forward to continuing to work with partners across Greater Manchester to help create a more people-powered future.

**Halima Khan**

Executive Director, Health Lab, Nesta

# Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership

Greater Manchester challenged itself two years ago to make the greatest and fastest improvement possible in the health of our population. There are many contributions to that endeavour and it certainly includes the full range of health and care services and many other public services. Those contributions are ambitious and utterly necessary; however, they are not enough to make the level of improvement we require possible.

Throughout our journey to develop the plan, Taking Charge (1), engage the public and partners on its potential and start to implement some of the changes it describes, we have urged the need for true humility to recognise what is not possible from public services alone. We have consistently confirmed the need for us to think differently about the relationship between the public and their public services. We have recognised the limitations of building the plan around only what we can provide at the expense of what we could help unleash. We have held the aspiration that would not only be a plan to be implemented but a movement to be cultivated. The power of 2.8 million people to help maximise their health potential is the most significant resource we could bring to bear to make real gains in the health, life expectancy and life chances of Greater Manchester's population.

These case studies confirm that we are making real progress. The examples are rich, varied and inspiring. Many of the projects are simple in their approach, making use of peer mentoring for example, or simply valuing the expertise which comes with the lived experience of people who have overcome challenge and applied that knowledge to help others. Whilst the approaches are often simple they remain profound when we recognise the complexity of many of the issues they are helping to address whether that is supporting people living with cancer, or helping families overcome the effects of parental substance misuse. It is impossible not to be inspired by examples of survivors who then dedicate themselves to lifting the lives of those around them.

These case studies are a moment in time and we should expect to be able to collate many more examples over years to come as the movement spreads and we recognise the replicability of so many of these approaches. The report generates real insight into the way we estimate the value of interventions, projects and approaches beyond their cost - understanding social value and planning services accordingly.

Most importantly, on the part of public service leaders, we should recognise the extent to which this contributes to that shift in the way we ourselves think about the planning and delivery of services and the interactions we have hour by hour with residents. The mantra we can take into our working lives from now can be to seek what's strong, not focus solely on what's wrong.

**Warren Heppolette,**  
Executive Lead, Strategy and System Development

# Contents

1. Holding Families, Bury
2. Bolton People Affected by Cancer, Bolton
3. Inspired People, Manchester
4. Growing East Manchester/Men in Sheds, Manchester
5. SAWN, Oldham
6. Inspire Women, Oldham
7. Mind, Oldham
8. HMR circles, Rochdale
9. Salford Dadz, Unlimited Potential, Salford
10. Salford Healthy Communities, unique improvements
11. Starting Point, Stockport
12. Give2 Gain, Stockport
13. TPA Community Anchors, Stockport
14. Hyde Community Action, Tameside
15. Denton West End Library , Tameside
16. Stretford Town Hall, Trafford
17. My Life Legacy, Wigan

# People Powered Health in Stockport

Over the last 5 years Stockport has been working with Nesta to implement and scale up people powered approaches. People Powered Health recognises the importance of solutions which are more than medicine; it demonstrates the power of people with a shared and common experience talking and supporting each other, the action of giving back to help others, the strength people can draw from feeling part of a greater whole, a community or network; it recognises the crucial need to take on and find solutions to the loneliness and anxiety too many people now experience which overwhelms them and is so successful in undermining their resilience and generating a demand for service provision.

Stockport has benefitted from support and leadership to invest in these approaches in an increasingly purposeful way, drawing out learning in doing so, coming to understand that each of the 34 naturally occurring recognisable geographies which together make up the Borough requires a very individual, conversational approach. Initially using community conversations brokered by a Faith based organisation as a way in, asking the question how together we can make the community kinder, Stockport is now valuing and adopting an Asset Based Community Development approach.

All the players in the health and care system, its service leaders and professional staff, the voluntary sector, wider public services, businesses and community groups and activists, need to grow trusting relationships based on collaboration to achieve the common goal of making the people and places of Stockport healthier, safer, more independent, resilient and stronger.

The Nesta website [www.nesta.org.uk/what-we-have-learnt-people-powered-health](http://www.nesta.org.uk/what-we-have-learnt-people-powered-health) has many examples of the five tenets of People Powered Health, some drawn from Stockport's own experiences.

**Nick Dixon,**  
Commissioning Manager, Stockport Council  
March 2017





## Project Description

At Holding Families, we support children, parents and families affected by parental substance misuse and the problems associated with it. We aim to increase wellbeing and communication within family relationships and reduce the risks and vulnerabilities for children and their families.

### Our offer to families looks like this:

- Weekly one-to-one sessions for children/ young people. The child's voice is at the heart of our work; sessions are child-led and person-centred
- Fortnightly group work sessions for parents
- Fortnightly one-to-one sessions for parents
- Family meetings that bring the family together and support children to express how they are feeling to their parents.

## Key Learning

Our, Holding Families workers are consistent in their person centred and asset based approach to working. They strive to reduce barriers to engagement that families with complex needs often have.

We are able to work together with families, helping them to understand the impact that their substance misuse has on their children and family. Throughout the programme parents are encouraged to share their experiences, learn and support one another. The project can be challenging but ultimately very rewarding and empowering for all.

Our specialist children's workers enable children to express how they feel about their parent's substance misuse through play and talking therapies. Children are able to share their thoughts and feelings about the impact it has on their daily lives, even when parents/cares believe they are hiding their substance use behaviour. Children are given the opportunity to have their voices heard for the first time in a safe space.

Family life through the eyes of a child is a powerful and emotional motivator for change. It helps families to work together, build upon their strengths and identify what needs to change and how those changes can be made. Working with the appropriate services to do so where necessary.

## More About Us

In response to the "Hidden Harm" agenda, a group of managers from Early Break, Bury Drug and Alcohol Service and, Children's Services, created the Holding Families model in 2005. They piloted the model and, after an evaluation by Salford University, Bury Children's Services decided to fund the programme. The service and model has grown from strength to strength and is now operational in Bury, Rochdale and Salford. The broader aims of Holding Families are:

- To support and encourage the family to talk about substance use and associated problems
- To highlight any significant harm caused by parental drug or alcohol use
- To empower parents to make necessary changes
- To encourage parents to remain in treatment for alcohol or drugs
- To allow children's voices to be heard by parents and workers
- To help families move down the safeguarding threshold
- To build on the things families are already doing well.

Holding Families has won numerous national awards and commendations over the years such as the Municipal Journal award for 'Best in Children's Services' and Children and Young People Now award for Health and Wellbeing in 2013. In 2015 Early Break was awarded a 'Made in Bury' award in recognition for the work contributing to supporting children and families in Bury.

We continue to develop the Holding Families programme as we recognise that the needs of families and children change over time, introducing elements such as mindfulness and early intervention self-help tools that children and parents use to help them cope with their emotional health and wellbeing needs.

Parents are given the support to make positive life changes for their own benefit and the benefit of their children and families. Once parents have completed the programme they are encouraged to act as peer support mentors for future groups.

## How our project is people powered

The power of peer mentoring is a key element in the Holding Families programme. Peer mentors offer practical support and guidance to parents and families who are working with the Holding Families team. Peer mentors have 'walked the walk' and having completed the programme are able to be objective and offer peer challenge towards behaviours and attitudes.

Peer mentors are able to empathise with those who are on the programme, and can offer their own experience and provide support during some of the more challenging times. Peer mentors are also able to use their experiences to help them to continue with their own journey of recovery.

Many peer mentors have successfully used their experiences working with the Holding Families programme to help them to gain confidence, return to full time education, training or employment, and in some instances making major life/relationship changes.

Early Break continually look to improve the delivery of the Holding Families programme. We advocate service-user participation and value the contribution of all, actively encouraging them to share their experiences with programme and policy developers, commissioners and also recruitment of staff. This ensures that the service is kept vibrant, fresh and meaningful for future Holding Families groups.

## Evidence of impact

Holding Families reports annually on outcomes to commissioners. Externally we have been evaluated twice by Salford University, in 2006 'No Longer Lone: An evaluation of the Holding Families Project' after the pilot, and again in 2014 by Murphy M, Ravey M, Long T (2014) Evaluation of the Bury Holding Families Project (Phase 3). University of Salford.

Over the period of the evaluation 154 families received a service from Holding Families. All families with available data from every group were included in the evaluation. Holding Families workers made additional effort to ensure that missing data was addressed. Great effort is made by the service to engage with parents, but because of the nature of the client group at least 25% of families would be expected not to engage or would leave the service at an early stage. Permission and consent was sought from all participants at the start of each programme, and the research aims to include at least 20% of service users (18 families) in the qualitative element of the study. These were recruited by the service staff and research team in partnership. The nature of the service under evaluation meant that a variable proportion of families would be motivated to participate in its evaluation. Seven children and young people agreed to be interviewed. Contributions were made by children in other aspects of the data, too, including 'Have Your Say!' and testimonials.

More recently we have produced a Holding Families Impact Report on the work with Achieve Salford Recovery Services. Family vulnerabilities are measured at the start and at the end of the programme so that we can further change the families we have helped.

- 75% families stopped using illicit drugs or alcohol in the family home
- 86% of parents stopped using drugs or alcohol in front of their children
- 100% of all families accessed treatment and recovery services
- 100% of families are no longer at risk of losing their homes, creating a more stable home environment for children
- 88% of children improved educational attainment and attendance
- 91% reported improvement in parenting
- 53% of families were abstinence from drugs and alcohol
- 88% of families were no longer in exploitative relationships
- Two parents gained employment
- One family no longer claimed unemployment benefits
- One child re-entered mainstream education.

## Links

[earlybreak.co.uk/what-we-do/holding-families/](http://earlybreak.co.uk/what-we-do/holding-families/)  
[youtube.com/watch?v=6JG19OJWTPA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6JG19OJWTPA)  
[youtube.com/watch?v=uRhufAwa10Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uRhufAwa10Y)  
<https://youtube/z8c9XN3N7Jc>



## **Project Description**

This service has been co-produced with Bolton Hospice, Bolton People Affected by Cancer (Bolton PAC) Group, Macmillan Cancer Support and NHS Bolton Clinical Commissioning Group. The service has three centres located at Royal Bolton Hospital, Bolton One and Giles House at Bolton Hospice. Between them they provide free confidential information and support to anyone in Bolton who is affected by cancer. The staff and volunteers offer a warm welcome and can provide support in many ways; this may be a listening ear or practical help, such as signposting to a support or self-help group.

The service also offers:

- Cancer information materials (in other languages and formats)
- A Telephone helpline
- Benefits advice
- Self help and support groups
- Outreach in the local community
- Help signposting to other services
- User groups.

The service has three full time staff - a Service Manager, Deputy Manager, an Information and Support Assistant as well as a full-time Macmillan Benefits Adviser. The service also has the support of 27 volunteers.

## **Key learning**

1. This project is a great example of how co-production can be used to create, build and run a successful service for those affected by cancer. Bolton PAC and all the strategic partners have had an input in all aspects of the service as it is today. The development of the service has required lots of hard work and time to produce the best outcome for those who access it.
2. The Bolton PAC Group has played a key role in the development of this service. Service users have been represented at the MCISS Steering Group and Design meetings for two new builds since August 2014 and are now at the core of the development of the MCISS. Suggestions made by representatives of the Group during such meetings have resulted in significant improvements in the design of the MCISS sites at Bolton One and Royal Bolton Hospital.

3. Bolton PAC developed and took part in a very effective User Led Assessment Centre for candidates in the recruitment process for all the Macmillan Cancer Information and support service staff. The candidates were asked to take part in a role play with an actor, deliver a presentation and undertook a task depending on their role. Following the assessment centre the service users would review the candidate's performance then decide which candidates should progress to interview. Service users were also on the interview panel. This ensured that service users were central to the decision making progress in appointing staff. Effective user involvement is essential to ensure that the MCISS offers a high quality service that is accessible, inclusive and meets the needs of those who will use it. Bolton Hospice, NHS Bolton CCG, and Macmillan Cancer Support positively value the knowledge, and skills of service users, as well as the wealth of expertise that they can bring to the service.

## **More about us**

The history of this service starts over 10 years ago, when during a public health meeting in Bolton, it was recognised that the people of Bolton needed a support service for those affected by cancer. As a result of this a campaign was started by a group of people.

Along the way there were many issues but the group managed to overcome these when they secured the partnership with Bolton Hospice, Macmillan Cancer Support, and Bolton NHS CCG. Macmillan funded a project lead who supported the service users initially and followed a co-production model.

In July 2014, a group of service users started working with Linda Hill, Macmillan User Involvement Coordinator, and Tanya Humphreys, MCISS Senior Project manager, to work on the User Involvement Strategy for the MCISS.

Since then, service users have been meeting up on a regular basis and have been actively involved in the co-production of the service.

In November 2015, the Group decided to create an identity for the MCISS User Involvement and the name Bolton People Affected by Cancer (Bolton PAC) was chosen. Within the Bolton PAC sits a group of people who meet regularly to ensure that the voices of service users are heard in all the decisions made regarding the MCISS.

The Group is currently made up by 11 members. Although the group is small, it is quite diverse, and not only are there are representatives of those with different types of cancer, but different ages as well as representatives from the Hindu and Muslim communities. The meetings continue to be held on a regular basis and are organised and facilitated by Sue Summerfield, MCISS Manager. All the other members of the Group have been affected by cancer, either as patients or as relatives/carers of a cancer patient.

The MCISS steering group comprises of members from Bolton PAC, Macmillan Cancer Support, Bolton hospice, Bolton NHS CCG-including the support of the Bolton Macmillan GP.

The MCISS communication team also has representatives from each strategic partner including Bolton PAC.

These meetings were used to design, locate and project manage the opening of the service. Six months prior to opening the first of its centres the manager was appointed, followed by the assistant, Deputy Manager, Volunteers and benefits adviser. Bolton PAC was involved in the selection process of all full-time staff members. Co-production has been used to ensure all involved have had an input into everything down to the furnishings in the three centres.

### How our project is people powered

People affected by cancer have been instrumental in the development of this service. They have campaigned tirelessly for a cancer support service in Bolton. Macmillan and their partner organisations are delighted to be working with them to help as many people as they can who are affected by cancer in the area.

The co-production model which has been used to develop the MCISS ensures that all involved are consulted when making any decisions about the service. The steering group, communication team and Bolton PAC continue to meet and have a flexible approach to decision making. Often alternative ideas are discussed as a group, always with the service user at the heart of it. Bolton PAC aims to have a degree of self-management, with the support of the strategic partners. The service strives to support the local community and provide them with high quality support, information and increase cancer awareness. The partners support each other at all levels providing a network of experience and knowledge. The service will continue to offer its services with those affected by cancer, being the voice for what it offers. Now the service is up and running, Bolton PAC now have a monitoring role in reviewing quarterly reports and following a clear operational policy.

### Evidence of impact

Bolton PAC has co-produced the service to ensure it meets the needs of people affected by cancer and since opening in July 2015 the service has:

- Had over 3,000, people access the service
- Developed a Macmillan Benefits Advice Service in partnership with Bolton Council, which became operational in March 2016. The Macmillan Benefits Advice Service has had over 470 referrals and has demonstrated financial gains of £1.25 million
- Received very positive feedback from service users
- Hosted three health and wellbeing events for people affected by Cancer
- Regular Look Good Feel Better Workshops/Skin Care & Make Up Master Classes
- Has its own website and social media pages.
- A monthly walking Group
- Run a Hope Course - Cancer survivorship self-management course
- Held regular outreach sessions in the local community
- Delivered cancer awareness talks.

### Links

[boltonmacmillansupport.org.uk](http://boltonmacmillansupport.org.uk)

## Project Description

GITC is a community food, environment and educational charity based in East Manchester applying an asset-based approach. Operating from former derelict land owned by Resurrection & St. Barnabas church, the community have created a vibrant welcoming safe community space. Today, "It's a garden, but much more", working with a range of participants to deliver activities via Growing projects, Men's Shed, Barnabas Bees and other green international and initiatives.

As an open drop in space it is accessible to range of people and supported groups from across the area and further afield.

## Key Learning

1. Through shared activities, the project overcomes social isolation; provides regular resident led/driven volunteering opportunities; community connections, (re)builds self-esteem, confidence, capacity, skills; offers support via the fellowship network with peer to peer experience and skill sharing that takes place.
2. Engagement with people and community is key to what we have achieved but the potential risk for our activity is the variable and fluctuating nature of people, who can sometimes 'come and go'. We work to make sure the activity and experience of people is relevant, fun, rewarding and enjoyable. We work to build and maintain relationships with people /community using the activities as well as them building their own personal and social capital/wellbeing.
3. By the nature of the longer term support and inclusion activities we provide, we find the changing social and personal factors of our participants mean that additional/existing conditions can arise. Careful support/sign posting by us is important to ensure continued access to additional support that they may otherwise not initiate.

## More about us

GITCs community activity started in November 2013 and the group became constituted the following year. Men's Shed Manchester started June 2015 and targets activity mainly (but not exclusively) at often harder to reach mid /older aged men often with complex needs.

Although a primary focus of the Men's Shed approach is to target social inclusion of and activities of interest to mid to older aged males (typical 40+ yrs), it does also attract and involves younger men (sometimes NEET) and middle aged females.

However, the project is open to all men in the community which enables us to connect people from the local neighbourhood and further afield, without focusing on labels, where we meet in kinship and a supportive manner, to have fun and build relationships that go beyond the projects capacity.

Members share existing and learn new skills to create wildlife feeders /shelters and garden furniture from reclaimed materials

The project has been initiated and co-designed alongside and by the community and other partners. It has been recognised by external bodies such as social housing providers, the RHS, and the Spirit of Manchester awards (winner of best community space 2016) for its success and achievements as well as the quality of work and activities.

By using, valuing and embedding reciprocity and the core economy to the maximum potential in the project, alongside the income we generate from locally produced/consumed products, we can move to becoming self-sufficient in the long term.

Within a short period of time our work has become recognised for its established presence and good relationships with the NHS and MCC Community Mental Health, social housing partners, a range of other VCS organisations, GMP and MCC teams.

We now receive regular (informal) referrals from adult social care / community mental health teams (MCC/ NHS teams) and attract the wider community who hear about our activity via our promotion and connections with social housing as One Manchester's, and VCS organisations.

## How our project is people powered

The formation of GITC was driven by local people wanting to reclaim un-kept land to create a safer more welcoming social community space. Aside from broad community engagement in the initial activity days and special events, which have included (community) conversation's shaping our activity, we recognised the profile of more frequent participants was that they were mid/older men who were socially isolated for a range of reasons.

Common evident features of their presentation are:

- care issues
- work/relationships difficulties
- Emotionally unsettled, anti-social, manic
- Depressed, anxious, exhibiting OCD, schizophrenic, schizotypal

Through formal community/participant conversations and ongoing informal group discussions, the lack of activities suitable for men and gap in Manchester for a shed project became evident. Following discussions with social housing providers and community public health team we established an 8-week pilot project. This verified need and directly influenced the activities of the formally launched Men's Shed.

**Co-Production within Project**

- Health information point setup
- Health professionals attend drop ins (e.g. bowel screening, stroke and diabetes services)
- Practice nurses from Manchester are connecting with us for learning purposes
- The above relationships open new ways for care professionals to engage with people who otherwise may not access services.

**Evidence of impact**

The project is relatively new and as such has not formally been evaluated. We have recently been used by undergraduates at MMUs school of social care and psychology studies for their dissertation research. We await sight of their final papers.

Since our formation, we have continued our conversations and listening to help deliver activity that focuses on items people want to create and at their own pace. We have also recognised the recent comments of people in independent interviews (with BBC TV and Radio, One Manchester, Big Issue North, MEN and Manchester City Council 'Our Manchester') about the need to provide additional activity days and make the existing volunteer led activity more definite.

**Links**

Facebook: [Growing in the City](#)

Twitter page: [@Growinthecity](#)

## Project Description

The Inspired Taskforce emerged from a three year Big Lottery funded project tackling social isolation amongst older people (Inspired People's Project 02/2014 - 01/2017). The project's commitment to involving and empowering users led to the users themselves developing a social action group to promote and campaign for an Age Friendly neighbourhood. The Taskforce spent time asking other older people to suggest their priorities via a short questionnaire and in person at public events. The Taskforce's first campaign was 'awareness raising' to highlight trip hazards with bio-degradable green spray paint that caught media interest and had them dubbed 'the grey graffiti gang'.

## Key Learning

The lead-in time for peer-support projects can be significant. The Inspired Taskforce developed in the final year of a three year funded project, and only after investment through training and personal development of the peer group leaders. The Inspired Taskforce all received 'community reporters' training to document local issues and learnt the ICT skills required for social media. Capacity building for peer support groups therefore needs to be funded for a consistent and longer period than that which most grant programmes currently allow.

Genuine consultation with the wider community of older people took time and effort in collecting responses, but was crucial in building credibility. We started with a single question asking, "what would make the local area more Age Friendly?" and after collating the responses, asked the next time for people to prioritise the issues that were raised. This gave the Taskforce a mandate for activism, and ensured they felt confident and had community backing. Unexpected 'allies' were identified (e.g. parents with buggies) and the use of social media to spread the word locally was particularly effective. A well-respected community hub, such as the Inspire Centre with its welcoming and affordable café facilitates the discussion and coming together of community peer-led action.

## More About

The Inspired Taskforce went on to respond to another urgent issue "that of the lack of public toilets! A disabled visitor to Levenshulme got "caught short" and was refused access to a toilet four times in local shops. His humiliating experience hit the local news, and the Inspired Taskforce responded by canvassing 11 venues on the high street who would be welcoming to people needing the toilet for whatever reason. The Taskforce got 2,500 leaflets printed with a map of the venues and distributed them to other older people's groups and community venues. This initiative has been spread via Manchester's Age Friendly Network and is being replicated (at little cost) in other neighbourhoods.

Due to effective media coverage (11 articles in various press outlets) the BBC's One Show came down and filmed a short clip, which was aired in March 2016 (see link to view). The press attention helped solidify the Taskforce's aims and objectives, as well as teaching us valuable lessons about getting our message across. The Taskforce has always taken a collaborative approach to working together with the relevant authorities to identify and tackle the community's issues. To this end we received great support from the Council's Press Office, and the Executive Member for Health and Social Care came on 'walkabouts' and took up our cause, hoping (as we do) to inspire others to set up their own groups.

Later that year, the Inspired Taskforce was nominated and won (by popular vote) an award for 'Most Successful Campaign/Innovative Project' in the 2016 Spirit of Manchester Awards, organised by the voluntary sector.

## How our project is people powered

Peer support is in our view, a form of social prescribing that works well in community settings. The individual members of the Inspired Taskforce have all reported health and wellbeing benefits by being involved in a dynamic and action focused group. Improvements in self-esteem, boosted confidence levels, and applying the brain to solve real-life problems all have physical and mental health beneficial effects. Developing a sense of purpose and usefulness to society again, is especially important for retired people who often can feel 'blamed' for living too long and using up all the resources. The Taskforce demonstrates that by harnessing older people's life experience, skills and knowledge benefits can also be produced for the wider community. The friendships that have been forged for Taskforce members, and the links built within the community that circles around the physical hub of the Inspire Centre, will provide companionship, peer support and help build resilience to the 'slowing-down' factors of old age.



The objectives and desired outcomes of Taskforce members are often common with service providers, so better ways of communicating and working together can be developed with enough goodwill to make things happen. Understanding each other's perspectives (and limitations) is critical, especially in a reducing funding environment.

### Evidence of impact

The Inspired People's Project has been independently evaluated and a copy of the report can be obtained via email request to [info@lev-inspire.org.uk](mailto:info@lev-inspire.org.uk)

### Links

For up to date information on Inspired Taskforce campaigns and activities, see the Inspire Centre website at [www.lev-inspire.org.uk](http://www.lev-inspire.org.uk)

(NB: New website is currently in development)

To watch the Inspired Taskforce clip shown on the BBC One Show go to: - <https://youtu.be/TXwhvkM3Q3E> (4 min 50 secs)

To watch the Inspired Taskforce film shown at the Spirit of Manchester Awards 2016 please go to and scroll down:- [manchestercommunitycentral.org/spirit-manchester-awards-2016-winners-and-nominees](http://manchestercommunitycentral.org/spirit-manchester-awards-2016-winners-and-nominees) (1 min)





## Project description

Established in 2011 by a group of local women; Inspire have created an empowering/nurturing space for women in Oldham. We encourage women to have a voice, co-producing services that overcome isolation /disempowerment. Our services are informed by an understanding of what works for women, existing as a response to women's needs, involving women in producing and facilitating services. Our values and culture are based on compassion, empathy, trust and respect. We are women centred. We create a space where women become visible, where what had happened to them is a strength not a weakness. Our role is focused on facilitating, not fixing or rescuing.

## Key Learning

At the heart of our approach is a common thread of identifying, valuing and building on strengths. This includes a re-framing of language that focuses on strengths and capabilities rather than needs and deficits. We struggle with deficit labelling. That is not to say that the women we work with have not faced multiple complexities in their lives, they too often have. Support, and how we view support, should start from a different space and it too often doesn't. Practitioners need to be asking different questions.

We work to encourage women to have a voice and co-produce services that overcome loneliness, isolation and disempowerment. Many of the women who engage in the Centre have very long histories of medical and non-medical interventions, almost all lacked positive social connections, a key factor in terms of lasting wellbeing.

One of our hopes is that organisations like Inspire Women who sit outside of mainstream health services are recognised and considered for both their value and impact. The proposed devolution of power that exists within the notion of preventative work does not filter down. Inspire's approach considers the role and involvement of the woman and is designed to both encourage and enable her to be self-directed.

## More about

The journey for Inspire Women Oldham (Inspiring Futures Partnership CIC) has been a collaborative one. Our foundations are built on recognising women's assets with the ability to contribute to their own and other's journeys. Recognising their inherent strengths and contributions has been critical in shaping responses going forward. Our passion and interests are focused on social value, community self organisation and the opportunities it brings, particularly to women in re-creating services and places they would want to live. We believe that harnessing the assets that women have, creating both the space and culture for women to develop for themselves is key to sustaining thriving communities.

In 2016 we secured £250,000 from the Lotter and Girls Initiative, establishing an amazing space for women in Oldham town centre. Inspire Women is a great example of co-producing- from a small group of women who engaged on Finding Me almost 5 years ago, to now being viewed as a key partner locally, being part of the Early Help offer, gaining pledges from Women Leaders across Oldham, along with Local and National award recognition for our pioneering approach.

There is much interest nationally in terms of our structure that provides a Pathway from which a woman can become a member initially, growing into an Associate role and later an Associate Plus paid role. The structure is based on a co-operative asset model, that is gender specific and where leadership is amongst the many. This structure ensures that the organisation sustains its collaborative/participatory approach. The framework is based on a set of beliefs that recognises individual gifts and the importance of social connections, voice, place; inviting women to adapt/evolve the framework, further developing new uses and new connections within their communities. This approach encourages the creation of listening spaces, redefines power and begins from a place of equality and human connection.

## How our project is people powered

Our work with women has been based on how women can come up with their own solutions; tapping into their assets, self-organising, creating a cooperative/equal space, a network from where women create something locally and inspire others to develop in their own unique way.

What we deliver is based on what women want. We invite women to self-organise around the issues they care most about. We move away from the categories of victims/helpers and instead start from a place of equality and human connection. We work with what is present, not what is absent. We facilitate. We create opportunities for connection in a space this is based on equality of power.

Our approach is based on values, beliefs and purpose; requiring only that we are present, available and willing to grow, working alongside other women in a non-judgmental, non-deficit way.

At the heart of our approach is a common thread of identifying, valuing and building on strengths. This includes a re-framing of language that focuses on strengths/capabilities rather than needs and deficits.

Our 'Give it a Go' and 'Finding Me' Programmes provide social solutions, looking beyond the medical model, facilitating alternative approaches to health and wellbeing.

## Evidence:

<http://bit.ly/2uhZUdV>

## Links:

Twitter @InspireOldham

## Project description

Tameside Oldham and Glossop Mind (TOG) provides workshops to individuals and community groups aimed at improving personal resilience and self-care and helping them support others in their community experiencing emotional wellbeing issues or distress. The workshops are targeted at individuals already providing informal emotional support, such as carers, hairdressers and youth workers, but are offered to anyone wanting to develop their skills. Some participants choose to become Community Ambassadors and are provided with on-going training and information to support their local community, through regular e-Newsletters, volunteering opportunities and a funded community mental health qualification.

## Key Learning

The model started with two separate pilots in Tameside and Oldham, to address identified need. Key learning from the pilots included:

- The importance of being flexible and creative in how we engaged with different community groups. A standard resilience workshop specification was not as effective as adapting activities and information to the needs of the group. We developed a range of 'resilience tools' that could be offered in different circumstances (for example 'Mince pie Mindfulness' sessions for the Christmas period)
- There is a significant appetite in the community for resilience and self-help tools. We also had high response from carers and parents seeking support with family members. We also worked with a group of student hairdressers at Tameside College, who then incorporated content into future courses
- A need to further develop materials for the BAME communities in the context of specific religious and cultural beliefs and high levels of stigma around mental health
- It took time to engage with hard to reach groups, but as awareness of the project increased it was possible to develop and build ongoing relationships and improve local service pathways, to help ensure signposting to the most appropriate support. This has helped increase the preventative and early-intervention support locally and reduced pressure on specialist services.

## More about us

Following the successful outcomes of the pilots, the project has been commissioned in Oldham as part of an IAPT Plus model to support prevalence, increase early-intervention and prevention and improve pathways for mental health services. In Tameside, the project is commissioned to support the Public Health strategy to develop community assets and self-care and reduce the stigma around mental health. Both currently commissioned projects build on the learning from our pilots, but introduce new elements of the service.

We now offer Community Ambassadors a funded Level 2 community mental qualification (around 30 members of the community are currently booked on this) and a pathway of ongoing development within our staff and volunteer Training Academy, to provide structured and practical mental health skills.

We have developed self-help materials in Urdu to support our community work and have recently started a Faith Leadership programme, aimed at encouraging Faith Leaders to discuss mental health issues within their communities and reduce stigma around accessing services.

In Oldham, we now also offer a small grant community chest, designed to support community groups to develop existing or new ideas that will enhance the emotional resilience of their members. We can work with the group to provide training and feedback on effective strategies and encourage individuals to access additional support through our Ambassador programme.

In Tameside, we are working with Age UK as part of a national pilot focusing on improving the mental health resilience of older people and will be offering targeted 6-week resilience workshops for carers of people with dementia, combined with a peer support programme.

Comments from project participants include:

"We have had lots of contact from members of the community needing help and considering committing suicide and have been more able to give support and help as a result of knowledge gained from the project."

"I didn't realise there was so much help out there. I can now pass the information that I have learnt onto others."

## How our project is people powered

This project is people powered, because its focus is on developing self-care and resilience skills. We have identified core influencers in the community and empowered them to model these skills within their social networks and to the wider community.

We are seeking to develop the skills of local influencers, to enable them to support and signpost people in their community, as feedback suggests people will access services recommended by someone they trust. In particular, this model is more effective with hard to reach groups that may not access their GP or other medical provider.

We are seeking to develop the skills of local influencers, to enable them to support and signpost people in their community, as feedback suggests people will access services recommended by someone they trust. In particular, this model is more effective with hard to reach groups that may not access their GP or other medical provider.

The project works on the assumption that communities can provide the assets to foster resilience, whether that be key influencers modelling good self-care strategies or community activities, such as walking groups or book clubs to encourage socialisation and reduce isolation.

The project provides ongoing community consultation and co-production; feedback and suggestions are collected from every community session and are used to improve the service going forward. As a result, we have developed community networks with partners such as Age UK. Volunteers from the BAME community have helped develop, and now deliver customised workshops; and we are looking to build on what is already working well in our communities through the community chest programme.

### **Evidence of impact**

We have not commissioned formal external evaluation, but collect evaluation data before and after community workshops. Participants report using the information and skills to support members of their community, and feeling more confident after the workshops that they would know how to support individuals in emotional distress.

Feedback from the pilots indicated that:

- 60% felt that, as a result of the workshop, the number of conversations that they have had with others in their community about mental health and wellbeing had increased
- 53% of respondents knew at least 5 people within their community who had experienced an impact on their lives as a consequence of this project
- 93% felt that the wellbeing of those impacted by the project had improved
- 33% thought that, as a result of this project, those impacted by it have visited their GP less frequently.

### **Links**

Further contact information can be found on our website:

[togmind.org/training/community-resilience/](https://togmind.org/training/community-resilience/)

Details of our accredited community mental health qualification offered to Ambassadors can be found here:

[togmind.org/community-mental-healthwork-course/](https://togmind.org/community-mental-healthwork-course/)

**Project description:**

Support and Action for Women Network (SAWN) is a registered charity based in Oldham. Over the last ten years we have worked with communities and professionals to address issues that affect Black/ African women in Oldham and within Greater Manchester. SAWN has worked with over 350 African women and their families over the years in various projects which include; Wellbeing project, Social Trips, Swimming for Health, Voiceless Victims Prison project, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Awareness project and a Healthy Eating club project. All our projects aim at empowering women to be able to play a key role and engage in decisions on issues affecting their lives.

**Key Learning:**

We currently run three projects which are person-centred and run from an asset based Approach where the woman is at the centre of the proposal, delivery and evaluation. We hold consultative meetings before during and after project delivery. All our work aims to create opportunities for dialogue; raising confidence and self-esteem to enable victims to help themselves and other people and become the voice of the community.

**1. Our work on Female Genital Mutilation:**

- We provide community training on FGM for professionals to understand cultural approach to the practice and the communities that are affected by the practice.
- The Butterfly project has beneficiary led FGM support hubs which we call home cells for women to provide a safe space for them to talk about FGM amongst other things. We focus on the good and positive things women do on a daily basis and to protect girls and young people from being victims of FGM by supporting engagement and good relations between the communities and statutory professionals; and support to access specialist services

**2. Our Prison rehabilitation -Voiceless Victims**

- We support African women in prisons and detention centres to understand and engage in the prison regime for the best outcome of their sentences and reduce isolation.
- We also aid rehabilitation and support prisons pathways to prepare for life after prison by offering through the gate support.

**3. Finding financial happiness/ money issues matters:**

- We run sessions on raising awareness to women about how to be in charge of your finances and how it contributes to general wellbeing and independence by helping women to budget, manage income and expenditure as well as debt.
- We also encourage women into entrepreneurship by using the several skills they have such as cookery for catering, hairdressing for hair salons, artwork and crafts etc.

**More about The Butterfly Project:**

It is estimated that 170,000 young girls living in the UK have undergone the practice of FGM and a further 65,000 girls under the age of 13 are at a risk of undergoing the procedure.

Many women have lived with the impacts of FGM and do not relate it to the practice itself therefore are willing to carry it out on their children as part of their cultural requirement. We aim to support them to discard the practice by engaging positively and empower themselves and others to stop the practice. The Butterfly project gives ownership to the beneficiaries, aims at self-sustainability, and recognises strengths and knowledge of the victims/ women and individuals. It also gives a voice to the unheard and is person centred. In this case, victims of FGM come together and use their common problem to gain personal and communal success. Rather than focus on what FGM had done to them, women focus on what they can collectively do together.

The women share life stories through drama, music and dance, sharing food and showing what they can do despite what they have gone through. One beneficiary said "Before joining the project I did not think there were so many people facing same issues like me. Now I can talk about what happened and feel accepted."

**How our project is people powered**

The project is victim/survivors led, women who have endured hardships. The women have had to develop resilience in other areas of their lives and have experienced issues like racism, interrogation from the immigration services and other issues which SAWN has chosen to build on; and which enabled the Butterfly project to be a success. The majority of our beneficiaries are asylum seekers and refugees and have that background knowledge of their other needs or mitigated circumstances. In order for the project to succeed we supported people through other issues like immigration, housing and local area knowledge which is important for the positive the outcomes of the project.

The project has so far had 15 beneficiaries all of whom are women between the ages of 20-55years. They are from the Ugandan, Congolese, Zimbabwean, Rwandese and Nigerian ethnic backgrounds.

The project reduced isolation using the ABCD approach as people came together with a similar cause aiming to focus on the positive and collectively fight against the common negative cultural procedure that was done to them without their consent.

## Evidence of impact

SAWN has shared the project development and growth with the Greater Manchester BME Forum and media. We have spoken of the project on a Local FM radio and one member featured on national TV. We hope to have an article of the project published in the Nubian times.

When together the women appeared to have lost all the vulnerability and were confident to talk to each other. Genuine love and friendship has emerged. Business and learning benefits emerged as women came together to resolve financial and education needs together.

There is a scope for continuity and sustainability as more women are joining and hopefully will keep growing to encompass many other issues and community problems that they can tackle together.

The cells are enabling women to support each other to build dreams and improve the quality of their lives.

The pilot project will be written up in a report that will be shared with other organisations and stake. It will be presented by workers and some of the women at a later date.

The ABCD approach helped to recreate the communal approach to life people had formerly know, but people had lost their identity after being displaced as immigrants. For whatever reason as economic migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, people have left the safety of the African communal life.

The project brought community cohesion and brought together people with a common interest.

Everyone was welcome and made to feel that they can make a difference with the can-do approach and builds on the positives of the community

## Links

[sawn.org.uk](http://sawn.org.uk)

[forevermanchester.com/fm-women-january-2017-sawn/](http://forevermanchester.com/fm-women-january-2017-sawn/)



## Innovation through Conversation

### Project description

Heywood, Middleton & Rochdale Circle is a membership organisation for the over 50s and our primary aim is the reduction of social isolation amongst older people.

We have been hugely successful in getting older people out and about, meeting new people, making new friends and getting socially connected with their local community.

To achieve this, we do 2 main things, organise social events and deliver practical support.

Each month we organise between 35-40 different social events, ranging from meeting up for a coffee to going out for a meal, to going to a show or exhibition, trips out, anything and everything our members ask to go on the social calendar.

In 2016 alone we took nearly 6000 social bookings and completed nearly 1000 practical jobs for our members.

Every year we work with an average of 575 older people across the borough.

Our practical service helps with the awkward jobs older people struggle to get done such as gardening, decorating, DIY, moving boxes, changing lightbulbs, so giving our members access to trusted and friendly trades people and removes the fear of 'rogue traders'.

### Key learning

Our success is down to the members having ownership of the activities and looking to continually improve what we do by having regular dialogue with our Members, we call this- Innovation through Conversation.

The three-key learnings from the activities we do are: -

1. Members decide the social activities they would like to see on the social calendar.
2. Activities must take place across a range of times, days and locations.
3. Each event must have a designated social host to make people welcome and for the event to run smoothly.

The key to getting older people to socialise and engage with their community is to facilitate the things they want to do; not what people think they may like or should do.

The members suggest the things that appear on the social calendar and when and where these activities take place, this ensures maximum engagement and uptake.

As well as putting on a diverse range of activities, it is equally important that the events take place when members want them to happen. Members have differing needs and situations. For example, some members tell us they aren't lonely during the day as they are busy doing their day to day activities such as shopping etc. It's when they 'close the curtains' at night that they are at their loneliest, so we ensure activities take place both during the day and at night-time as well.

The same applies to weekends, as events and activities must take place across the full week. Sunday is a good example as older people miss 'family time', with historically Sunday being the day people came together to eat as a group. With families increasingly living geographically apart, socially isolated older people even those with living adult children are an increasing issue.

The events we organise have to be spread around the borough so as to make them as accessible as possible and also give people the opportunity to visit venues or events they wouldn't have otherwise attended.

To ensure people are made to feel welcome and for the event to run smoothly, each activity has a social host. The host, who is usually a member volunteer collates the attendance list, makes new members welcome and introduces them to other members and helps things to go as smoothly as possible.

### More about us

Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale Circle (HMR) was originally set up thanks to a seed fund from the town's largest social housing provider, 7 Rochdale Boroughwide Housing (RBH).

HMR Circle was originally part of a larger organisation called Participle who devised the original 'Circle' idea, but unfortunately due to business pressure, Participle wasn't able to continue.

Here at Heywood, Middleton & Rochdale Circle though, we were able to continue as a stand-alone organisation developing the Circle model and have gone from strength to strength, receiving world-wide recognition for our work in the reduction of social isolation amongst older people, principally via the research group Studio-L based at the University of Osaka in Japan.

We have changed the business model to be a low-cost operation and have also adopted a culture of continuous improvement in what we deliver- Innovation through Conversation.

We have developed the Circle model and have launched a modified version based around Independent Living Schemes called Be-Social with Trafford Housing Trust.



We have also helping to deliver a project in the Rochdale Borough Called Silverlinks in conjunction with Care & Repair England. Silverlinks is based on providing information and advice around housing options as we get older. We have also developed Circle-Soft Landing, a programme based around reducing re-admissions into hospital which we hope to launch very soon.

With Circle-Soft Landing a Circle volunteer is partnered with a patient /older person whilst they are in hospital to act as an informal visitor. Once the patient/older person leaves hospital the Circle Volunteer continues to visit them whilst they are at home and supports them in getting back socially active.

The patient/older person is encouraged to get active within the Circle Social Calendar so when the support from the Circle Volunteer tapers off they have a ready-made 'social circle' to keep them engaged and active.

### How and why our project is people powered

Circle's entire ethos is based around co-design and co-production with our Members driving everything we do.

Members suggest the events and activities they want to do and when they want to do them.

Members suggest the range of tasks they want from our practical service.

The members host the majority of our social events, they actively volunteer on a weekly basis to help support the administration side of Circle as well as helping out with Practical Jobs for other members, befriending and giving lifts or sharing transport costs with each other.

The feedback/suggestions/questions are a daily occurrence and we encourage this, but we are conscious that 'one size' doesn't fit all when it comes to ensure people stay 'empowered'.

We also have more structured communication channels to ensure maximum ownership and that Circle is genuinely people powered.

Members are also involved and kept up to speed via a quarterly newsletter called Circuit which answers members questions and suggestions.

We also have a twice-yearly event called Suggestion Time devoted to giving members a more formal meeting style for a more structured discussion on how to improve the service we offer Members.

Circle operates with small board with a member with a permanent position and also we will be adding two more members who will attend board on an annual basis.

### Evidence of impact

At Circle, we are keen to demonstrate the benefits that we deliver and the positive changes we make to people's lives.

Using the HACT Social Value Calculator Circle delivers a fantastic ROI of £1 invested brings a social value return of £58.74p

We are proud of the findings and a full version is available from our website.

Circle Monitoring and Evaluation Statistics-Circle Follow Up Questionnaire (see website)

### Links:-

HMR Circle's website: [hmrcircle.org.uk/](http://hmrcircle.org.uk/)

Complete Member Surve:  
[hmrcircle.org.uk/news/174/making-a-difference](http://hmrcircle.org.uk/news/174/making-a-difference)

When Studio L based at the University of Osaka in Japan visited HMR Circle  
[hmrcircle.org.uk/news/169/big-in-japan](http://hmrcircle.org.uk/news/169/big-in-japan)

Martyn's story. One of our early success stories. Circle Member Martyn pen his own experiences of what Circle did for him:  
[relationalwelfare.wordpress.com/2014/07/29/this-was-living-again-martyns-story-in-his-own-words/](http://relationalwelfare.wordpress.com/2014/07/29/this-was-living-again-martyns-story-in-his-own-words/)

HMR Circle Launch a pilot programme:  
[rochdaleonline.co.uk/news-features/2/news-headlines/97429/rochdale-circle-norden-and-bamford-pilot-programme](http://rochdaleonline.co.uk/news-features/2/news-headlines/97429/rochdale-circle-norden-and-bamford-pilot-programme)

Circle-Thrill seekers in the Manchester Evening News:  
[manchestereveningnews.co.uk/incoming/thrillseeking-circle-members-proving-still-9962902](http://manchestereveningnews.co.uk/incoming/thrillseeking-circle-members-proving-still-9962902)

Joan's Story-A heart-warming story of the difference we make:  
[relationalwelfare.wordpress.com/2013/04/24/the-power-of-circle/](http://relationalwelfare.wordpress.com/2013/04/24/the-power-of-circle/)

Heywood, Middleton & Rochdale Circle Facebook page:  
[facebook.com/circle.cic/](https://facebook.com/circle.cic/)

Heywood, Middleton & Rochdale Circle @HMRCircleCIC

"I know what my dad's done for me. Everything he's done for me I can pass on to my kids. Some kids don't get this. Some kids are in really bad neighbourhoods where they don't get anything like this."  
(teenage boy, Salford).

### Project description

Despite all the work by statutory and social organisations over many years, a large proportion of children in disadvantaged areas are unlikely to fulfil their potential and therefore face the risk of severe and multiple disadvantage. Their families tend to make disproportionate use of public services, which are being reduced or withdrawn.

### A Dadly approach

Dadly Does It is a project that aims to explore the question: does improving the well-being of fathers improve the well-being of their children?

The fathers with whom we have worked often have poor quality of life: especially mental ill-health and social isolation - reflected in poverty, unemployment, homelessness, substance misuse and/or criminal activity. They are at greatest risk of punitive and coercive interventions by public service agencies.

We want to minimise the proportion of children experiencing these things. This would help to reduce the proportion of adults and future generations facing severe and multiple disadvantage. Complementing others' work with mothers, we aim to achieve this by co-designing flexible responses with fathers, delivered shoulder to shoulder with other fathers to develop and move on.

Dadly Does It works alongside fathers with long-term histories of economic and social marginalisation. Many have experienced various childhood traumas, with associated complex and difficult family relationships and poor educational experiences.

### Key learning

*"We take how we feel into home"*

Our initial work in one locality in Salford found family breakdown and worklessness as key elements affecting fathers' well-being. Fathers' pride and shame often means they isolate themselves and tend towards unhelpful coping mechanisms as they are often marginalised from the family home.

How fathers feel is mirrored in the experience of their children, whether living with, having contact with or estranged from them. The children often experience similar early roots of severe and multiple disadvantage: background poverty; complex and difficult family relationships; and poor educational experiences.

### Shoulder to shoulder

We have found being a good father is often a strong motivator to take action and make changes. Enabling fathers from similar backgrounds to work together and become positively supportive mates can sustain this. They can then collectively determine the terms of their own inclusion.

So far, we have found the 'positive deviants' are fathers able to overcome their pride and shame to express their feelings. They give hope to other fathers who are isolated and in agony. Having a 'mate' and working 'shoulder to shoulder' allows fathers to open up and share their feelings with others who are or have been in similar situations. This allows them to develop positive coping strategies.

### Control, contact and confidence

We have learned that, if fathers feel listened to, feel accepted and have purpose, they regain some control over their own lives and well-being improves. The biggest change is in confidence, enabling them to grow as fathers and as men. Children become more confident and the father's relationship with the mother improves. This challenges mothers' images of what fathers are like. There is the start of a cultural shift in attitudes as an alternative positive model of fatherhood emerges.

### More about us

Acting yourself into a new way of thinking.

Fathers lead the work and communities discover for themselves what the problems for fathers are, who their 'positive deviant' fathers are and how they deal with problems. Each community makes its own journey of self-discovery, developing ways to share the knowledge of these positive deviants.

In principle, fathers design spaces where positive role models talk openly about their problems, shoulder to shoulder, not face to face. Fathers then design and run dad-child fun activities, enabling bonding with their children.

In our first locality in Salford, fathers constituted a group called Salford Dadz. This is also a 'living university' to give hope, by sharing learning with fathers in other localities how to change their lives and those of their children. We also know that older children who have benefited can persuade and support other fathers around changes that can ensue.

### Continuing to learn

Building on our learning from the initial project in one locality in Salford, and with support from the Lankelly Chase Foundation, the Dadly Does It approach is being tested further in two other localities in Greater Manchester. Learning is continuing to be produced not only around the impact on family well-being, but also on the impact with regard to people experiencing severe and multiple disadvantage.

## Positive deviance

We use a strengths-based approach called positive deviance: finding those who already overcome problems, despite having the same resources as everyone else.

The four stages (the 4Ds) of positive deviance are:

1. Defining the problem
2. Determining the positive role models ('positive deviants')
3. Discovering what dads do (uncommon practices or behaviours)
4. Designing ways of sharing solutions.

Positive deviance tells us that success needs to be described in children's and fathers' terms. Local people have told us they want:

- more smiles at home
- children doing well at school
- meaningful employment.

## Evidence of impact

### Outcomes

So far, we have found that children find positive time with their fathers precious, novel and enriching and want to spend more time with them. Children have seen a different side to their fathers and have a new respect for and trust with them. They have also recognised a change in their own behaviour in response to the change in their father's behaviour.

Fathers establish a stronger identity and belonging, with greater self-confidence and self-esteem. They also feel more cared about. The experience has been life-changing for some, with moves into volunteering, education and employment after many years out of work. They have seen their increased confidence rubbing off onto their children.

Although at first somewhat suspicious, mothers grow in support of Dadly Does It. They eventually report improved relationships within their relationships and family, and a more positive view of men in general. Mothers also experience more sharing of the parenting burden and joy, and more time to relax and pursue interests for themselves.

Public and voluntary sector workers have verified that they have seen changes in fathers, and that this had reduced the resources they needed to allocate or were likely to allocate in future to supporting some families: "He was saying I go to Salford Dadz and we do things with the children and he was saying how they sit down and do craft things and he was explaining some very positive interaction." (social worker)

## Cost-effectiveness

A social return on investment study, assured by Social Value International, concluded that "we can be confident that the social value created by the Project is in the range of £1: £13 and £1:£20". This means that £1 invested yielded up to approximately £20 of social value, of which the potential financial return to the public sector is for every £1 invested, Dadly Does It yielded approximately:

- £3 of potential savings in children's services alone;
- £13 of value for the fathers actively involved

## Links

Unlimited Potential

[unlimitedpotential.org.uk/enterprise/innovation-projects/dadly-does-it](http://unlimitedpotential.org.uk/enterprise/innovation-projects/dadly-does-it)

Realising the Value

[www.realisingthevalue.org.uk](http://www.realisingthevalue.org.uk)

External evaluation (Leeds Beckett University)

[eprints.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/1728/](http://eprints.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/1728/)

Social return on investment (VIE for Life)

[salfordsocialvalue.org.uk/sroi-assessment-salford-dadz-project/](http://salfordsocialvalue.org.uk/sroi-assessment-salford-dadz-project/)





Unique Improvements is a not for profit organisation, working with disadvantaged communities to find local solutions to problems, using asset based approaches. Our experience lies in developing and delivering co-produced approaches to support improvement across a range of health and wellbeing topics. Examples include a community-led Collaborative to tackle worklessness, and an older People's Collaborative that supported local people to develop 17 new weekly luncheon social clubs for older people, serving 5000 meals per annum and 21 community members trained as activity instructors.

One of our current contracts is Salford Healthy Communities, a community-led Long Term Conditions Prevention Programme. It is commissioned by Salford City Council

### Project description

Salford Healthy Communities is a community led Long-Term Conditions Prevention programme focused on: -

- Raising awareness of long term conditions (Cancer, Diabetes, CVD, Stroke, Dementia, liver disease, etc.)
- Promoting and encouraging the take up of cancer screening and NHS Health Checks
- Encouraging behaviour change in target audiences, including
- Earlier presentation of cancer
- Uptake of flu vaccination
- Stop smoking support
- More referrals into local health and wellbeing services.

We do this by supporting and working with several teams of local people who use a variety of creative approaches to tackle issues in their communities. Teams are drawn from a mixture of geographical communities, and communities of interest or identity. They include a Jewish team and a young person's team.

### Key Learning

The Salford Healthy Community programme takes a collaborative approach with local people. The work is co-produced with 'team members' from the community. At any given time, there are 90 regularly active and 180 occasional volunteers who are supported by a small staff team. Key learning from the approach includes:

#### Test ideas in small scale approaches

The most successful approaches to engage local people in brief advice conversations happen when creative approaches are tested with target audiences. Examples include producing knitted body parts, staging puppet shows, making lungs from angel wings left over from hen parties, playing hook-a-duck, baking boob cakes, etc.

### Value local knowledge and local relationships

Using local knowledge and relationships to prioritize how, where and when they engage their communities that will have the most impact. Examples of this have included; engaging Jewish men in Synagogue car parks before prayers, staging games in pubs and organizing Christmas markets

### Invest in capacity release

Reflect your approach with processes, language and investment in people. For example, shift your language from a 'volunteer' to 'team member'. Feedback on impact - people engage with what they see works and what they value. Provide a variety of training and learning opportunities. Advocate for the contribution of (volunteer) team members.

### More About Us

Unique Improvements have a long-standing relationship with the communities of Salford. Our team were originators of the Healthy Community Collaborative programme, and Salford an initial pilot site. The pilot was then sustained locally, first in three ward areas, and later to a city-wide Cancer and CVD programme which was managed by Unique Improvements.

In 2015 Salford City Council built on the success of the work and commissioned a wider Long Term Conditions Prevention programme (Salford Healthy Communities) which was developed by Unique Improvements. Additional innovations that took place through Salford Healthy Communities included:

- a community based pilot to identify people at risk of type 2 diabetes which was part of the National Diabetes Prevention Programme
- support to Drinkaware to deliver community facing interventions around brief alcohol advice
- Sleep Matters, a community-led initiative to improve the sleep of people with a diagnosis of Dementia.

The changing commissions have come with increasing complexity, but have offered opportunities to work on more topics and community issues. This has meant that Salford Healthy Communities has shifted focus from cancer and CVD to a more complex set of long-term conditions targets and the need to understand the interdependencies between people's lives and health and wellbeing topics.

New commissions often mean that we need to balance topic based approaches with community focused solutions; i.e. we are as interested in supporting resilient communities as we are at increasing flu immunization for example. On occasions this presents a challenge where commissioning priorities that focus on reducing an ill-health burden, can overshadow the ambition to improve community development.

The changing complexities of the SHC programme means that some (volunteer) team members need to have a higher level of skills and knowledge as they are integral to the local public health workforce as partners; this also means managing the tensions between paid staff from partners organisations and unpaid roles.

### **Why and how our project is people powered:**

Salford Healthy Communities is a community-led project where community team Members work in collaboration with staff and partner organisations to co-produce and design creative approaches to supporting others in their communities to: -

- make manageable lifestyle behavioural changes
- increase knowledge about lifestyle risk factors for Long Term Conditions
- increase the take up of screening services
- identify signs and symptoms of long term conditions
- have an effective voice in shaping local interventions and services
- enhance the assets for health and wellbeing
- encourage relationships between communities and service providers
- support individuals and groups with specific needs; ie. Sleep Volunteers helping people with a diagnosis of dementia to manage their sleep

### **Evidence of impact:**

Salford Healthy Communities has not been formally evaluated, however we recorded the outputs and outcomes listed below in 2015/16.

- 75 active community volunteers, averaging 240 hours per month
- Over 150 occasional volunteers
- Held 186 community events
- Completed 5000 brief advice conversations
- Carried out over 1600 Lifestyle Risk Assessments
- 1000 behaviour change goals set with members of the public
- Brief advice on cancer screening given to 1750 people
- 1250 people followed up and 90% have raised awareness or intention to act
- 1274 people given flu immunisation advice
- 1200 people given advice and information about NHS Healthchecks
- 5 local health campaigns developed and delivered
- 4 National campaigns promoted
- 3 stop smoking campaigns in Salford Colleges
- 151 people supported to make a plan to reduce or stop smoking

- 425 social Capital surveys completed
- 27 volunteers supported into work and education
- 562 referrals into lifestyle services or activities
- 335 people referred to primary care services
- 150 training opportunities completed by community volunteers

### **Links**

A case study of our work in the Jewish Communities of Salford that reflects our approach across the City has been published in the Local Government Associations paper 'Working with faith groups to promote health and wellbeing' - Engaging the Salford Orthodox Jewish community in the NHS Health check programme is available at:

[http://www.local.gov.uk/documents/10180/8150261/1.34+Working+with+faith+groups\\_web.pdf/2bc83738-d503-407a-a368-10525c60223f](http://www.local.gov.uk/documents/10180/8150261/1.34+Working+with+faith+groups_web.pdf/2bc83738-d503-407a-a368-10525c60223f)

or on the NHS Healthcheck website for commissioners and providers at:  
[http://www.healthcheck.nhs.uk/commissioners\\_and\\_providers/evidence/case\\_studies/](http://www.healthcheck.nhs.uk/commissioners_and_providers/evidence/case_studies/)



## Project description

At the Prevention Alliance, we believe in working 'with', not to or for. We try to interact with people in a different way right from the start - having a conversation with them, rather than assessing, enabling them to recognise their strengths and build on these to make changes rather than focusing on problems.

The Community Anchors are people who regularly attend, or run, groups and spaces within the local community, who have agreed that they will be a friendly and welcoming face for anyone the TPA points in their direction.

## Key Learning

The Community Anchors scheme is a fledgling project at this point - we have a lot of lessons yet to learn as things evolve!

The Anchors scheme is strength based - we are recognising the skills and qualities that people are already, and naturally, demonstrating, by being 'that person' in a place who would be a good port of call for a newcomer due to their friendly nature and approachable attitude.

We have deliberately tried to keep the Anchors programme informal - the welcome only takes place within the group or space where the Anchor would be anyway - each person takes responsibility for themselves - they simply sign a very basic agreement (which we also sign) to commit to taking up the role to the best of their ability.

## More about us

The Prevention Alliance is a preventative service commissioned by Stockport Council Adult Social Care team. The Alliance itself is made up of Stockport Homes, Talk Listen Change, Threshold, Age UK Stockport, Nacro and local information, advice and guidance charity FLAG. The team is made up of over 35 staff, comprising Keyworkers and a small team of Community Connectors who are delivering a programme of 'People Helping People' work, including the Anchors programme.

The project is not rocket science! As we got to know the area and the groups and spaces that are on offer for people to attend, we kept finding that people liked the idea of attending somewhere, but (as we all know), the reality of setting one foot over the threshold or pushing open that dark creaky door can be pretty intimidating. It seemed logical that the people on the other side of that door, lovely and welcoming as they were, should be the ones to take people over the threshold rather than us.

The wider work of the Prevention Alliance is very much based on the principle of everyone having something they can give, and how crucial this can be to someone's progress towards change. The Community Anchors is one way we are trying to make it easy for workers and the people we work with, to see how they can give something back.

## How our project is people powered

The work is an attempt to encourage people to recognise the skills and talents they have, and to use them for the benefit of others. It is about allowing people to interact without 'professionals' being involved, and letting relationships evolve (between the Anchor and the person they welcome to their space or group). If we want communities to become self-sustaining, we must have the confidence to step back!

## Evidence of impact

As the work is so new, we are not yet at the stage where we have research or evaluation evidence. However very soon we will begin to gather peoples' stories and outcomes evidence including what difference having the Anchor in place has made to how they felt about attending a space or group.

## Links

<http://stockporttpa.co.uk>

[https://www.facebook.com/pg/stockporttpa/posts/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/stockporttpa/posts/?ref=page_internal)



## Project description

We are a small social enterprise based in Stockport but we've a big reach. Focusing on digital inclusion, building financial resilience and encouraging good health and wellbeing; we use community organising principles to engage with our community. In 2016 we engaged with 1,700 people with the aim to support people to have better lives by being involved in informal learning.

Based within a coffee shop, we're interested in knowing how food can knit communities together and help people to have more community support in their day to day lives. We employ 4.5 full-time staff and support 32 community volunteers.

## Key learning

Our focus is on individuals in our community and listening to them, then building on things they love in life and supporting with needs. To say we have no agenda sounds conceited, but without the pressure of having to deliver a service, we have the flexibility to deliver what is truly needed and not focus predetermined outputs of a project.

We don't do for others what they can do for themselves. We have heard this said many times but have frequently challenged what it means in practice. As services move towards asset based approaches we can see 'getting others to do for people what they can do for themselves'. We have experienced and witnessed volunteer burnout and ensure that we support these people as we would anyone else.

We build sustainability from the outset. There is a huge opportunity to work with social enterprises. We define social enterprises as organisations that generate revenue from alternative services and reinvests 100% of profit. This isn't always in cash but is more often in resources. This means that we can extend work beyond project (budget) timelines, which we have found essential in the work we do.

## More about us

We use food to engage people in learning and connecting. From the drinks that we sell in our coffee shops served with a conversation, to the recipe packs that we donate to food banks and give to our customers. Our deliverables change frequently but currently include:

- Suspended coffee schemes - originally for unpaid careers, now for anyone in our community who needs it
- Community cooking courses - Developed from original healthy eating & budget cooking to understanding new trends and tackling food waste.
- Working with Tesco and Fareshare to redistribute food that was heading to landfill. Recipients vary and this is influenced by our community who inform us of need.
- Offering a weekly 'Pay What You Can' menu where people share the same menu and space but pay what they can afford or feel it's worth.

- Weekly recipe packs - using money made at our 'Pay What You Can' events to create bags that contain everything someone would need to make meals from a healthy carrot soup to a heart-warming apple crumble
- Befriending at cake clubs - a private donation was the catalyst for this work, but we didn't know what befriending would look like in our setting. We've settled with cake club as this seems to work right now. It may change in the future depending on demand or desire for things.

Our common theme for all the above is that it has and will continue to evolve. We don't settle on something. As our community changes, so does the work we do. We feel it is important to be versatile, compassionate, reflective and fun.

In addition, to this we run 18 community computer clubs each week throughout Stockport, one credit union collection point, monthly kids coding club and fortnightly volunteer training days.

## How our project is people powered

Our background is in business and not community. As such we didn't initially have the vocabulary to describe what we did. Retail businesses engage with people and offer what people want to buy every day. It is quite simple. To transfer that approach to community work and projects seemed an obvious thing to do. Build relationships and respond to need and demand.

Encouraging people to steer and drive our work has many benefits. We have never had to spend time in trying to recruit people to attend activities because we have only responded to need in the first place. In addition, we aren't a big team so cannot take on work that other people could do themselves with a bit of resource, be that a free space or some training.

We are not formal enough to need a scrutiny panel but instead prefer to have an open mind to any ideas and use our volunteers as a sounding board to scope out each suggestion. It has taken us a while to be confident enough to know that this approach works for us and is enough to ensure that we are accountable to our community.

## Evidence of impact

[goodthingsfoundation.org/Learning-for-Health-Award](https://goodthingsfoundation.org/Learning-for-Health-Award)  
[youtube.com/watch?v=ydoOpDamyXA&t=12s](https://youtube.com/watch?v=ydoOpDamyXA&t=12s)  
[youtube.com/watch?v=1QpVxReCIHO&t=11s](https://youtube.com/watch?v=1QpVxReCIHO&t=11s)

## Links

[stockportonline.org](https://stockportonline.org)  
[twitter.com/startpointsk6](https://twitter.com/startpointsk6)  
[facebook.com/startingpointstockport/](https://facebook.com/startingpointstockport/)

## Project Description

The Give2Gain Community Timebank is a local community timebank, in Stockport, where local people give their time to help each other. Every hour of help earns a Timebank member a Time Credit, no matter what help is given. Time Credits can be used to receive help from other Timebank Members, or they can be donated to the Community Pot, for another Timebank Member to use. Timebanking is for everyone, for individuals of any ability or disability, small community groups and those larger community organisations or businesses that are happy to develop their community connections via Time Exchange.

## Key Learning

- The Give2Gain Community Timebank provides a safe space for local people to connect and get to know each other, in their own time and at their own pace. Meetings and events provide the space to bring people together and to pool their skills, knowledge and experience.
- The Timebank has developed a structure within which people can discover their talents for helping via Time Exchange. Helping requires the skills of offering, negotiation and organising, which can be developed via the preparation required to take part in Time Exchange. The Timebank structure enables members to explore and develop these skills, along with the confidence to use them. The outcome is safe and flexible Time Exchange. Time Exchange takes place between individuals, and within group projects, where everyone involved enjoys the experience and wants to take part in more. Being a Timebank member, and taking part in Time Exchange, has enabled some members to secure regular volunteering work or employment.
- The Safe Return Home from Hospital Scheme is an example of how peer and friendship networks can add to and enhance professional support. This peer to peer support based on friendship and trust is personal, timely and flexible.

## More about the Give2Gain Community Timebank

The Give2Gain Community Timebank was established in 2014. It is a member organisation that is free and available to all local people and accessed via regular weekly drop in meetings, monthly events and Time Exchange activities. The wealth of experiences, knowledge, skills and personal connections of Timebank members means that there is a ready-made talent bank that members can contribute to and share with each other. Members discover their and their peers' talents via four key questions that they ask of each other regularly:

1. What do you like doing?
2. What do you want to know more about?
3. What help can you give?
4. What help do you need?

Give2Gain Timebank members are encouraged to attend meetings where they are given the space to get to know, like and trust each other. From this, friendships develop and helping relationships emerge out of facilitated Time Exchange. Timebank members learn that there are endless ways of helping and learning from each other, many of which they are still to discover. Over time independent friendship groups are formed and new local social support networks established. Members of these groups are encouraged to return to Timebank meetings, from time to time, to share their learning.

As friendships are established, Timebank members are asked if they would like to enrol in the Safe Return Home from Hospital Scheme. Once enrolled, there is a system they can use should they, or a Timebank friend, be admitted to hospital. The Scheme ensures members get home safely, after a hospital stay, via having a Timebank friend visit them in hospital, bring them clothes and personal items from home, make sure the house is warm, do some shopping, give them a lift home from hospital and provide some companionship in the days following discharge from hospital.

## How our project is people powered

The Give2Gain Timebank is people powered because it is about people helping people and creating social networks of reciprocal support. It is about people discovering that their experiences, knowledge and skills can have a profound effect on another person where the value to that person is immense. It can literally make their day.

Time Exchange leads to practical help such as shopping and sewing. It provides the basis for peer to peer learning, by experience, such as learning DIY skills, gardening or painting. Members provide workshops and share information about, for example, other community services. They also organise and run community events such as the Timebank Soup which benefit other local community groups.

The Safe Return Home from Hospital Scheme is rooted in human connections, friendships and help. Working with the Timebank Coordinator and local hospital staff, Timebank members, have been able to overcome professional concerns and ensure another person returns to the comfort of their own home in a safe and timely way.

Overall, an emphasis on what can be done creates a sense of optimism. Members see the results of their helping behaviour and this, in turn leads to the wish to do more for each other.

## Evidence of impact

To date there has been no formal evaluation of the Give2Gain Community Timebank.

## Links

[www.give2gain.org](http://www.give2gain.org)

[give2gain.org/meet-peter-one-of-our-give2gain-timebank-members/](http://give2gain.org/meet-peter-one-of-our-give2gain-timebank-members/)  
[give2gain.org/celebrating-the-opening-of-the-stockport-mencap-garden/](http://give2gain.org/celebrating-the-opening-of-the-stockport-mencap-garden/)

## Project description

Denton West End Community Library is a charity run by 14 Trustees and several Committee members. We all work on a voluntary basis alongside our work and home life commitments. It is our aim to provide an active library and a vigorous community facility for the all the residents of Dane Bank.

The library offers children and adults the enjoyment of reading and provides a place for learning new skills. We are much more than a library, we have developed our offer to the community and now provide a variety of groups and learning opportunities for all ages. We provide a place for our elderly residents to socialise and make new friendships, which in turn is reducing isolation within the community and bringing together all age groups.

## Key Learning

### Volunteering

As a library service we are run entirely by volunteers. Without our volunteers we would not be able to have a library service or deliver the wide variety of activities. Our volunteers and the time commitment they give are the real strength behind making this community asset such a success. Our volunteers all live in the local community and we have seen additional positives to those who volunteer, like reducing isolation for those who live on their own, creating opportunities for them to join activities as well as one group who have started to go away together for short breaks.

### Creating a library service

Some people will argue that books are a thing of the past and e-books are the way forward, but we have a strong belief that books still have a place in modern day life. The library service we provide, means that our local community whatever their age, has access to books and reading. To enable us to purchase new books, we take book donations which we either use in the library or sell on, all money raised through this, goes to buying new books.

### Creating activities to engage the community

As well as providing a library service, we provide a variety of activities that engage our community and provide a place where people can come and learn something new. There are various activities including our community choir, kick boxing, street dance, play group, knit and natter, yoga, IT lessons and much, much more!

## More About

In 2012 Tameside Council made the decision to close several local libraries. The residents of Dane Bank were greatly disappointed by this and felt strongly that our community needed not only a library, but also a place where people of all ages could learn new skills. With the support of the local community a Friends Group, which later set up, the charity, was formed. Over the past couple of years, the group have worked tirelessly to save this great community asset.

We had great joy in being able to announce that on 28th June 2013 the charity, by means of a business loan, successfully completed the purchase of the library building from the Council.

As a charity, we need to ensure that our financial commitments are met. We are continually looking to improve the facility. Without community and business support, we simply will not be able to remain open or provide enhanced facilities to the community.

As we receive no external funding, we run the library and pay our bills, through donations, fundraising and hiring out our room to local businesses. Over a year, we hold various different fundraising events including, coffee mornings, quiz nights, discos, fairs and afternoon tea. We have been successful in gaining some grant funding which has enabled us to improve our facilities and support our groups when they are setting up. We also work with some of our health providers to provide well-being sessions.

We have been successful in acquiring a large pool of local volunteers for running the library. We have volunteers of all ages, who all have different 'job' roles within the library. Without our dedicated volunteers we would not be able to continue to provide the service we do.

One of the best times of the year is when we get all the community together to switch on the Christmas tree lights. The coming together of our community at this event, makes it all worthwhile!

## How our project is people powered

Our community realise that the only safe hands for community assets is 'with the community'. This led our group to become very actively engaged in saving our local library and community hub with the intention of making much more of it. We have learnt a huge amount about mobilising support, and what is possible to achieve.

We anticipate much greater involvement from a significant group of people in the affairs of our local community, which will continue to grow, to provide a sustainable and long term community resource.

With over 75 residents pledging to volunteer their time to supervise the opening of the library and to clean and maintain the building, it is clear that there will be a change. This can only be for the betterment of the community as we all learn more about volunteering, helping others and the benefits this brings.

We also have regular dialogue with other community groups and organisations, locally and nationally. We all learn, share and benefit from one another's experiences for the benefit of our communities.

### **Evidence of impact**

Where we have not done any formal impact analysis, we have completed evaluation for specific projects that are linked to grant funding.

We hold an AGM every year, where we discuss our successes and what we have achieved over the year. We invite views from all our volunteers and the local community on the work we do and how we can change and make improvements.

Our main evaluation comes from verbal feedback from the community and volunteers and the difference we see we are making to their lives.

We have groups keen on crafts, genealogy, knit & natter and playing games who use the space and we also run a range of classes, clubs and sessions such as: writing classes, books for boys, craft clubs, internet/email/word processing and internet safety for parents. One activity we are particularly confident about is showing films to small groups (up to 30) on Sunday afternoon. The setup costs are manageable and the return is excellent.

### **Links**

Twitter @DWECL

FaceBook: Denton West End Community Library

Webpage: [www.friendsofdenton-westendlibrary.co.uk](http://www.friendsofdenton-westendlibrary.co.uk)





## Project description

Hyde Community Action is an award-winning charity, set up in 2007 to:

- Tackle issues that impact on people's health and well-being.
- Provide targeted support for disadvantaged and excluded groups.
- Promote improved community cohesion.

We exist to challenge inequalities in health and well-being, helping people develop and support each other.

Our programme is designed to empower the people we work with, individually and collectively, by encouraging them to build with confidence on the skills and knowledge they already have. We listen to the views of the people within the community we serve, being informed and led by their expressed needs at the same time being culturally sensitive.

### Key Learning:

- Keep the people you are serving involved from start to finish through listening, feedback, keep them involved in the process of developing and reviewing your program
- Build and strengthen the good resources that is already there. Utilize the people, their skills, knowledge and expertise, utilize spaces, venues, and opportunities to collaborate with and support, therefore, helping to bridge gap of trust between people and organisations.
- Grow your own, invest in your local community. By having your workforce reflect the community you serve strengthens the trust and buy in.

### More about us

The charity grew out of the Asian Healthy Living Project which ran from 2003 to 2008. Our work has since grown to delivery across Tameside.

We:

- are based at the Healthy Living Centre in Hyde, from where we host and co-ordinate regular activities and training for the local community, with the help of our volunteers.
- share the ideas and agenda of the localism - we don't do something for people they can do themselves.
- are sensitive towards faith and culture, although we will not normally undertake work that is faith-specific.
- strive to be honest and transparent about our intentions, so it is easier for the people we work with, and for our partner agencies, to know where they stand with us.
- involve community members in decision making, volunteering, training and paid employment

In 2013 we received a Pride of Tameside award for our work with volunteers, and we were one of only 25 organisations nationally to receive new funding from the Government's Volunteering Fund. In 2015 we won a regional Award from Trinity College London, as part of NHS Health Education England Adult Learners Week for our work on ESOL and online Access to Health Records - a co-production between local GP and PPG, developed from ABCD work. We were also invited to attend 10 Downing Street to represent HCA at the very first Local Charities Day event, celebrating the work of the voluntary sector.

### How our project is people powered

We believe without people power we will not be able to achieve what we have and got where we are today. We invest in our 'Grow our own model' where service users are now part of our workforce.

Our volunteers underpin our work and are represented at all levels from supporting activities to being part of our trustee board making key decisions to shape the future of the organisations. The majority of Trustees are Tameside residents, 80% women of which 50% are from BAME communities, all have succeeded from involvement with our programme of activities.

Our peer mentor programme trains local women from disadvantaged communities in awareness of Domestic Abuse, Female Genital Mutilation, Child Sexual Exploitation and Mental Health. Peers then support other women in crisis, offering emotional and handholding support.

Our social activities are volunteer led, people helping people within their communities to help with social isolation, confidence and getting active in the community. Activities are shaped by our service users and volunteers and implemented with support from our staff.

With reduced funding opportunities available and different funders emerging, we have stayed true to our ethos of not being driven by funders. Our programme ideas are all initiated by the people we serve through face to face consultations using participatory techniques, identifying gaps in services and opportunities to empower individuals to take the next step raising aspirations.

### Evidence of impact

Upon request

### Links

[www.hydecommunityaction.org.uk](http://www.hydecommunityaction.org.uk) <https://www.facebook.com/HydeCommunity/> <https://twitter.com/HydeCommunity>



## Project Description

Stretford Public Hall is a beautiful Grade II listed building that has played a highly significant role in civic life in Stretford. Yet in 2013, its future came under threat with its proposed disposal by Trafford Council.

It was at this time that the local community came together to save the Hall and bring back into community use.

With lots of hard work we have achieved a great deal, including securing ownership of the Hall for the community in 2015 and our subsequent work to develop plans and begin bringing the hall back into use.

Our vision is for Stretford Public Hall to be a unique and thriving multi-purpose venue at the heart of Stretford owned and run by the local community.

## Key Learning

We have learnt so much in getting to this stage and there will be many more learnings along the way. However, three key things for us would be:

1. Crowd-in the skills, competencies and experience you need to develop the project. No single person or group will have all the requisite expertise you will need to achieve success in your project. However, by engaging the community you will have access to a wealth of abilities that will be essential to move forward. We have secured the inputs of lawyers, project managers, accountants, creatives, marketing and PR professionals, wellbeing practitioners and much more. All have been local enthusiasts that have given up their time to support the project because they recognise the value.
2. Take control of the pace of your project development. Often the speed of development of a project like this is dictated by external events. There have been times we have had to work incredibly fast such as submitting the bid to purchase the building. Then there have times when things have progressed slower than planned. Overall though it is important to develop the project at a pace that is feasible for your leadership team to manage, but also there is sufficient momentum to keep the team, volunteers and the wider community engaged.
3. Ensure that your vision stays relevant and is embedded into your practices. Our vision is for Stretford Public Hall to be a unique and thriving multi-purpose venue at the heart of Stretford owned and run by the local community. We have tried to apply this to all our practices, from setting the booking policy to determining our fundraising strategy. We are fortunate that this vision continues to be relevant but it still has required active consideration when involved in the more detailed operational side.

## More about us

Although in many ways we are at the beginning of our journey, as an organisation and group of residents we have already achieved a great deal since first coming together in 2013.

In 2014, we:

- Registered Stretford Public Hall as an Asset of Community Value (April 2014)
- Registered as a Company Limited by Guarantee in September 2014
- Launched a petition that gathered over 2000 signatories in support of our proposals to stop the hall being sold off
- Undertook a public consultation exercise receiving over 380 responses demonstrating overwhelming support
- Received over 50 expressions of interest from service providers and prospective users
- Hosted two successful Open Days attracting approximately 1060 local community members
- Hosted the first of several fundraising events (Dec 2014)
- Secured a total of £79,000 through two grants from Social Investment Business to pay for pre-feasibility, and detailed feasibility works to develop an outline business plan, undertake surveys, and pay for professional architect fees, legal fees, and project management costs
- Raised £3,100 from local donations
- Coordinated an effective media campaign, comprising mainstream media, local paper coverage and extensive social media coverage
- Submitted our bid proposal in response to the Councils call for Expressions of Interest, August 2014.

In 2015, we:

- Secured a further £42,000 in grants to develop our project and plans for refurbishment
- Successfully secured commitment from the Local Authority to transfer Stretford Public Hall to us
- Converted to a Charitable Community Benefit Society
- Carried out essential repairs and decorated parts of the building
- Accepted our first tenants into the building in December including the Parliamentary Office, local artists and a handful of small businesses
- Supported the development of two new community led groups

In 2016, we:

- Achieved conditional Change-of-Use Planning Approval to allow for community and office based accommodation
- Negotiated and secured income generation as a temporary filming set /production studio of a feature film

- Hosted our first events in the Hall including Trafford College Craft Festival and Stretford Arts Collective Exhibition
- Secured a development grant and pledge of equity match funding from Power to Change through the Community Shares Booster Programme
- Launched our membership scheme, attracting over 150 members.
- Held our first Annual General Meeting in the Hall, with over 50 members attending
- Secured £20,000 from the Architectural Heritage Fund and Heritage Lottery Fund to finalise the scope and scale of the restoration work.

### **How our project is people powered**

There are many ways in which our project is people powered and we embedded this approach within our mission:

As guardians of Stretford Public Hall, we will restore and protect this historic landmark enhancing opportunities for regeneration. Through ongoing engagement with the local community, we will host a wide range of activities that meet Stretford's needs. In partnership, we will help to improve the lives of residents by providing opportunities for employment and involvement as well as access to arts, culture, heritage, and a range of wellbeing services.

A key dimension of our project is to ensure that Stretford Public Hall can act as a valuable space for existing and active community organisations and activities. In particular, we have developed strong relationships with Stretford Children's Theatre and Stretford Arts Collective who have been closely involved in our development and accordingly are now using the space actively to deliver their activities to the local community.

Our role with Stretford Children's Theatre and Stretford Arts Collective is to let these organisations take the lead in service delivery but act as close partners in respect of the use of the Hall. However, this year we are taking a more leading role in curating and delivering wellbeing activities, where we recognise there are gaps in local provision.

In early 2017, we launched a weekly Community Choir which is attracting upwards of 80 people a week. We have also established 'Well-being Tuesdays' in which are running a series of wellbeing classes across the day, using local service providers. In its first week, it attracted over 100 people.

### **Evidence of impact**

Our current Community Share Offer Document and Business Plan cite early research / market analysis that we have undertaken. These are available here: <http://www.stretfordpublichall.org.uk/communityshareoffer>

### **Links**

Our website has further information here: [www.stretfordpublichall.org.uk](http://www.stretfordpublichall.org.uk)

Our Facebook Groups and Pages also have lots of information:

Our public page: <https://www.facebook.com/friendsofstretfordpublichall/>

Our group (for more dedicated supporters (request to join): <https://www.facebook.com/groups/227083674131806/>

Choir Facebook group (request to join): <https://www.facebook.com/groups/690004407844501/>

## Project description

My Life Legacy is a newly established charity that is based on an 84-acre purpose built eco farm in Standish and also at Leigh Sports Village. My Life evolved from local people and that is why it offers such a wide and diverse range of person centred opportunities for all including:

- Alternative day support for individuals of all abilities including people with disabilities, mental health issues, illness relating to older age and support needs of all ages.
- Bespoke further education for those with special educational needs and disabilities age 16 - 25 years
- Alternative education for those children and young people not in education and employment (NEET). We specialise in supporting young people who may be on roll at a school but don't attend. Our unique environment can enable young people to engage in education in different ways from animal care, outdoor adventure to bicycle repair, drama and dance, catering and hospitality, the arts and so much more.
- Fully inclusive school holiday activity club for all ages and abilities.
- Care Act Advocacy - Currently Wigan area only.
- Accessible holiday lets / respite facilities.
- My Life Support - An evolving third party brokerage service to enable individuals to have choice and control with a personal budget or personal health budget without all of the burden of administration and human resource issues.
- My Life Travel - a specialist travel agency to find accessible personalised holidays/respite whilst helping with the personal budget.

## Key Learning

Our key learning over the past 4.5 years is: -

- To be brave and listen carefully to what people want - it usually is right and will enable you to build a responsive business offer.
- Place is critical - we had many ideas but people tend to judge by what they can see, in particular the funders. We invite people to our place so they can 'feel' what we are about belonging, hospitality and seeing each person for their skills, gifts and qualities.
- Flexibility and willingness to learn - we don't get it right every time but we try our best to learn as we go along. We continually reflect and act on our learning, openness, transparency and discussion is critical to achieving great outcomes for people.
- Keep close to your values - culture of an organisation is critical we need people with the right attitude and as we say a 'big heart', the rest we can teach them. Make sure your organisation has its people at heart in all it does and you won't go far wrong.

## More about us

My Life evolved from Caroline Tomlinson's 'front room' Caroline is Mum to Joe age 28 years who has complex needs and who pioneered personal budgets in the UK in Wigan

Whilst Caroline had enabled her son to live a good life many local families were asking how to do this and in particular they had concerns of how you find reliable, flexible and quality support for your loved one as well as meaningful things for people to do all day. Caroline had experience in the voluntary sector and decided to create something a little bit different that belonged to local people.

My Life was born as a CIC and is now a charity (My Life Legacy) to create a community where everyone belongs. In July of 2012 we launched with a two-day workshop on asset based community development delivered by Cormac Russell, which grounded the evolution of My Life.

My Life used the assets of local facilities to start developing new ways to find people to work in the health and care sector to support families. We developed 'Pathways to Employment' an innovative asset based recruitment and training programme which matches staff to customer based on skills, gifts and interests. This was funded by Skills for Care and to date has run over 10 ten times finding and matching over 250 people into personalised work arrangements. We also connected people, their personal assistants and the community by offering opportunities to get together and try and break the feeling of isolation for the individual needing support, the family and the staff member.

Whilst My Life had no aspirations of grandeur, we had a reputation of seeing possibility and grasping opportunities. In 2014 we were offered the opportunity to be based on an 84-acre purpose built Equestrian Centre and eco farm by a local philanthropist. We had a real opportunity to do something very different and offer alternatives to traditional day provision by providing real meaningful occupation. We decided to take the risk and become tenants on the site, 6 months later we opened our Leigh site and the rest as they say is history.

## How our project is people powered.

My Life has evolved from what local people have said and has been built from the assets of local people. It was called My Life Legacy as we know over years different people will be involved in the organisation and all they would need to do was to leave a positive legacy of their time here to the community.

## My Life created some basic principles that it had to: -

- Be what people wanted - we developed on the model of membership-membership, that those who put something in, would get something out. It was about empowerment, self-efficacy and promoting independence, giving people a hand up rather than a hand out.

- All means All - our beliefs are around inclusion and belonging and we would support and welcome all members of the community as they came forward.
- Be at the heart of the community - Place is critical so whatever we did would be local and open to all.
- Be sustainable - we developed a model of community trading that doesn't rely on the gift of grants or contracts and was diverse enough to survive. (Although grants to pump prime and test out ideas would be welcome).

#### To ensure we remain close to the people we host:

- Regular user and family forums.
- A Board which meets bi-monthly takes the views of our members seriously.
- An open door policy which enables people to call in as and when required.

#### Evidence of impact

We have many different examples of impact although we have not yet published anything as we feel we are still in the early stages of development. However, on an individual level we can demonstrate the impact of individual circumstances.

#### Case Study 1

A is a young man with a diagnosis of autism, he is 15 years old and has only attended school for 20 mins per week in the last 3 years. During this time, he would only sit in the reception area and was completely disengaged and showing signs of issues in his mental health. He started to come to My Life in September 2016 and came for one day per week. He has worked alongside our site maintenance team flagging, decking, bricklaying and joinery. We have applied his functional skills learning in practical ways and the outcome has been significant. He attends 3 full days per week, is totally engaged with people around him, he has developed friendships which are being realised outside of My Life and is going to be coming full time, by choice from summer 2017.

#### Case Study 2

S is a young man age 22 years with extremely complex health needs - ventilator, tracheostomy etc. He lives at home with family and although he has a personal health budget and some amazing personal assistants having people constantly in your home can be very intrusive. My Life offers holiday let style respite in wooden accessible chalets which enable S and his team to come and stay in a great environment. This has given the family a regular break each week whilst enabling S to invite friends round.

#### Case Study 3

A is a 72 year old gentleman with Parkinson's, until his diagnosis he was very active running and facilitating the outdoor adventure part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award schemes. Over the past 6 months his health and in particular his mobility has become extremely unsteady. This has implications for his wife who now feels she has to be constantly vigilant for him. He comes to My Life 2 times each week where we take him out walking over the countryside, keeping him steady and safe. He also partakes in the bushcraft activities

#### Links

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or visit us

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[www.my-life.org.uk](http://www.my-life.org.uk)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DWVXSPP8BGQ>  
 Facebook - @mylifecharity  
 Twitter - @mylifecharity

Caroline Tomlinson, Tizard Article, - Love is Simply not enough.  
 Other various articles under Caroline Tomlinson



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A joint venture to support  
the local VCSE sector  
in the ten boroughs of  
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