

The Neighbourhood Asset Mapping of Greater Fishponds

A project delivered by BAB Community Researchers



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Executive Summary

Introduction

*Asset mapping provides information about the strengths and resources of a community and can help uncover solutions. Once community strengths and resources are inventoried and depicted in a **map**, you can more easily think about how to build on these **assets** to address community needs.*

(Center for Health Research and Policy, University of California, accessed, 18th February 2016).

At the core of this definition is the concept of community strengths and resources rather than deficits. The essential rationale for any neighbourhood asset mapping project is building an understanding of community potential by surveying current capacity. A community asset or resource is anything that improves the quality of community life. Assets can include:

- The capacities and abilities of community members.
- A physical structure or place. For example, a school, hospital, or church. Maybe a library, recreation centre, or social club.
- A business that provides jobs and supports the local economy.
- Associations of citizens. For example, a Neighbourhood Watch.
- Local private, public, and non-profit institutions or organizations.

The kinds of assets the team was tasked with mapping were not just the traditional services targeted at older people like lunch clubs. Instead, the Community Researchers (CRs) were asked to map a wider range of organisations, clubs and activities where older people might engage, either as participants or volunteers, and some of which might not be expressly focused on older people. The core purpose of the asset mapping findings was to facilitate an understanding of existing services by the organisation commissioned to develop a community development approach by which older people would be linked to both existing and newly established services and activities. A secondary intention was to make the information available to the Bristol Well Aware website subject to obtaining permission from any new group to be added.

The time table to carry out the asset mapping project was heavily constrained since project deadline completion was timed to match the commissioning process and hence it was agreed to try to complete all the neighbourhood asset mapping work by the end of October.



Strategy

The majority of the CRs together with Naomi Woodspring and Robin Means attended a day training workshop conducted by a specialist in this work who was funded by Hall Aitkin, the National Development Team appointed by the Big Lottery fund to work with Bristol and the 13 other sites under their overall Ageing Better initiative. The training laid out the basic perimeters of asset mapping through a series of hands-on exercises as well as going through the pro forma that the facilitator had developed and which it was decided to adopt for this exercise (see appendix).

Robin Means and Naomi Woodspring talked through the specific parameters, needs, and information requirements of the Greater Fishpond project at the July meeting of the CRs. The CRs were asked to join one of three teams, each of which would work loosely within one of the three wards. Each team was given a 'starter list' of assets and key individuals gleaned from the internet and which included local councillors. This list was designed to give the asset mappers a starting point, not an assigned list of assets. CRs were asked to discover assets through a networking and snowballing process starting with the list they were given. The asset mapping process included initial contact with a potential new asset, interviewing (either in-person or, if more appropriate, by phone contact) and completing a pro forma. It was known from the outset that there would be some cross-over between the teams in terms of asset discovery, contact, and interviewing. The BAB email yahoo group was used to communicate between the teams so that duplication was minimised.

Most of the discovery, contact, and interviewing relating to specific community resources was carried out between August and the end of October. At the mid-September meeting of the CRs, they were asked to consider running focus groups. The purpose of the focus groups was to listen and record what community people had to say about their neighbourhood/community as it pertained to older people. In other words, getting information from more than organisational voices to round out the asset mapping process.

(For a detailed description of both the initial asset mapping exercise and the focus groups, please see CR team reports).



Findings

The BAB administrator was sent each proforma electronically. She added the completed information to an online spreadsheet that was accessible by anyone in the group. The BAB administrator used the hard copies of the pro forma to create a resource binder. She also created an asset map with assets pinned on the appropriate sites.

At the end of the process Means and Woodspring sifted through the resource binder setting aside community assets that were not appropriate for a more public display. For example, some of the teams interviewed individuals who were important assets in their neighbourhood or community. Teams were encouraged to discover non-traditional assets. The final binder will be passed onto Bristol wide resource Well Aware for inclusion on their website after any permissions have been received. An asset map spread sheet, an informational version of this summary, and a link to the Well Aware website will be posted on the BAB website to serve as a community resource for those looking for help and for people interested in doing their own asset mapping project. The CR team identified and interviewed 70 assets in the three wards of Eastville, Frome Vale and Hillfields that comprise Greater Fishponds, 55 of which will be made public through the Well Aware and Bristol Age UK websites. The identified assets ranged from churches and traditional service providers to bicycling and gardening clubs to cafés to individuals who were seen as important resources in their neighbourhoods. In the process of carrying out this work, some of the community deficits became glaringly obvious. Poor public transportation was a frequent barrier, in some areas obstacles to walkability were a concern while in others a basic lack of resources and facilities were uncovered. The lack was, in part, made up for by older residents accessing various assets across ward and neighbourhood partnership boundaries. The important finished product aside, the CR teams gained valuable skills in the process of asset mapping along with a hands-on understanding of how to conduct an asset mapping project. Of course, each of the CRs came with their own set of skills, so it is impossible to list specific skills as global learning for the group. That said, investigative networking, interviewing, team work, an asset-based versus a deficit-based community perspective, and report writing are among skills developed by the CRs through this exercise.

An important insight from the asset mapping work was how artificial are the boundaries of wards and neighbourhood partnership areas from the point of view of both many community groups and many older people. This finding has been an important factor in the decision of BAB to review how best to commission and deliver a city wide network of community development projects. In other words the results of the Greater Fishponds asset mapping project are being employed in the thinking through of a reconfigured commissioning process which will place less emphasis upon neighbourhood partnership areas.

(For a detailed outline of outcomes and results, please see individual team reports.)



Reflections on the Process

The UWE team used a 'test and learn' approach (Davenport, 2009) that offers CRs an opportunity to use their skills, experience, and knowledge in a new setting. In the case of this project, prior to BAB, none of the CRs had any experience with asset mapping. They were provided with a basic training, an outline of protocol, and the pro forma, as well as the rationale for the project. The task was to organise themselves, and use the training and information they received, to figure out how to accomplish the tasks necessary for project completion. Test and learn can feel difficult but is effective. For adults with a lifetime of experience and knowledge, it can feel disconcerting to be learning new techniques without detailed instructions.

The CRs produced individual reports on their work in Eastville, Frome Vale and Hillfields as well as with the focus groups and these include reflections on the process. These indicate some uneasiness with the 'test and learn' approach which is common because it can feel uncomfortable. However, their critique also offered some important learning for the UWE team. In the future, CRs need to be encouraged to get more engaged with project briefs so that these are fully owned and understood. More allowance will need to be made to accommodate different learning styles within the group (less reliance on verbal communication and more use of handouts and PowerPoints), more space to fully explain tasks (a need for monthly and not bi-monthly meetings of the CRs) and more allowance for the fact that CRs are volunteers with many other commitments.



Conclusion

The Greater Fishponds asset mapping project has produced successful outcomes on several fronts:

- A fairly in-depth map of the assets in Hillfields, Frome Vale, and Eastville.
- An important new perspective on the effective delivery of services and how people from these three wards access assets that will influence the BAB commissioning process.
- Skills development and learning on the part of both the CRs and the UWE team.
- A more cohesive CR group.



References

Davenport, T.H. (2009), "How to design smart business experiments", Harvard Business Review, February.
Center for Health Research and Policy (2016), *Asset Mapping University of California* Available: http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/programs/health-data/trainings/Documents/tw_cba20.pdf. (2016, 18 February).



The purpose of the focus group was to listen, and record what community people had to say about their neighbourhood and community



What is Neighbourhood Asset mapping?

Asset mapping provides information about the strengths and resources of a community and can help uncover solutions. Once community strengths and resources are inventoried and depicted in a **map**, you can more easily think about how to build on these **assets** to address community needs.

(Center for Health Research and Policy, University of California, accessed, 18th February 2016).

At the core of this definition is the concept of community strengths and resources rather than deficits.

- Local private, public, and non-profit institutions or organizations.

The essential rationale for any neighbourhood asset mapping project is building an understanding of community potential by surveying current capacity. A community asset or resource is anything that improves the quality of community life. Assets can include:

- The capacities and abilities of community members.
- A physical structure or place. For example, a school, hospital, or church. Maybe a library, recreation centre, or social club.
- A business that provides jobs and supports the local economy.
- Associations of citizens, for example, a Neighbourhood Watch.

There are a growing number of UK examples of this type of approach being deployed often with the assistance of local people and/or lay researchers (Buffel, 2015; Klee et al, 2014; Southway Housing Trust, 2013)

The kinds of assets the Community Researchers (CRs) were tasked with mapping were not just the traditional services targeted at older people like lunch clubs. Instead, Community Researchers were asked to map a wider range of organisations, clubs and activities where older people might engage, either as participants or volunteers, and some of which might not be expressly focused on older people.

The core purpose of the asset mapping findings was to facilitate an understanding of existing services as a resource for the organisation commissioned to develop a community development approach



by which older people would be linked to both existing and newly-established services and activities.

A secondary intention was to make the information available to the Bristol Well Aware website, subject to obtaining permission from any new group to be added.

The time table to carry out the asset mapping project was heavily constrained since project deadline completion was timed to match the then commissioning timetable for community development in Greater Fishponds and hence it was initially agreed to try to complete all the neighbourhood asset mapping work by the end of October.



Chapter One:

Introducing the Neighbourhood Asset Mapping of Greater Fishponds

Robin Means and Naomi Woodspring

Introduction

The overall aim of Bristol Ageing Better (BAB) is to reduce social isolation and loneliness in later life across the city. However, it has decided to prioritise certain localities where those most at risk seem to be clustered. One of these priority areas is Greater Fishponds and concern has been expressed on a number of occasions by different stakeholders that BAB knows

relatively little about existing neighbourhood assets here, compared to the other areas that have also been prioritised. Hence The Evaluation and Evidence Group of BAB decided to ask UWE, as the local evaluation partner, to work with the Community Researchers of BAB on the development of a neighbourhood asset map of the Greater Fishponds area.



Overall aim: To produce a neighbourhood asset map of Greater Fishponds in terms of existing community resources

Aims

- 1) To collate existing information on neighbourhood assets in the Greater Fishponds area.
- 2) To present this in a form that will be of value to BAB and other key stakeholders as they progress community development work in this area.
- 3) To make suggestions as to next steps in terms of understanding and working with the asset potential of Greater Fishponds.
- 4) To develop the skills of the Community Researchers in neighbourhood asset mapping.
- 5) To make proposals as to how asset mapping can be brought to other neighbourhoods of Bristol within existing resources.



Strategy

The majority of the CRs together with Naomi Woodspring and Robin Means attended a day's training workshop conducted by a specialist in neighbourhood asset mapping work, who was funded by Hall Aitkin, the National Development Team appointed by the Big Lottery fund to work with Bristol and the 13 other sites under their overall Ageing Better initiative. The training laid out the basic perimeters of asset mapping through a series of hands-on exercises as well as going through the pro forma that the facilitator had developed and which it was decided to adopt for this exercise (see Appendix A).

Robin Means and Naomi Woodspring talked through the specific parameters, needs, and information requirements of the Greater Fishpond project at the July meeting of the CRs. The CRs were asked to join one of three teams, each of which would work loosely within one of the three wards. Each team was given a 'starter list' of assets and key individuals gleaned from the internet and which included local councillors. This list was designed to give the asset mappers a starting point, not an assigned list of assets. CRs were asked to discover assets through a networking process starting with the list they were given. The asset mapping process included

initial contact with a potential asset, interviewing (either in-person or, if more appropriate by phone contact) and completing the pro forma. It was known from the outset that there would be cross-over between the teams in terms of asset discovery, contact, and interviewing. The BAB email yahoo group was used to communicate between the teams so duplication was minimised.

Most of the discovery, contact, and interviewing relating to specific community resources was carried out between August and the end of October and the 70 community groups and resources identified are listed in Appendix B. At the mid-September meeting of the CRs, they were asked to consider running a focus group. The purpose of the focus group was to listen and record what community people had to say about their neighbourhood/community as it pertained to older people. In other words, getting information from more than just organisational voices to round out the asset mapping procedure.

Conclusion

This opening chapter has outlined why the Community Researchers were asked to carry out a neighbourhood asset mapping of Greater Fishponds and also how this task was set up for them. The next four chapters involve the CRs reflecting upon their experiences in taking on this challenge both in terms of insights about their areas but also reflections upon the process of actually doing the work.

References

- Buffel, T. (ed.) (2015) *Researching Age-friendly communities: stories from Older People as Co-investigators*, Manchester: Manchester University Library.
- Center for Health Research and Policy (2016), *Asset Mapping University of California* Available: http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/programs/health-data/trainings/Documents/tw_cba20.pdf, (2016, 18 February).
- Klee, R., Mordey, M., Phua, S. and Russell, C. (2014) 'Asset based community development – enriching the lives of older citizens', *Working with Older People*, vol. 18 nos. 3, pp111-119.
- Southway Housing Trust (2013) *Old Moat: Age-Friendly Neighbourhood Report*, Manchester: Southway Housing trust.



The Boundaries of Greater Fishponds

Bristol City Council has clustered its wards into what it calls Neighbourhood Partnerships Areas with each one having a Partnership Board composed of councillors, community representatives and non-voting officers with a remit to help co-ordinate and promote activity from diverse sectors across the area. Greater Fishponds is the partnership in the north of the city and it covers

the three wards of Frome Park which includes much of what is popularly known as Fishponds, Hillfields and Eastville (see Map below). The most obvious point to make is that this is a large area in terms of population size and geographical spread and contains several different communities. The CRs were being asked to take on a sizeable and very challenging task.



Chapter Two:

Neighbourhood Asset Mapping in Hillfields

Christine Crabbe, Dean French and Sue Hicks

Introduction

On Friday 31st July 2015 the Hillfields Group met at Lodge Causeway Cafe for coffee to get ourselves more familiar with the area and to discuss objectives and strategy to asset map the area. We organised ourselves in a very friendly informal way and each person offered to do whatever they felt best suited them.

Hillfields

Hillfields is primarily a residential area with few facilities either for young or older people. It is sandwiched between Frome Vale and Speedwell. Hillfields contains large pleasant green spaces in which to walk. The main artery road through Hillfields, Lodge Causeway, links the Frome Vale ward of Fishponds with Kingswood. Lodge Causeway consists of small shops, post office, hairdressers, take away food outlets, a small Tesco, a café and a car dealer.

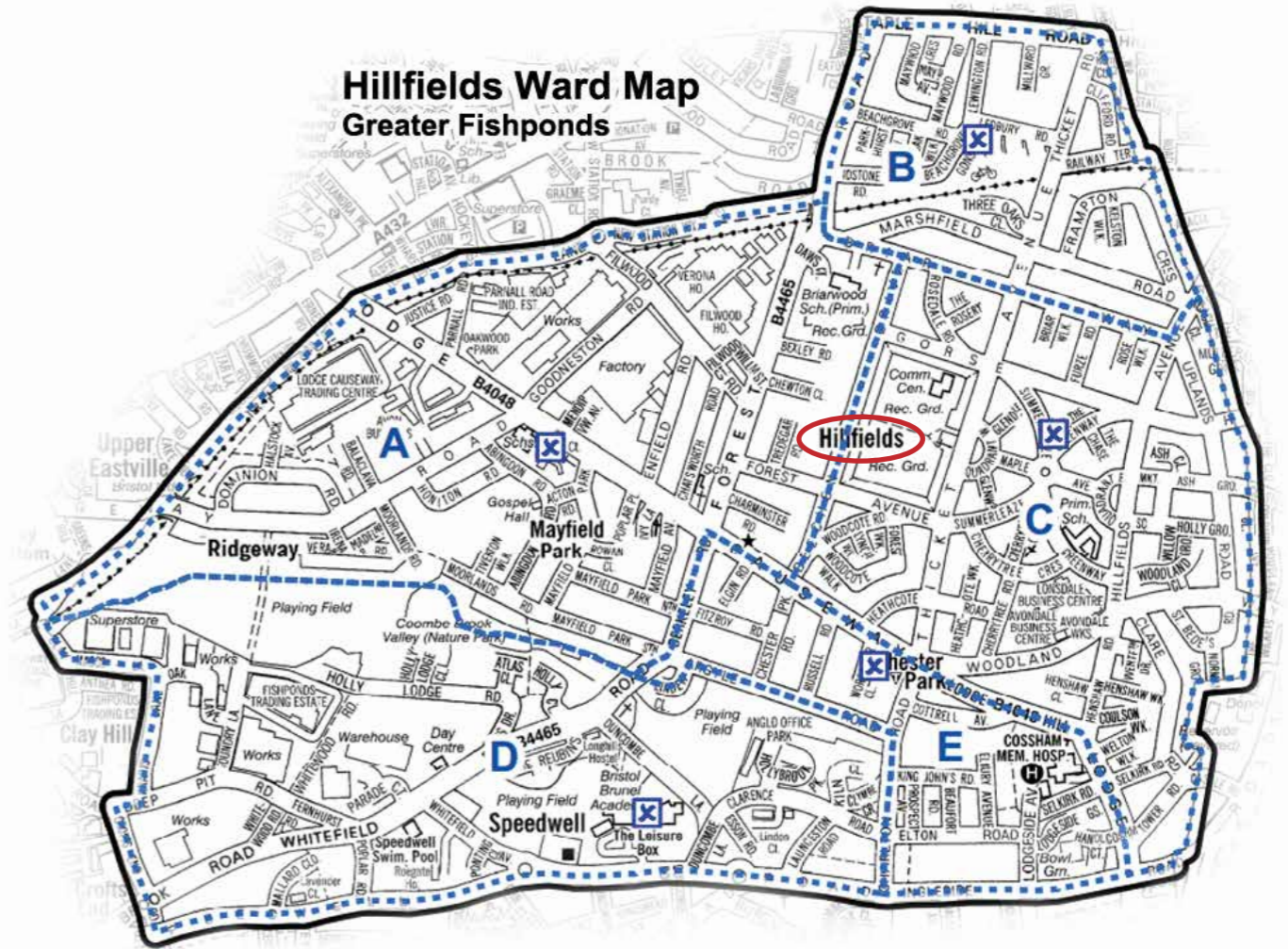
Hillfields has a population of 13504. Of whom 979 are retired and 859 are aged over 75. (Source 2011 census).



Aims

The Hillfields Group objectives were:

- 1) To contact established (prime) organisations, which provide services for older people and identify older people's services that are not publicised or widely known.
- 2) To determine if these prime organisations have services which are yet to be publicised and/or delivered.
- 3) To identify and contact unpublicised organisations to find out what they offer.
- 4) To document prime services and/or new services on an asset map database.



Hillfields is primarily a residential area with few facilities either for young or older people.



Strategy

One member of the team was allocated the task of searching the internet to identify websites and useful contacts. Bristol Ageing Better provided an initial paper contact list. Team members divided the names on the list between the group and each member agreed to contact specific individuals or organisations. The team decided on the wording to be used, but it was emphasized that the agreed wording was a flexible guide and could change if considered appropriate.

Suggested wording for contacting organisations

We are a team of four community researchers who are working on behalf of the Bristol Ageing Better (BAB) Project in the Hillfields area of Bristol.

BAB is an exciting lottery-funded project. The project was launched in April 2015 and is planned to run for a minimum of 5 years. The aim is to establish and/or improve services for older people to reduce loneliness and social isolation.

We are currently working in the Hillfields area to determine the services that already exist and to identify any services that are not publicised or widely known. The information collated will be used to develop an 'asset map' covering Hillfields and eventually other areas of Bristol. Additional teams are working alongside us in Eastville and the Frome Vale area of Fishponds.

As a starting point, we are searching for information in the public domain, such as websites and notice boards. However, we would welcome the opportunity to speak to someone within your organisation who might be able to assist in expanding our current knowledge of the services available for older people in the Hillfields area.

We would be very grateful if someone within your organisation who could possibly further our research would be available to talk to a member of our team. Please contact us if this is possible and when it might be convenient.

Thank you very much for your time.

Hillfields Community Research Team

Administration

On 16th August 2015 after searching the internet for contacts, a colour-coded Hillfields spreadsheet was set up. The spreadsheet was administered by a member of team who was responsible for entering information and forwarding the team the spreadsheet to keep them up to date of changes. The other members of the team informed the administrator of contacts, appointments and the completed CR (Community Researcher) forms were sent to the Bristol Ageing Better Yahoo Group. The spreadsheet contained the headings: contact name(s), telephone, email/website, further information, name of CR who made the contact (and whether it was by telephone/letter/email), date of any reply and comments. Organisations contacted were coloured grey and when a completed asset mapping form had been completed, the colour was changed to blue. Any organisations on the list not so far contacted were coloured yellow. The spreadsheet was particularly useful to keep a track of organisations contacted and replies that were awaited. It was also an encouragement to see colours changing from grey to blue and gave the team an idea of how the asset mapping was progressing.

Some of the team walked around the area looking in shop windows for cards advertising clubs and groups, whilst others contacted groups from advertisements in a local magazine. Occasionally, a contact would suggest someone else who might be able to help. A relationship with the local police officer was developed which proved to be very helpful. The team worked well together and no problems were encountered in communications with each other.

Arranging appointments

When a member of the team made an appointment, often by telephone or email, they contacted the remainder of the team to ask who was free to attend the appointment with her/him. The team met with contacts in pairs and on their own.

It was found that in some instances it was not necessary to have a face-to-face meeting and a chat on the telephone was sufficient.

Most people were happy to talk to BAB community researchers about their organisation and the provision made for older people. However, some difficulties were encountered: despite repeated promises to speak to a researcher, telephone calls, emails, and letters did not always elicit a response. Therefore, in such cases attempts to contact were discontinued, as it was clear a reply would not be forthcoming. In addition, August was not a good time to begin because of holidays.

Follow-up meeting

In October 2015 the Hillfields team held a follow-up meeting to consider if anything had been overlooked and whether there were any further organisations to be contacted, as well as to talk over our experiences.

Findings

Hillfields lacks a community focus. There is no community hall, no community notice board or community café. The library, which could perhaps serve as a focus for the community, is situated on a housing estate away from shops or the main thoroughfare, and therefore fails to attract passers-by. Walking from the shops to the library is difficult for elderly people. The comment was made that some people have lived in the area all their lives and were unaware of the existence of a library in Hillfields. The churches provide most of the opportunities for older people to meet through lunch clubs and occasional activities in the summer, particularly Hillfields Baptist Church, which was described as the most consistent in helping the elderly. Funding is a problem in trying to build-up the community and provide inter-generational activities and there was no community transport. The open ground on which some of the summer activities are held is rather rough underfoot and away from toilets. This can cause problems for people with limited mobility. The large attractive green spaces at Hillfields act as a barrier for older people because of the distance to access shops and although there are elderly people's dwellings in the area, it is not easy for people to walk to the shops. The GP practices are also at a distance from people's homes, therefore, it is difficult for older people to easily obtain the medical assistance they need. Hillfields has a bus service, but it does not appear to be very frequent.

Some of the people contacted commented that organisations had been in touch with people from the area previously about the lack of facilities, but despite this nothing has been done to improve the situation.

Communications within the team of community researchers were good. The primary source of communication was by email through the Yahoo Group or emailing Hillfields team members direct. The Yahoo Group worked well and all the teams used it. It was particularly useful to enquire whether an organisation had been contacted previously and this avoided duplication. The completed community researcher forms were also effective and a spreadsheet providing a record of all the teams completed CR forms proved very useful.

There seems little advantage in going beyond six months of asset mapping. However, if specific issues were raised this could be re-considered. A clearer task definition from the outset (more scoping of what is already known) would be helpful, and more planning. It might have been helpful to have had more discussion with all the teams on a face-to-face basis before the project started so we were confident of exactly what we were going to do, why we were doing it and how we were to achieve it. In addition, to be clear about how our work will make a contribution towards to the overall aim of reducing loneliness and isolation. However, the asset mapping project has been a learning curve for all concerned and we were all learning as we progressed. It would also have been helpful to start the project earlier in the year as contacts were sometimes on holiday during July/August.

At the end of the project the Hillfields community researchers consider that their objectives were achieved and that the strategy decided upon worked well. The Hillfields team enjoyed working together and we were able to bring our different skills and interests to the project to accomplish the asset mapping task.



The library, which could perhaps serve as a focus for the community, is situated on a housing estate away from shops or the main thoroughfare ...

Chapter Three:

Neighbourhood Asset Mapping in Frome Vale

Jeremy Groome

Introduction and approaches

There were initially four Community Researchers in the Frome Vale team but with the project starting in late July it competed with holidays and little activity took place in that month. After this, two of the members decided that they would withdraw from BAB and another only had time to conduct a single interview and then decided that the asset mapping activity was not for them. At that point, though help was available, I chose to continue the project alone.

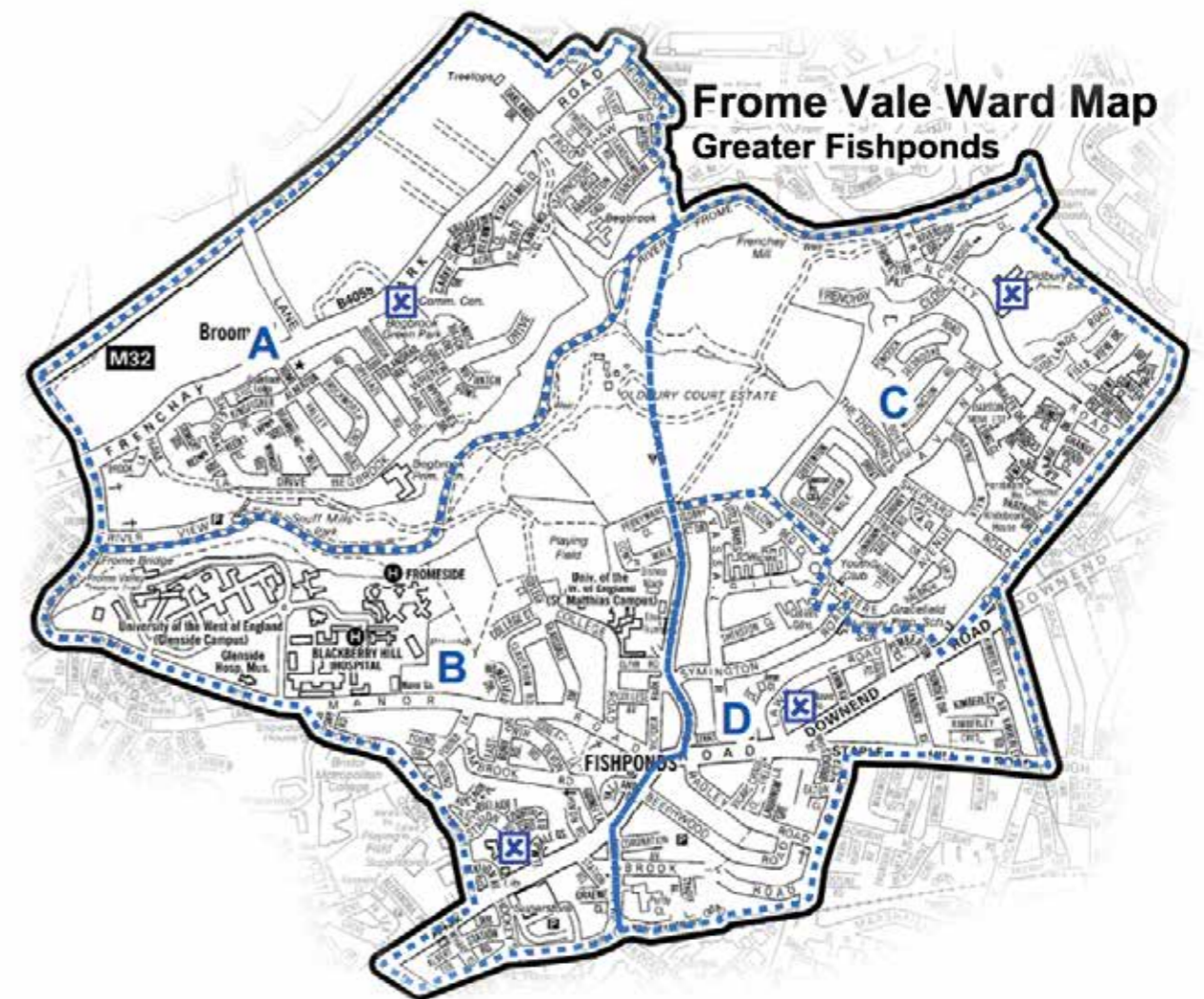
At the time of start-up, the two ward councillors were not available, the BCC Neighbourhood Partnership Area Coordinator was unavailable by phone or email and the remaining CR had no knowledge of the Frome Vale ward or the Greater Fishponds area. What to do?

1. Using the map provided by BAB, drive the area, followed by walking the area to get a 'feel' of the location: population distribution and general mobility; review of the bus routes (bus stop schedules and map); identify the location of retail business and services; mark on the map the distribution of recreation and social activity centres; similarly identify location of religious buildings; measure a sample of distances from housing areas to

shopping/activity areas using Google maps. Watch the people and what they are doing;

2. Review the announcement boards outside churches and community notice boards in supermarkets (only 1) for information on social activities for older people;
3. Follow-up on the list of providers supplied by BAB;
4. Visit the library and talk to staff;
5. Undertake searches on the Well Aware database; and,
6. Review the adverts in the local free press and the Neighbourhood Partnership website.

This was followed by making initial contact by email with the managers of some of the activities for older people listed in the Fishponds Voice freebie newspaper – the initial trawl drew a comparative blank. I used some of the forthcoming events from online and hard copy advertisements and walked in on activities that were announced or inferred as being run for older people.



The area is basically residential with a high street shopping zone which is generally busy, active and friendly ...

Using these contacts and adding the referrals from other CR groups the network expanded without difficulty. The draft letter recommended by BAB was used as a core script for making introductions. The service providers visited were extremely welcoming and willing to discuss their activities, plus successes and problems. With this encouraging start, interviewer confidence grew and the door-knocking, visiting events and telephoning intensified. In summary, the most useful discussions were held with the local PCSO, clergy, care-home managers, the administrators of the Beechwood Centre and the Downend Folkhouse (only just outside Frome Vale ward!) and one of the main organisers involved in ACTIVATE. This should not detract from the main fact that everyone met was open and constructive in their communication. All the organisations visited are listed by name, address, telephone, email and area of activity in the Asset Mapping database.

It was unfortunate that the project bumped up against the summer holidays though it was explained by the UWE team that scheduling was dictated by the commissioning process. This also meant that it was not possible to meet with BC ward councillors until early September by which time all the service providers working with older people had been 'found' and the majority of the meetings/telephone discussions had been completed. As it turned out, the councillors had no information on additional providers to add to the list. In the same way, meetings were held with coordinators at the Ways to Wellbeing unit at the Care Forum; not only did they not have information on any additional providers but also did not know of all the groups contacted in Frome Vale. These were supplied.

Geography

The Frome Vale area is bounded on the NW by the M32 and is divided into two parts by a green belt either side of the River Frome. In addition, this division is accentuated by the UWE Glenside Campus and Blackberry Hill Hospital.

Frenchay Park Road provides the main access route in the north western section, and the complex of Manor Road, Fishponds Road and Downend Road provides access to the South and SE area of the ward. The area is a diamond shape and about 2 miles (or 40 minutes' walking) from one end to the other. From the NW corner to the shops, medical centre around Fishponds Road it is a 30 minute walk with an additional 10 minutes to the supermarket/library/BCC Information Centre.

The area is basically residential with a high street shopping zone which is generally busy, active and friendly plus a supermarket/library area which is convenient if bleak. Housing around these foci consists of Victorian terrace houses in small twisty Victorian side roads. Travelling away from the centres, the houses expand into late Victorian suburbia, many tree-lined, and then to between the wars and post WWII middle class housing. There is an area of council housing near the Vassal Centre in the centre of the ward which has a small parade of shops on Sheppard Road, Oldbury Court. Other than this there are no corner shops, cafés/bistros, toilets or seats outside the two main shopping areas in the ward. The bus stops in the centre and close to the Vassal Centre have seats and shelters but those in the residential areas have neither. There are no seats anywhere along the pavements throughout the ward although Fishponds Park has good seating.

Demographics and Ethnicity

There are significant demographic and ethnic differences between the population in Frome Vale and the other wards of Greater Fishponds and Bristol city as a whole. These are shown in the data in the following tables.

These tables indicate that Frome Vale has a higher population of >65s than other areas of Greater Fishponds and Bristol as a whole whilst a significantly lower BME population than the other wards in Gt. Fishponds. From the limited experiences of visiting different groups, meetings and activities the non-white population does not appear to be represented in proportion to their population in the ward.

Transport

The physical divisions, mentioned above, are accentuated by a deteriorating public transport system. Nearly every older person approached named transport as a major problem. 'A poor and inadequate – and recently reduced – bus service' was given as the main contributory factor in the isolation of older people as expressed by older residents. Dial-a-ride is reported as being unreliable, not regularly available and there was confusion as to whether it was available for 'social' events. Bristol Community Transport do not currently offer services in Greater Fishponds.

The one important transport asset is that parking for cars is free both on the street and in the various car parks.

Table 1: FROME VALE WARD: Demographic Information in relation to Greater Fishponds Area and Bristol City (% within total estimated population)

Age	Frome Vale Ward	Eastville Ward	Hillfields Ward	Greater Fishponds	Bristol
65-74	7.8	6.0	6.5	6.7	
75 & over	10.8	4.9	6.4	7.3	
Total	18.6	10.9	12.8	14.0	13.3
Ethnicity					
White total	81.0	65.3	77.5	74.5	84.0
BME total	19.0	34.7	22.5	25.5	16.0
Mixed/dual heritage	4.4	6.0	4.5	5.0	
Black/Black British	6.4	11.7	8.0	8.7	
Asian/Asian British	7.3	15.1	9.0	10.5	
White non-British	4.9	6.0	4.7	5.2	

Source: 2014 and 2015 BCC Reports on census estimates

Existing Community Facilities

(a) Public Library:

There is a public library in Frome Vale (Fishponds library). Although it is situated in the SW corner of the ward there is good access with buses and parking plus sharing physical facilities with a BCC information point and there are two supermarkets nearby.

The library runs a fortnightly knitting club and according to the librarian 'has facilities to provide support for coffee mornings for older people.'

(b) Activity Centres:

There are active community centres in all parts (except the NE of the ward), which offer a range of activities appealing to all ages, including those over 60. All centres are close to bus stops, have easy access, most with car parks or at least turning areas nearby and toilets plus catering facilities.

(c) Social Centres in commercial area:

There are restaurants/coffee shops/pubs in the main Fishponds shopping area and at one of the supermarkets.

(d) Fishponds Park:

This area of green right in the centre is a major asset. The facilities (play area and shrubs/flowers) are well supported by local charities that receive funding in part from the Neighbourhood Partnership. However, individuals made comments about the slow and complicated process of application and receipt of funds.

Continued Mapping

This project was an interesting personal learning experience about another area of Bristol for the participating CR. Rather than merely collect information on the size, activities and organisation of the different groups, the CR tried to discuss with the participants their feelings about 'isolation and loneliness' in the most general terms. In any extension of the project this could be taken to a much deeper level with a form of structured feedback not only to BAB but also to all event organisers, councillors and Neighbourhood Partnership area coordinators. All were interested in constructive comment.

Table 2: Activities for Older People in Frome Vale Ward, Greater Fishponds

Type of activity	Name of group	Meeting location
Social/supportive	ACTIVATE lunchtime concerts	Fishponds Methodist Hall
	Townswomen's Guild	Beechwood Club
	Fishponds Conservative Club	Conservative Club, Fishponds Road
	Bereavement group	St Marys Church
	Not so Young Club	St Augustines Church
	Diamond Club coffee mornings	Fishponds Baptist Church
	Lunch Club	Fishponds Baptist Church
	Hannah More	Beechwood Club
	Fishponds and Downend Rotary Club	Langley Arms, Emerson Green
	Begbrook Retirement Club	Greenfinch Lodge Community Room
	Lunch Club	Fishponds Baptist Church
	Monday Club, Friends and Neighbours, Coffee Morning	Fishponds Methodist Church
	Holiday at Home	Fishponds Methodist Church
	Lunch Club	St Marys Church
	Fishponds PROBUS	Fishponds Conservative Club
Senior Citizen Support team	Avon & Somerset Constabulary, Fishponds	
Kingfisher Café	Straits Parade, Fishponds	
Carers' Support Centre	Vassal Centre	
Activity and Exercise	Dance Club	Beechwood Club
	Feed Bristol	Avon Wildlife Trust, Frenchay Park Road
	Knitting Club	Fishponds Library
	Friendship Retirement Club	Fishponds Baptist Church
	Life Cycle >55 cycle rides	Create Centre
Gardening Group	St Marys Church	
ACTIVATE Horticulture and Craft Show	Fishponds Methodist Church	
Educational	Lectures and courses	Downend Folkhouse
	Fishponds Reading group	Beechwood Club

Emerging Issues

The city councillors do not appear to play any role in the overall selection or management of these varied services though some Councillors may have a particular area of interest and provide support to community groups working within their area of interest.

This leads to individual groups going their own way – often very effectively, but perhaps without an overview of where they fit in the bigger picture.

The Neighbourhood Partnership has a plan for 2015-2018 that includes asset mapping (not known before the project started), working with minority communities and improving facilities and developing more activities for the whole community.

Tabulating the assets of communities does not imply that these communities do not still need additional resources from outside and better and more efficient distribution systems internally to ensure these resources reach those who need them. Therefore, future asset mapping needs to encompass a broadening activity that identifies additional people with new ideas who have an interest in expanding the current delivery system. The people already working on improving the environment should not be overloaded with responsibility to undertake new activities.

As there are many gaps in the provision (particularly with the current gender and ethnicity bias of what is available) it is critical for any asset mapping to build a picture of current embryonic new relationships between and among local residents, local associations and local institutions.

On top of the need for relationship building, the map needs to identify institutional links and how they can be improved so that gaps in physical services (for example transport) can be addressed to build an adequate provision that can be accessed by all who are in need.

Finally, the work of recognising and tabulating the current assets focuses by nature on those who want to use them. There is an important need to work to identify methods to acceptably gain a knowledge and understanding of those who are currently lonely and isolated but not accessing any provision – a negative asset map! It could be considered that they are ‘falling through the net’. Whether this is by choice or due to some social, physical or financial impediment is not known.

NB

CRs were advised that the commissioning process for BAB activities in Greater Fishponds would be organised to ensure that ‘*Field activities stemming from the BAB Community Development contract in Greater Fishponds would be getting off the ground in early summer of 2016*’. This statement was used regularly with activity groups, administrators, NP groups etc. With the scheduled delay to any activities it is important to keep the community informed of the changes in the BAB timetable for Greater Fishponds.

The library runs a fortnightly knitting club and according to the librarian ‘has facilities to provide support for coffee mornings for older people’.

Photo (left): Jakey Thomas

Chapter Four:

Neighbourhood Asset Mapping in Eastville

Penny Beynon, Jan Fullforth, Jenny Hoadley and Christopher Orlik

Introduction

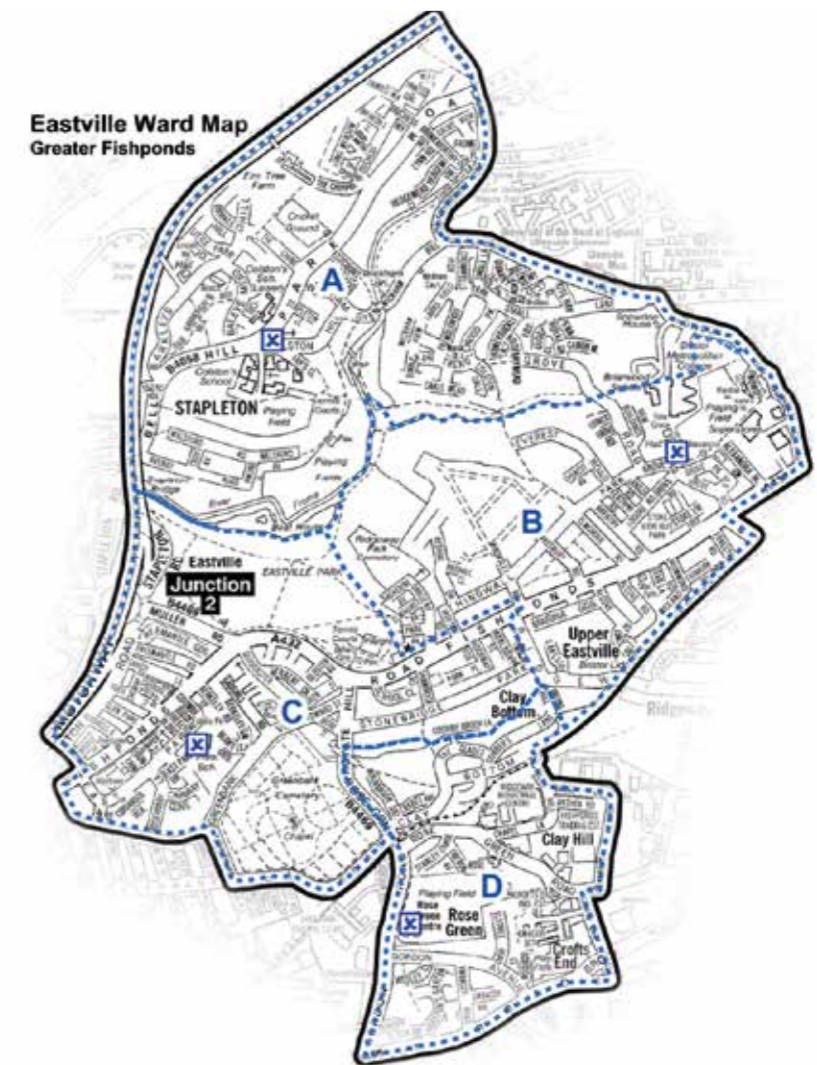
There were four Community Researchers in the Eastville team. However, the timing of the project starting late July proved somewhat problematic because three of the team were away on holiday for significant periods during the first two to three months of activity. The result was that all four of us weren't able to meet together until October, although we kept each other up to date and in touch by email and three of us met up several times prior to us all eventually getting together face to face.

Two of us met up with Cllr Mhairi Threlfall in the first week of August. She was enormously knowledgeable and, using a ward map divided into 5 polling districts, pinpointed numerous relevant services and amenities in the ward. She described the social issues affecting particular neighbourhoods, such as housing quality, transport problems, lack of meeting points and demographic differences.

Her information provided a great kick-start for the team and was key to our being able to begin to contact existing amenities. Three of us then met up and allotted ourselves specific neighbourhoods to initially have a look round and then follow up existing and new community leads. One of the community researchers attended a Neighbourhood Forum meeting at which she was able to

explain a little about Bristol Ageing Better (BAB) and the asset mapping project to those attending. This proved really useful and six people (four older women and two people who ran relevant projects), provided helpful information and leads.

Each team member followed their own leads, not always keeping to the neighbourhoods we'd allotted ourselves because it seemed sensible to stick with the same person who'd made initial contact. Most of the contact was by face-to-face interviews with a few by phone only. We kept in contact with each other by direct email and with the other ward teams using the BAB Yahoo group. We completed 20 pro-formas about community activities and resources in Eastville.



Eastville Park, although a large attractive green leisure space, has no artificial lighting from dusk until daybreak ...

In our discussions with individuals and the various organisations and services in Eastville, the following issues, were considered of most relevance and importance to loneliness and social isolation in this ward:

1. Geography

Within Eastville ward geographical/physical factors significantly contribute to barriers between and isolation of different communities or neighbourhoods.

The M32 motorway runs for the full length of the western boundary, making it virtually impossible for those on foot living very close to access supermarkets and popular large shopping chains (Tesco, Mothercare, Boots, Next, Ikea etc) at Eastville Retail Park. The Retail Park is just off Junction 2 of the M32 and access by foot/public transport can require a long and very unpleasant trek negotiating huge traffic islands all the while surrounded by heavy traffic or an even longer roundabout route emerging in the Ikea car park. The River Frome forms a further boundary physically separating Stapleton from Upper Eastville and the Whitefield/Fishponds area.

Eastville Park, although a large attractive green leisure space, has no artificial lighting from dusk until daybreak with the effect of making it not somewhere anyone would wish to walk alone other than in broad daylight. Again the effect is the creation of a physical barrier between those who live north of the park and those on the southern and eastern sides of the park.

Much of the area is hilly (especially southeast of Fishponds Rd around the Rose Green area) and not felt by many to be easy walking. The whole ward is bisected west/east by Fishponds Road, a main arterial road in and out of the city and consequently subject to

heavy traffic and the main bus route. The other major feature is the Bristol-Bath cycle path running south-west/northeast cutting Rose Green off from the rest of the ward, and Upper Eastville from the neighbouring ward of Hillfields. In parts it runs in a cutting with only 3 bridges linking the areas on either side. As a walking path linking up to the Fishponds Library and the superstores it is a well-regarded resource but for some people, the high usage by cyclists could be off-putting.

2. Demographics

There are significant demographic differences, particularly regarding ethnicity, within Eastville ward. See attached table 'Eastville Ward Demographic Information by Local Super Output Areas (LSOAs) (see Table 3, page 37).

a) Ethnicity

The ethnicity figures for the whole Eastville ward are White total 65%, BAME (Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic) 35%. The following 'area' figures are taken from the 2011 Census LSOA analysis.

The 2011 Census lists the Greenbank LSOA area, which borders Easton ward to the south, as having a total white population of 41% with a BAME population of 59%. The total BAME population subdivides into 26% Black/Black British and 22% Asian/Asian British plus 9% of those identifying themselves as mixed racial heritage.

The Eastville Park area also has a large total BAME population of 46%. However here 24% identify as Asian/Asian British, 15% as Black/Black British and 5% as Mixed.

In comparison, the equivalent statistics for the LSOAs of Stapleton (white total 79% BAME total 21%) and Whitefield/Fishponds (white total 80% and BAME total 20%) are much closer to the figures for the whole of the city (White total 84%, BAME 16%).

The Black and Asian community is perceived as having, and actually seems to have, closer links with the cultural

and religious activities in Easton ward, which has similar demographic ethnicity patterns than it does to the cultural and religious resources of Eastville.

b) Age

Of the three wards in Greater Fishponds, Eastville has the youngest age profile. The comparative figures between the 3 wards relating to population age may also be significant. 11% of Eastville ward are 65 and over, of which just under 5% are 75 and over, compared with Frome Vale ward, where those over 65 form almost 19% of the population, of which almost 11% are 75 or over.

3. Transport

The physical barriers, outlined in section 1 above, are not relieved by a good public transport system. Nearly everyone we spoke to named transport as a major problem. A poor and inadequate – and recently reduced – bus service was given as the main contributory factor in isolation of older people as expressed by older residents.

There is a bus route north/south to and from the centre of Bristol along Frenchay Park Rd through Stapleton but no bus service north/south connecting the Rose Green area in the south towards Stapleton in the north. There are also bus services operating northeast/southwest along Fishponds Road to and from the centre of Bristol and two services which skirt along the northern boundary from Frenchay Park Rd along Blackberry Hill. For many who rely on buses it is easier to get into the city centre and areas along that route for leisure activities than somewhere in Eastville or Greater Fishponds – some may feel it is just too far and too difficult to get to the nearest relevant bus route.

4. Existing Community Facilities

(a) Public Library:

There is no public library within Eastville ward boundaries although Eastville Library does exist. However it is situated on Muller Road, in the Lockleaze ward of the city, and is accessible from Eastville ward itself only by crossing the M32 – a challenging and unpleasant exercise for anyone on foot, as outlined in section 1.

Eastville Library runs coffee mornings for older people, plus activities for under-5s. Scheduled for closure in April 2016, a vociferous campaign to save it resulted in it remaining open three days a week (renamed the Old Library Eastville and run by volunteers). The nearest alternative libraries are Fishponds Library, or Baptist Mills Library at Junction 3 of the M32, neither within easy walking distance and both a significant bus journey away for those living in the north, west and south areas of the ward.

(b) Community Associations:

There is no easily accessible active community association or community centre in Eastville ward that offers a range of activities appealing to all ages (including those over 60) or acts as an information resource.

(c) Public venues

There were few venues available for public use – four were identified, three of which were church buildings.

(d) Funding:

More than once those working for, or representing, voluntary activities for



Eastville Library currently runs coffee mornings for older people ...

older people expressed concern that funding for well-established and well used services and activities had become more difficult to obtain, including from previous long-term supporting grant providers or funders. This situation was putting their continued existence in jeopardy. City Council grants have been replaced in some instances by commissioned services, where money only came with a client who had been successfully assessed by social workers as being in need of that particular service. One attendee at a group for elders said 'How can they assess how lonely I am?' There is concern that while the new BAB funding is welcome, it will be available only for new projects or new add-ons to existing well-used services, while those services themselves may suffer reduced funding or lose altogether the existing funding which keeps them going.

Overall the team wondered if local residents might choose to use assets in other adjoining areas – after all the electoral ward boundaries are artificial and do not necessarily reflect communities especially at the peripheries. The bus routes and geography might dictate this as a rational response, as might culture: the large BME populations may find some activities more relevant in neighbouring Easton and Barton Hill. Any future community development work with older people would need to look beyond local authority ward boundaries, and certainly consider the issue of transport.

Other Information-gathering Activities

At the CR meeting on 23 September, three of the team volunteered to plan and organise a focus group meeting within two months as proposed by Naomi Woodspring, with the objective of collecting the views of local individuals and organisations as to how isolation in older people in Greater Fishponds could be alleviated. The fourth team member also attended the focus group meeting itself. Details of the planning process and outcome are in the separate Focus Group Team Report.

Project Assessment

Our team generally worked well together and all found the work interesting both in itself and as regards the information we gathered. The timing in the summer holiday period was frustrating, both for those who were away and those doing research on their own, but was generally overcome by use of email. The time taken to research possible leads, arrange meetings, travel, carry out interviews and write up was significant and somewhat unexpected. The Yahoo group was invaluable in cooperating with other ward teams regarding overlapping services and organisations.

Emerging Issues

This project was a useful learning process and asset mapping itself a new concept to each member of the team. However there were aspects of the whole process which bear considering for the future:

- a) **Timing:**
It was predictable that during late July/August/September (during which the majority of the mapping was originally expected to be undertaken) researchers themselves would be likely to take holiday but, in addition, many services also don't operate in the summer holiday period, which posed difficulties in making initial contact and delayed some interviews.
Future:
Earlier notification to researchers should be factored in to give longer planning time, and the avoidance of research work being concentrated in foreseeable holiday periods, wherever possible. Researchers' individual time commitments should be taken into account regarding timetables for research projects.
- b) **Who is the data intended for and why?:**
Most of the researchers were left unclear or confused until the December meeting as to whom the asset mapping results would be made available – Well Aware? LinkAge? – and whether or not there was a need to ask organisations for their agreement to be mapped? With hindsight, if part of the remit was to provide information as part of BAB tender documents, an indicative framework of the sorts of information required might have

been helpful, and one we could have shared with the organisations we met. It could sometimes feel difficult that organisations and workers were giving their time but we had nothing definite to give back in return.

Future:

One recommendation for future work would be for members of the BAB Programme Management Team or Community Researchers to contact existing agencies e.g. community organisations, information resources, local authority councillors and officers in advance, to establish whether similar or identical research had already been/was currently being carried out. The results of any earlier research should be provided to those undertaking an asset mapping exercise as possible useful background.

- c) **Pre-planning of asset mapping:**
Rather than sending 3 teams into the Neighbourhood Partnership area to make duplicate approaches to some Council Officers and other organisations serving the whole area, the asset mapping might have been more efficiently organised if such services had been contacted before we approached smaller, more local or more 'niche' amenities. The idea of arranging a Greater Fishponds focus group (to be completed before December) was not outlined to the CRs until the September CR meeting, two months after the asset mapping research itself had started. Again, it would have been helpful if this idea had been set out more clearly and incorporated into the asset mapping planning being discussed at previous meetings: such information could have

been incorporated into interviews and therefore opportunities to speak at earlier Neighbourhood Forum meetings built into the process.

Future:

A written brief for research projects would be useful (to be written in draft form and then discussed with CRs before an agreed final draft is arrived at, and to include whom the results will be supplied to and for what purpose) and agreed by the BAB Programme Management Team. This needs to be completed well before the actual work begins so it can be referred to both by CRs and those being interviewed or surveyed.

d) Training:

It was generally felt that the asset mapping training provided by the external facilitator was very enjoyable but of little practical help regarding how the asset mapping would be carried out. Training is always appreciated but perhaps it would be helpful in future if external trainers' proposed course content could be discussed with Community Researchers so that they can check it covers all their needs and can ask for particular matters to be covered. Alternatively the training could have been delivered in terms of a broad theoretical framework, but then specific reference made to the asset-mapping exercise in front of us, so we could begin to link theory with practice. This might have sparked lots of queries which then may have been resolved before the mapping process actually began.

e) Working in small teams:

Because of variations in time commitments of individual CRs, which can sometimes be unpredictable, it might be more efficient to work in teams of 5 or 6 for exercises like asset mapping. This would hopefully prevent researchers unavoidably being left to work on their own when they would prefer to be in pairs (often more practical in terms of note-taking at interviews).

Table 3: Eastville Ward Demographic Information

Ethnicity	Eastville Park %	Fishponds Road %	Green-bank %	Rose Green %	Stapleton %	Upper Eastville %	Whitefields/Fishponds %	Eastville Ward %	Frome Vale Ward %	Hillfields Ward %	Greater Fishponds %
	White total	54	69	41	68	79	72	80	65.3	81	77.5
BME total	46	31	59	32	21	28	20	34.7	19	22.5	25.5
Mixed/dual heritage	5	6	9	6	4	4	5	6.0	4.4	4.5	5.0
Black/Black British	15	7	26	10	2	11	6	11.7	6.4	8.0	8.7
Asian/Asian British	24	18	22	11	13	11	7	15.1	7.3	9.0	10.5
White non-British	7	8	6	5	4	8	4	6.0	4.9	4.7	5.2
Age	Eastville Park %	Fishponds Road %	Green-bank %	Rose Green %	Stapleton %	Upper Eastville %	Whitefields/Fishponds %	Eastville Ward %	Frome Vale Ward %	Hillfields Ward %	Greater Fishponds %
	65-74	6.27	3.98	4.48	7.08	9.05	5.72	6.36	6.01	7.81	6.46
75 & over	4.80	2.69	3.46	5.36	7.67	4.68	6.48	4.89	10.83	6.36	7.25
Total	11.07	6.67	7.94	12.44	16.72	10.40	12.84	10.9	18.64	12.82	13.98

EASTVILLE WARD: Demographic Information by LSOAs. Source: 2011 Census LSOA (Local Super Output Area)

Chapter Five:

Insights from the Focus Group Work on Neighbourhood Assets in Greater Fishponds

Penny Beynon, Dean French, Jan Fullforth, Jeremy Groome, Jenny Hoadley and Christopher Orlik

Introduction

A group of Bristol Ageing Better (BAB) Community Researchers (CRs) held a series of discussions with local residents and service providers either working or living in the 3 wards of the Greater Fishponds area.

The aim of the study was to elicit opinions on the following questions:

- What are the good things for older people in their neighbourhoods?
- What are the potential barriers to feeling part of their community?
- What are the current local resources which help to ameliorate feelings of social isolation and loneliness?

The meetings and discussions were held during the period from 29th October to 26th November 2015. The process adopted was to 'piggy back' sessions onto the Neighbourhood Partnership (NP) forums and also arrange a dedicated focus group discussion. Quarterly NP forums are held in each of the 3 wards of Greater Fishponds, namely Eastville, Frome Vale and Hillfields.

In total approximately 42 local residents, 6 representatives from professional bodies and 1 counsellor attended the 4 sessions.

The anticipated output of the activity was to provide background information to the BAB commissioning process and subsequently to the selected lead delivery partner/s in their work in Greater Fishponds.

It is also hoped that other groups involved in community research will find the experience gained from the focus group process useful for their future work in this area.

The Report is arranged in 4 sections:

Section 1 Findings, Conclusions and Discussion.

This is what people told us about the community and initial conclusions by the CRs.

Section 2 The NP Forums and the Focus Group Process.

This explains the way the CRs carried out the research at the different meetings.

Section 3 Learning from the Focus Group Process.

This summarises the team's learning both individually and collectively from running the focus groups.

Section 4 Emerging Issues.

This identifies areas for further work that arose from the current activities.

Section 1: Findings, Conclusions and Discussion from the NP forums and the Dedicated Focus Group

This section summarises the main points made by attendees at the 3 NP forums and from the dedicated focus group.

a) General Comment

There is a wide age range within the category of 'older people' and many people within the range do not identify themselves as 'old'. The experience of retirement and getting older is very different now to previous generations. It is useful to recognise the difference between chronological and functional age and avoid seeing older people as a homogenous group. Multi-generational activities may be more appropriate than ones targeted at senior citizens.

Some older people don't want to mix with other older people or to be treated in a charitable way. 'I'm not a charity case' was one response to kind neighbours who invited an elderly person living alone to Xmas dinner. Some people are in denial of being lonely.

b) Bereavement

Bereavement was identified as a risk factor for loneliness and/or social isolation. It was sometimes linked with a lack of confidence. Several comments were made by attendees; 'If someone doesn't feel like they 'belong' and their situation changes e.g. through bereavement then this makes it difficult to overcome isolation and loneliness'; 'Some people just want things to be the same so when a partner dies it is difficult to adapt'.

An organiser from the Stapleton and Begbrook Community Association said that when one of a couple died, often the surviving spouse stopped attending too. Couples often were used to sharing skills e.g. a man may have done the driving, and after his death, his wife may have problems with accessing social activities because she did not drive; men may rely on their wives to arrange social contacts after they retire, and become isolated if they are widowed. It was suggested that preparation for bereavement should be available in the same way as preparation for retirement.

c) Transportation

Bus services had been cut in some parts making travelling round the area more difficult. There was also criticism of the Council's Dial-a-Ride service as being unreliable, but also not available for social activities. Bristol Community Transport (BCT) does not operate in Greater Fishponds at the moment.

One person explained that her 80 year old mother wanted to attend a Pilates class at Easton community centre, and other activities, but she was limited in what she could do to the times when her daughter who was working and available to take her in the car.

One elderly gentleman made a comment about reliability of bus services through Hillfields, 'I cannot wait at the bus stop because I am very unstable on my feet and there is nothing to hold onto or sit on'. If it's raining it makes it all the more difficult for him.

Some people will need personal introduction to new activities and possibly door-to-door transport provided. BCT are not working in Greater Fishponds at the moment.

More community transport was needed that includes provision for transport for 'fun' activities.

d) Environment

Green spaces make a neighbourhood a pleasant place to live but can in themselves be a physical barrier to getting round the area, particularly for people with mobility problems or no personal transport. The renovated railway path to Bath was good for cyclists but some cyclists make it unsafe for pedestrians so it is little used by those on foot.

Hillfields is considered a pleasant place to live with green spaces (albeit with the problems of vandalism and drugs) – however the green spaces means it takes longer to walk to a bus stop or your destination. One elderly gentleman complained that 'people park on the grass verges and make it difficult for other motorists (he is one)' and also that 'some allow their dogs to foul the grassy areas'.

There was a lack of informal meeting places in the Eastville area. At present the communal space of Eastville Park was underused, and compared with St George's Park which was considered fantastic as a meeting place. There was need for a café in Eastville Park.

e) Personal Issues

Lack of confidence was identified as a barrier for social participation. Identifying who is lonely and/or socially isolated is difficult. Even when identified, some still are reluctant to engage and may need extra support until they feel more self-confident e.g. someone to take and introduce them to activities, and, in some cases, persuade them to take part. One lady described how a friend took her to the Barton Hill Settlement (luncheon club) which made a big difference to her life.

Befriending/ buddying services were felt to be helpful providing matching was done sensitively.

Lack of effort might cause some to be isolated: one lady said '[when I am isolated] I have to tell myself "just pull yourself together and get out there"' Someone else referred to stubbornness: 'some men don't like to use buggies/trolleys which might enable them to get out more'.

There is a stigma around mental illness and also sexuality, i.e. same sex relationships, so if there is a breakdown in personal relationships, e.g. due to bereavement, it can be difficult to feel accepted within the community.

Physical difficulties such as impaired hearing, mobility and infirmity also caused problems. Increasing understanding of dementia and that special provision may not be required could enable greater social participation.

f) Communication Challenges

There was no recognised information hub to publicise activities, or find out what was going on e.g. the Townswomen Guild want to recruit more people to their over-50's keep fit class but are unsure where to advertise. Information is available through the internet, but many older people do not understand how to use it or cannot use it easily because they lack hand mobility. More publicity could be given to the IT training and support already available e.g. through Orange or courses at University of the West of England (UWE), but people needed transport to get there and the confidence to do it. The internet should not be the only information source. The local papers, e.g. Fishponds Voice, could be helpful but are not delivered to all parts of Hillfields. Attention needed to be paid to the size of print for information.

Better signposting to what's going on/activities could help, e.g. after bereavement.

Language is considered to be a problem particularly for women from Black and Ethnic Minority groups. Men might be working away and the women do not feel able to make connections outside of the home.

A one-stop shop for a wide range of information on services and activities, e.g. from chiropodists to social clubs, was suggested. This should not rely on people being 'online'.

g) **Community Assets**

Some existing facilities or community activities are underused, e.g. Stapleton and Begbrook Community Centre and Stapleton Park. Some existing community groups are collapsing because of their reliance on key individuals who are unable to continue in their role and the lack of new volunteers.

It would appear that the churches are a major source of social activity for older people and appear to have most of the venues. However one person said that her local church hall is not really fit for purpose e.g. poor toilet facilities. Faith groups may well provide those community figures who “watch out” for others living close by, because they are motivated by ethical reasons to do with their beliefs, rather than just being nose, and they were suggested as potential sources for befrienders.

It was suggested that older people within ethnic minority communities often get support from their own community either from their families and/or their churches/mosques.

h) **Specific Community Assets**

Bereavement Counselling services – It is believed that these may focus on the emotional aspects of bereavement and not deal with the more practical side of maintaining social activities.

Linkage activities were mentioned but they were considered sporadic and patchy.

Barton Hill – Wellspring, Healthy Living Centre; Malcolm X centre and Easton Community Centre / Swimming pool were mentioned as having good provision although they are not in Greater Fishponds area.

Activate – a group for older people in Frome Vale, had easily accessible activities.

The Townswomen’s Guild has 2 local branches.

‘In the Pink’ is a gentle keep fit group for older ladies

‘Alive’ provides activities in Bristol care homes and daycentres for residents including intergenerational events to open up care homes to the community.

A local community gardening scheme in Rocky Lane, Fishponds, had involved people of all ages and had lasting effects for local older people.

Police Community Support Officers may be a good source of information about who the socially isolated older people are.

i) **Additional Comments and Suggestions**

The following factors were mentioned as exacerbating problems of social isolation and loneliness:

- Too many automated messages on telephones, giving multiple choices.
- Restrictions on care packages which meant that care workers had no time to engage socially with their clients. One person suggested greater investment in supporting care workers so they had more time, others felt we would have to rely on volunteers. The proposed use of robots for care tasks would reduce social interaction.
- Removal of wardens in sheltered housing.
- Older people who have been long term residents may want to downsize to one bedroom accommodation, especially social housing. Because so few are available in Frome Vale it will probably mean having to move outside the area, away from friends and neighbours who they may rely on.

Suggestions for reducing isolation included:

- Students/young people move in with an older person and pay low rent in return for spending time with them.

- Incorporate care homes into the community when building new estates e.g. by designs that build children’s provision alongside care homes/allow communal rooms to be used by other age groups and for social activities open to all.

j) **Conclusions and Discussion**

The CRs have identified some general themes which seem to be prevalent to the issue of isolation and loneliness.

- The quality of advertised information regarding community assets is varied, often it is in a format which is not accessible such as online or the print is too small to read. The information which is useful doesn’t get to the person needing it.
- Older people have personal barriers such as lack of confidence, not being motivated, being inflexible to changes, coping with bereavement and being stigmatised because of sexual orientation.
- Some older people need to a lot of ‘hand holding’ to access existing resources. This might range from communities having to reach out to people by buddying/ befriending to tailoring and/ or advertising their resources to meet the specific needs of individuals. This might help overcome some of the personal issues raised above.

- Once an older person feels motivated to access community assets, physical impairment and poor public transport causes added difficulty.
- Once an older person overcomes some or all of the difficulties mentioned above, the local resources would go some way to alleviate isolation and loneliness.
- Some older people have a preference for participation in activities for all ages and dislike targeted provision based on age.

Section 2: The NP forums and Focus Group Process

The UWE support team, who lead the CR team proposed that the investigation should consist of a single focus group and be completed by 23rd November 2015. A small group of CRs from the team volunteered to take on the task and were given free rein to manage the process. The Focus Group CRs decided that to gain a better understanding of the phrasing of the focus group questions prior discussions should be held in the community. Based on contacts and experiences earlier in the year, it was further proposed that these preliminary discussions could be held at the ward-level NP forums, which were scheduled for late-October to mid-November.

The timing of the overall activity was therefore extended until the end of November; even with this time extension it would still be possible to combine the results with the Asset Mapping exercise which was well on its way to being completed. Both would form part of BAB's input to a commissioning process which was planned for early 2016.

In all, 3 NP forums were attended where the CRs held focus group sessions prior to the main focus group.

a) What we did to organise the focus group work

There were 5 CRs who volunteered to run the focus group with a 6th person joining to provide additional support for the main focus group (one of the 5 was unavailable for the focus group). One person was unable to be involved for 4 weeks of this period.

To achieve the aim the following tasks were identified:

- Set date, time and venue for the focus group;
- Undertake publicity;
- Attend the NP Forums in Oct/Nov to provide publicity and where possible engage with attendees about the relevant issues;
- Consolidate what had been learnt to inform the way the main focus group could be optimised;
- Hold the main focus group and produce a report.

b) Setting the location and date

The "hub" of the area appeared to be around Straits Parade in Fishponds – it seemed to be the one place where the bus routes converged so the focus was on finding an appropriate venue in this area. It was appreciated, however, that many people who lived beyond a ½ mile radius were unlikely to be attracted to any venue. It was decided that day time would be more attractive for older people and probably the morning. As an enticement, a hot drink and mince pies were made part of the advertisement. It was decided to opt for the Beechwood Centre just off Fishponds Rd for November 26th 10.15-11.45am.



Figure 1: Poster to invite locals to make their thoughts and feelings known.

c) Publicity

The event was publicised through the distribution of leaflets and posters (see Figure 1, above). 23 possible contacts from the Asset mapping database were identified, these being the more local contacts. The latter were selected as it was considered that they might help with the publication of the event, i.e. activities/clubs which were known to be attended by older people. These were contacted by either email or phone to get their agreement and then posted or delivered the posters personally. Some posters were, in addition, put up in venues which older people are known to frequent.

In addition to flyers and posters, local radio was used to make announcements on BABs own programme broadcast on Ujima 98 FM. Bristol Community Radio – Silversound agreed to advertise the event, however it is not known whether this happened, as no one from the CR listened to the broadcast. Adverts were put in the Greater Fishpondsvoice and Downendvoice, the former being paid for and latter being free. The manager of the Beechwood Centre put a notice on Facebook the day before the event

The event was also publicised at the 3 NP forums. Figure 1 (previous page) shows the poster which we agreed to use for publicity purposes.

d) NP forums

The Council officer co-ordinating the Public forums gave the attending CRs a 30-minute slot on the main agenda. Two CRs attended each forum, and the forums were attended by 10-16 local residents, mainly but not all, over 55.

At Hillfields and Eastville a discussion took place as a plenary. At Frome Vale, because of the layout of the room (chairs were arranged in a horse-shoe around the edge of the room). It was decided to “work” each side of the room, and then to speak to some residents individually at the end of the meeting.

The CRs facilitated the following:

- At the Frome Vale NP forum on 29th October 2015, a group of 7 to 8 residents (2 over 70yrs, 3 over 50 yrs).

- At the Hillfields NP forum on 4th November 2015, a plenary session with about 16 people present, most of whom were assumed to be over 55. In addition several people were spoken to on their own during the break and afterwards.
- The Eastville NP forum on 11th November 2015, through a plenary session with about 15 local residents, with an estimated 10 over 50 years old.

e) Main Focus Group – 26th November 2015

In all, 3 local residents, 6 professionals and 1 councillor attended. All attendees were female.

Following the experience from the 3 NP forums, it was decided to keep questions to minimum. These were:

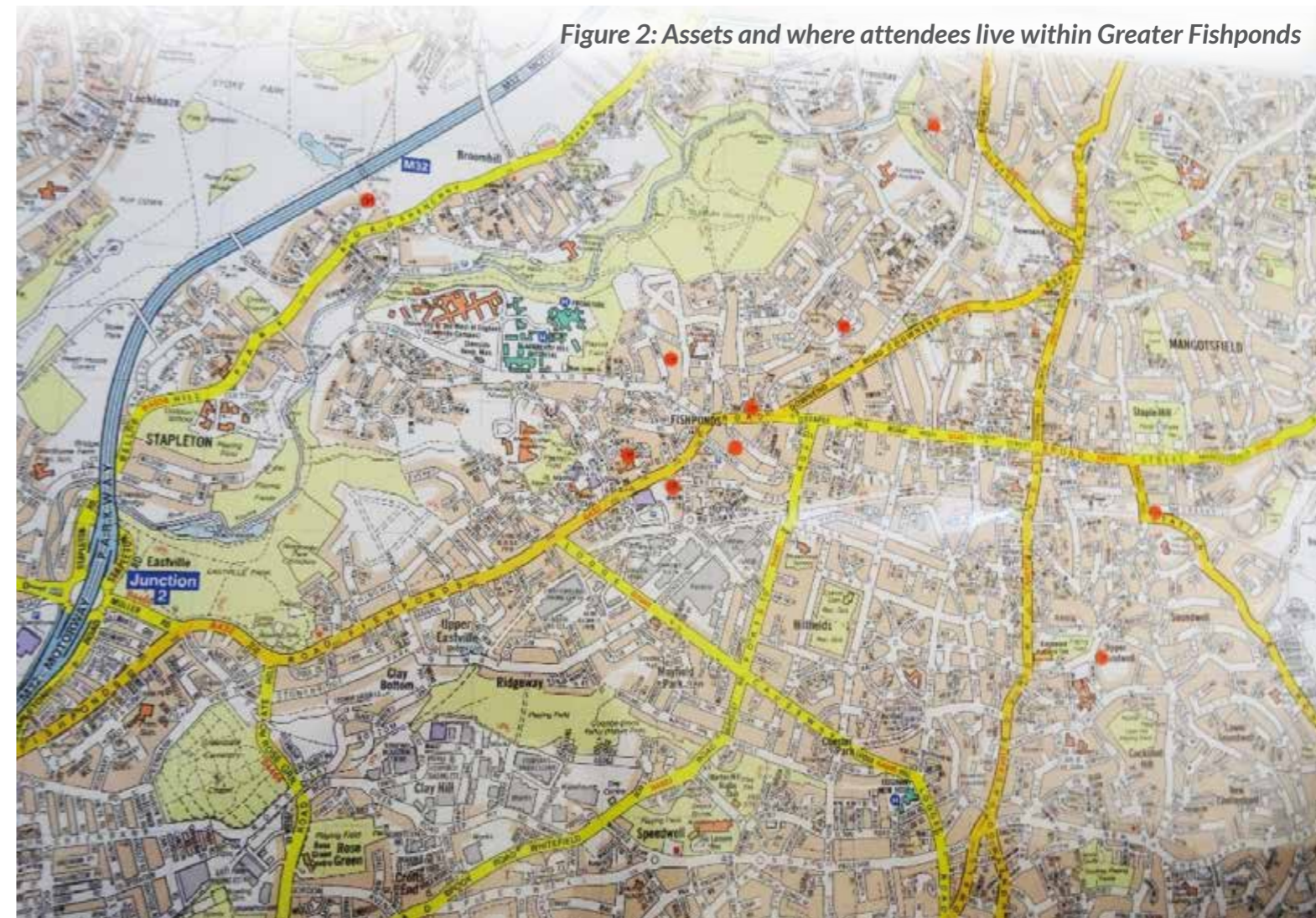
Q1 – *What is good about living in the community?*

Q2 – *What are the barriers to accessing community resources?*

Q3 – *What changes/improvement would you like to see to the community?*

On the day, 3 tables were ‘casually’ arranged with seating in the hall at the Beechwood Centre plus a flipchart with the 3 questions on separate sheets. The same 3 questions were written on the top of individual flip chart sheets with a set of questions for each table.

Figure 2: Assets and where attendees live within Greater Fishponds



The purpose of the focus group was to listen and record what community people had to say about their neighbourhood and community

Figure 3: Group work



Figure 4: Group work



In addition, there was a large map of Greater Fishponds plus sticky coloured dots (see previous page). It was decided to invite the attendees to mark where they live or work within the area on the map. For those people who turned up for the start this was quite easy for them to do. However, it was necessary to be more flexible as more arrived part way through the event. This resulted in the map not being easy to use; therefore some people did not mark it. Figure 2 shows the map with locations of assets/where people live.

Because numbers were so small it was decided to run the discussion with everyone sitting around one table (Figures 3 and 4, previous page). As the numbers increased (after the introduction and discussion on the first question), it was possible to expand to two separate groups; this enabled more views to be heard. As it was decided not to get people to register, the CRs had no idea as to how many attendees would come. Initially, it was hoped that mainly local residents would turn up as we decided it was more important to hear from them rather than seasoned professionals. The team was concerned that the professionals might have an agenda to promote their own service and the voice of the residents would be blocked out. However, as there were eventually only 3 local residents it was pleasing that the professionals hadn't been turned away. Figures 3 and 4 show the two individual groups at work.

One local resident said that she read the advertisement as a 'drop in' rather than a meeting and that was why she came to the meeting late. Another man

came, who seemed to be alarmed at the arrangements, made an excuse to go back to his car, and never returned.

The enthusiasm for audience participation was stilted at first. This was perhaps due to the fact that most people did not know each other plus the presence of one or two dominant individuals. Also, the erratic way in which the attendees arrived played a part in disrupting any developing flow of conversation. Fortunately, the enthusiasm seemed more vibrant once the group broke into two smaller groups and they stabilised themselves.

It was originally thought the responses to each question could be gathered into a list on the flip-chart but this did not work maybe because of the reasons mentioned above. Instead, the responses were written down on the sheet on the table. For the second and third questions (when working in two groups) the comments were recorded on the sheets at each table by a CR facilitator. This proved to be successful as it allowed comments to be recorded verbatim and having a rapporteur meant that individuals did not have to break off from speaking/contributing or lose eye contact with the other members of the group while writing their thoughts on the sheet.

A schedule was agreed during the preparation period – it was possible to keep to this and the meeting closed by 12.00. Participants were invited to leave forwarding details so that the output from the meeting could be circulated to them. The majority left contact details as they left.

Section 3: Learning from the Focus Group Process

Despite a major advertising campaign, the main focus group was attended by a small number of residents (3) and approximately 6 representatives of professional service providers and 1 councillor. At least 2 of the residents were already involved in community projects, some of which they had initiated themselves. This led to the conclusion that local residents who we would ideally like to speak to are not generally going to attend a specific focus group. If further conversations are needed with local residents then other ways to engage them would need to be found. The opportunity to attend and run sessions at the neighbourhood forums with a captured audience proved to be more successful than the main focus group. There were approximately 39 local residents contributing at the 3 forums.

We explored ways of holding the main focus group. After speaking to Adam Rees the BAB Director we decided to create a relaxed atmosphere by having a world café style arrangement of tables. This would mean that we would have up to 5 tables, each would have about 4-5 people sat around it and we would provide a drink to each at the start. The idea being that people would find it easier to become acquainted with each other in a relaxed way, prior to posing the first question. This would avoid the potential threat of being involved in a larger meeting, when it was unlikely that some attendees would not know anyone there, and might feel reticent about speaking up. Due to the trickle of small numbers we had to dispense with this style and we moved to a one-group process.

It seemed that the larger group process worked as the professionals and the 3 local residents, who were already 'community active,' were comfortable sharing their views. At the forums it is possible that the residents worked quite well in the larger groups as they were likely to have been more familiar with the others and had at least got to know them a bit by attending previous forums.

On reflection, the results from the NP forums contributed significantly to the results as well as confirming the phrasing of the focus group questions.

Section 4: Emerging issues

The focus group work carried out by the CR team that is described above was intended to provide supplementary information to support work on asset mapping in the Greater Fishponds area. It has enhanced understanding of the area and suggested some of the factors which influence social isolation and loneliness, and a few of the actions that may be taken to counteract these. Clearly, further work will be needed to understand how best to optimise the effort to tackle the range of issues presented at the NP and focus group sessions.

Inevitably, given the constraints of time and resources, there were limits on the numbers and types of people reached by the CRs, and the views expressed are only a partial picture of the issues.

In particular there is a need to gain the views of older and frailer people, and people from ethnic minority groups who did not attend the discussions. Careful thought will be required as to the best methods of doing this. Additionally, special difficulties are faced in trying to involve people who are currently socially isolated in influencing the future developments which may be targeted towards them.



Special difficulties are faced in trying to involve people who are currently socially isolated ...

Chapter Six:

Concluding Comments

Robin Means and Naomi Woodspring

Findings

The BAB administrator was sent each proforma about a community group or community resource electronically. She added the completed information to an online spreadsheet that was accessible by anyone in the group. The BAB administrator used the hard copies of the pro forma to create a resource binder. She also created an asset map with assets pinned on the appropriate sites.

At the end of the process, Means and Woodspring sifted through the resource binder, setting aside community assets that were not appropriate for a more public display. For example, some of the teams interviewed individuals who were important assets in their neighbourhood or community as a result of the CRs being encouraged to discover non-traditional assets. The final binder will be passed onto Bristol-wide resource Well Aware for inclusion on their website, after any permissions have been received. An asset map spread sheet, an informational version of this summary, and a link to the Well Aware website will be posted on the BAB website to serve as a community resource for those looking for help and for people interested in doing their own asset mapping project.

The CR team identified and interviewed 70 assets in the three wards of Eastville, Frome Vale and Hillfields, 55 of which will be made

public through the Well Aware (if not already known to them) and Bristol Age UK websites (see Appendix for more detailed information). The identified assets ranged from churches and traditional service providers to bicycling and gardening clubs to cafés to individuals who were seen as important resources in their neighbourhoods. In the process of carrying out this work, some of the community deficits became glaringly obvious. Poor Public transportation was a frequent barrier, in some areas obstacles to walkability were a concern while in others a basic lack of resources and facilities were uncovered. The lack was, in part, made up for by older residents accessing various assets across ward and neighbourhood partnership boundaries. The important finished product aside, the CR teams gained valuable skills in the process of asset mapping along with a hands-on understanding of how to conduct an asset mapping project. Of course, each of the CRs came with their own set of skills, so, it is impossible to list specific skills as global learning for the group. That said, investigative networking, interviewing, team work, an asset-based versus a deficit-based community perspective, and report writing are among skills developed by the CRs through this exercise.

An important insight from the asset mapping work was how artificial are the boundaries of wards and neighbourhood partnership

areas from the point of view of both many community groups and many older people. This finding has been an important factor in the decision of BAB to review how best to commission and deliver a city-wide network of community development projects. In other words the results of neighbourhood asset mapping in Greater Fishponds are being employed in the thinking through of a reconfiguration of the commissioning process which will place less emphasis upon neighbourhood partnership areas in the future.

Reflections on the Process

The UWE team used a 'test and learn' approach (Davenport, 2009) that offers CRs an opportunity to use their already acquired skills, experience, and knowledge in a new setting. In the case of this project, prior to BAB, none of the CRs had any experience with asset mapping. The CRs were provided with basic training, an outline of protocol, and the pro forma, as well as the rationale for the project. The task was to organise themselves and use the training and information they received to figure out how to accomplish the tasks necessary for project completion. Test and learn can feel difficult but is effective. For adults with a lifetime of experience and knowledge, it can feel disconcerting to be learning new techniques without detailed instructions.

The CRs produced individual reports on their work in Eastville, Frome Vale and Hillfields as well as with the focus groups and as seen in the earlier chapters these include reflections on the process. These indicate some uneasiness with the 'test and learn'

References

Davenport, T.H. 2009, "How to design smart business experiments", Harvard Business Review, February.

approach which is common because it can feel uncomfortable. However, their critique also offered some important learning for the UWE team. In the future the UWE need to be more adept at enabling the CRs to get more engaged with project briefs so that these are fully owned and understood. The initial training on asset mapping offered was of high quality but not sufficiently geared to the specific task in hand. More allowance needs to be made to accommodate different learning styles within the group (less reliance on verbal communication and more use of handouts and PowerPoints), more space to fully explain tasks (a need for monthly and not bi-monthly meetings of the CRs) and more allowance for the fact that CRs are volunteers with many other commitments.

Conclusion

The Greater Fishponds asset mapping project has produced successful outcomes on several fronts:

- An in-depth profile of the community resources and groups in the Hillfields, Frome Vale, and Eastville wards.
- An important new perspective on the effective delivery of services and how people from these three wards access assets that will influence the BAB commissioning process.
- Skills development and learning on the part of both the Community Researchers and the UWE team.
- A more cohesive Community Researcher group.

Appendix A

Pro forma used in the Greater Fishponds Asset Mapping

CR name (primary): _____ Date of interview: _____

Asset Mapping Info

Organisation/business name: _____

Contact person: _____ Phone number: _____

Brief Description

Website (if available): _____ email: _____

Benefits or tags: _____

Address/location: _____

Prompts

- Very briefly introduce self, BAB, and purpose of call – speaking to the right person?
- If so, provide more detailed description.
- When speaking with a community contact (eg councilor) ask questions that may jog their memory when thinking about the area. Be curious.
- Does the organisation operate under more than one name or have more than one program that might be known under another name?
- Ask curious questions about the organisation.
- Ask about the general benefits/tags and info more specific to older people.
- Is there more than one location? Phone support?
- Access?
- Please do not make any promises or commitments.
- REMEMBER – LISTEN AND CONNECT.



Appendix B

Community Groups and Community Resources in Greater Fishponds

Eastville

Shah Jalal Jame Mosque: Mosque under M32 flyover at end of Stapleton Road. Mr Alam told me that there were no 'extra curricula' activities.

Bangladesh Association: Provides advice and information to Bangladesh communities in Bristol on all issues including: benefits, housing, immigration, education, employment, health, racial harassment.

The New Place (Eastville Park Methodist Church): A Methodist-owned and -run community space in Eastville, home to a number of community groups and organisations who work with vulnerable adults, and children.

Friends of Eastville Park: Meets bi-monthly in 'hut' in Eastville Park providing they have Park's permission from council. Handful of attendees. Mainly elderly.

Rose Green Centre: Large reception building and adjacent cricket ground – home of Bristol West Indian Cricket Club. Football pitch and indoor cricket nets available for hire. Function room, bar and kitchen available for hire. It runs a social club, open to all (subscription for over 60's £7 pa), with quizzes, summer

outings, comedy nights, access to the bar in the evenings etc.

Fishponds Community Orchard: Orchard of top and soft fruit maintained by a volunteer membership who then benefit from the fruit. Monthly workdays. Public opening for Apple Day in the autumn.

Over 60s Luncheon Club: Anyone 60 or over is welcome. Takes place last Tuesday of each month 12.30-2.00. Run café style – customers served at tables. Sometimes attend at different locations, e.g The Kingfisher Café in Fishponds, but plenty of notice given. Food homemade by volunteers.

All Saints Church Friday Film Club: No age restrictions, anyone welcome – just turn up! Films suitable for family viewing. Tea and cake. No charge but donations for charity welcomed.

Bristol Repair Café: Held on 1st Saturday morning of each month (10.30-1pm) inside All Saints Church, Grove Road, Fishponds. Volunteers with expertise and skills to share offer free help with repairing faulty or broken appliances (eg CD player, toaster, phone), toys or bikes, clothing or textile repairs, or help with getting to know how tools or appliances

work such as a new phone or sewing machine. They see themselves as neighbours helping neighbours as well as saving money and reducing waste.

All Saints Church: Religious services and activities; Over 60s Luncheon club; Hall for hire for regular or one-off meetings; Various childrens' activities including scout groups; monthly coffee morning; monthly repair café; Film club.

Frome Vale

Begbrook Retirement Club: The Begbrook Retirement club was set up by Cllr Lesley Alexander and runs regular events at the Greenfinch Lodge Community Room. The group has 25 registered members and about 18/20 attend each meeting. The age range is from 60/90.

The Carers' Centre: provides support and advice to carers of any age living in the Bristol and S Glos areas.

Avon and Somerset Police: Police Community Support Officer. There are also PCSOs for Hillfields, Eastville and St George East & West based at Fishponds Police Station. A major part of the PCSO's work

involves getting to know local people, and becoming known in the local community.

Ways to Wellbeing: provides a free and confidential social prescribing service on a 1:1 basis to anyone over the age of 18 living in and around the greater Fishponds area of Bristol.

The Care Forum/Well

Aware: The Care Forum is an umbrella name for 4 service strands (Advocacy, which includes 'Ways to Wellbeing'; Volunteering covering over 100 volunteers; Healthwatch and Well Aware) Well Aware is mainly an interactive notice board (database) for sign posting services.

The Kingfisher Café: Set up as a Community Café in December 2014 and preparing to apply for CIC status. The Directors, Jane and Sarah, together with family members, employ 10-11 people on a part-time basis.

Vintage Community Church:

Sunday worship gathering consist of pre-service conversations around coffee and tea, followed by worship, prayer and a message from the Bible.

Fishponds Baptist Church

Luncheon Club: Run twice a week (11.45am to 1.00pm on Tuesday and Thursday) by volunteers with attendance of 30-50 people, within age range of 65-80+.

Fishponds Friendship

Retirement Club: Club for retired people held at the Fishponds Baptist Church.

Fishponds Baptist Church

Diamond Club: Run for older

people with some transport support. The Diamond Club coffee morning has been running for 13 years by volunteers with a regular attendance of 20-30, within age range of 60-80+.

Downend Folk House

Association: A charitable incorporated organisation (new charity group designation that gives limited liability without need for Company House registration) providing a wide range of activities, a large proportion of which are relevant and used by >55s.

Changes Bristol: Friendly peer support group specifically for over 55s for those feeling low, looking for support and company. Changes Bristol, in partnership with LinkAge, offers the opportunity to meet with like-minded people in warm, supportive atmosphere to discuss issues affecting them.

Avon Wildlife Trust –Feed

Bristol: Avon Wildlife Trust's community food-growing project that 'enables a wide diversity of people across Bristol to access and value the natural world through learning how to grow food using wildlife-friendly methods'.

Stapleton and Begbrook

Community Association: Community premises with licensed bar, fully equipped kitchen, rooms to hire (also with bars), skittles alley and pool room with dartboard. Full disabled access and adjacent free carpark.

Fishponds Horticultural

and Craft Show: The Horticultural and Craft Show is in its 9th year and is held

at the Methodist Church Hall in Guinea Lane. It is a competition/exhibition of flowers, vegetables, floral art, cakes and domestic produce, photography, handicrafts and hobbies plus children's classes.

ACTIVATE FISHPONDS

Lunchtime Concerts: The drop-in Lunchtime Concerts are held on the 2nd Friday each month at the Methodist Church in Guinea Lane. They are aimed at an older audience and include songs of the 50s and 60s, choirs, singing groups and ensembles.

Fishponds Methodist Church:

church staff and friends run a number of activities for adults including a Monday club, friends and neighbours group, coffee morning and holiday-at-home event.

St Marys Church Fishponds:

member of the East Bristol Partnership of churches. Runs a bereavement discussion group, gardening club and lunch club.

Bristol Fishponds PROBUS

Club: provides a meeting point for retired or semi-retired professional and commercial businessmen, through which they can maintain contact and fellowship. There are no charitable activities associated with the club.

Fishponds Conservative

Club: Although a membership club and with obvious political connotations, they are trying to reinvent themselves as the 'Fishponds Community Club' and establish links with the three CofE churches in Fishponds. The Club provides a place to obtain a drink and a snack and runs many regular

and seasonal social events throughout the year.

The Old Post Office: Local pub with one large bar, and serving food all day. Regular entertainments including a free pool night, live DJ, and quiz plus rock 'n' roll bingo, each week.

Fishponds Reading Group:

A ladies' group that meets monthly to discuss and share opinions on a specific novel and then adjourns to a nearby coffee shop for social conversation.

Dance Tuition/Practice:

Dance club for older people (youngest current member is in their 50s) held at the Beechwood Club. Covers ballroom dance skills (waltz, foxtrot etc.).

Hannah More Club: Club for people >55 held at the Beechwood Club that provides entertainment, refreshments and conviviality.

Townswomen's Guild –

Fishponds: Local branch of national organisation. The activities of the group are social meetings, activities (lunches and carol service) and visits. About eight months a year there are speakers and at the remaining meetings there are games and discussions.

FLAG – Fishponds Locality

Action Group: A limited company run entirely by volunteers, was initially set up to raise funds to improve and maintain facilities within Hillfields Park.

Hillfields

Crofts End Mission Church:

Runs various Christian group activities on Sundays and midweek, as well as a community café, computer and literacy training, drop-in nursery and walking group.

Argyle Morley United

Reformed Church: used most days by Children's Soft Play. The premises are also used by Slimming World on Tuesday 5:30pm and 7:30pm.

Seventh Day Adventist

Church: Hoping to start a lunch club for older people. Worship services on Saturday mornings.

GB Britton Bowls Club:

The bowls club is open to all adults. Currently the club has 105 members. Most of the members are local and over 50.

Hillfields Park Luncheon

Club: Lunch Club for people 65 and over living on the Hillfields Estate, Fishponds, Bristol and surrounding areas. Open throughout the year. A hot meal is served and occasional visits and talks from the police, social services and health workers.

Hillfields Park Baptist

Church: Weekend and evening services; guitar lessons; slimming world; lunch club; prayer meeting; Zumba; Bible study; and keep fit classes.

Brunel Fitness Centre: BFC run 'Active Choices' in three separate sessions a week. They have a significant number of older people who are referred by local GPs. People who are lonely, depressed, isolated, have medical problems are referred.

RHS South West in Bloom:

Community gardening scheme in Brook Road, Fishponds, supported by South West in Bloom.

Neighbourhood Watch,

Hillfields: There are 28 participants in the neighbourhood watch scheme and Alison has a list of streets covered. There is also a monthly newsletter.

Hillfields Community Trust:

Hillfields Community Trust volunteers hold events when possible and try and do as much as they can with limited resources for the community.

Hillfields Walking Group:

an initiative set up during the Public Health regeneration project and has been running 7/8 years. Up to 50 members, mainly retired people, of whom 18-25 might go on a walk at any one time. Fortnightly walks, led by trained volunteers, are free and 2-3 miles in length.

Greater Fishponds

Neighbourhood Partnership:

Asset-based community development worker – 1 day a week assigned to Hillfields. Signposting especially within the council.

Based Outside/Partially Outside Greater Fishponds or No Set Location:

Bristol Community Links

Central: BCL is a city-wide service based in three areas of Bristol North, South, and Central. They offer daily support to older people, adults with dementia, learning difficulties, physical and sensory impairments and carers.

Dhek Bhal: Provides services to Southeast Asian older people and their carers. They offer respite care, activities in a Day Centre for older people (exercise groups, men’s and women’s groups are some of what is on offer), and an outreach/home visit program. The Somali community is included in the outreach program.

Wellspring Healthy Living Centre: A community-run health and wellbeing charity in a purpose-built centre offering a huge range of health and social activities. All services are open to everyone and there are no age barriers. The aim is to improve both physical and mental wellbeing with a view to reducing isolation and enabling people to be more confident in their community.

Life Cycle Over 55 Cycle Rides: An energetic and innovative charity that has been helping people transform their lives through cycling since 1996. Group rides for the over 55s (the majority are in their 60s) are run from different areas of the City; the nearest start point to Fishponds is Easton Community Centre.

Royal Voluntary Service: Bristol and Somerset (RVS): Aims to help older people maintain their independence and stay involved in the local community. Various schemes run by service managers including: Home from Hospital: works closely with Red Cross but services differently funded; Good Neighbours; Home Library (delivers books to people unable to get there).

Streets Alive: working on a project in a few streets (East Park Estate and Elmgrove areas) to promote neighbourliness.

Amelia Nutt Clinic: ANC covers the South and South East Bristol for respiratory illness referrals to Active Choices (Brunel Fitness Centre). They cover people living in Kingswood, St George and Fishponds. Nearly all clients are over 50.

North Bristol Advice Centre: Advice support on welfare, benefits and debt; Home visits to older people giving advice on money management, social isolation and best deals in buying utilities; and IT courses for older people plus drop-in service on IT matters.

Salvation Army Staple Hill: This branch has a number of services (listed on Wellaware) and their own website (more extensive than on WA) which are for older people.

Not So Young Club: The club has 80 registered members but depending on the weather and the time of year, attendance can range from 55 to 70 members, from Fishponds, Downend and further afield from Chipping Sodbury and Yate. Because of the size of the hall the Club is currently closed to new members.

The Beehive Centre: LinkAge project where a huge number of varied activities are open to anyone over 55, including: exercise classes such as ping pong, line dancing, tai chi, and chair yoga; wellbeing group; arts and crafts; film club; computer courses; and a lunch club.

Rotary Club of Fishponds and Downend: Currently 18 members including one honorary member and one Friend of Rotary. The ages range between the mid-40s and the mid-70s plus 1 member of more advanced years. The majority of our members are in their 50s and 60s.

Kensington Baptist Church: runs a weekly day centre for older people on with a small charge and a regular women’s sewing group.

St George and Air Balloon Health Centres: Amy is a Community Nurse for Older People (CNOP) operating in the Speedwell and St George Area (not Greater Fishponds). She visits lots of elderly people who are lonely and isolated.

East Bristol Partnership of Churches: There are a number of community services for older people such as the Luncheon Club, Bereavement and Support (includes the elderly but exclusively).

Contact The Elderly: Emma is a volunteer who organises the East Bristol 1 group – Fishponds, Staple Hill, Easton, St Georges. Contact the Elderly is a national organisation which arranges monthly tea parties for people aged over 75 who live alone and have difficulty getting out on their own.

Independent Age – South West area: Aims to help older people live more fulfilling lives through the ABC of Advice, Befriending and Campaigning. Seek to empower and enrich people’s lives.

Notes

**UWE
Bristol** | University
of the
West of
England

Bristol Ageing Better (BAB) is a partnership working to reduce social isolation and loneliness among older people and help them live fulfilling lives.

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