

# Age UK Cornwall & Macmillan Macmillan Project - Learning Report 2019



## Who we are

Since 2015, Age UK Cornwall & The Isles of Scilly and Macmillan Cancer Support have been working together on the Living Well Macmillan project. **In July 2018, our partnership grew stronger as we rolled out County-wide support for older people living with Cancer.**

This new initiative provided us with the opportunity to recruit a Community Navigator & a Volunteer Experience Facilitator, these new roles have been complemented by the development of the Cornwall Link portal and supported by our fantastic Volunteer 'Community Navigators', **the success of these roles have enabled us to reach more people than ever before.**

Our partnership has continued to tackle loneliness & isolation and support the community by coordinating holistic solutions to local challenges. Our aim is to consistently improve access and provide support to the wide menu of services & opportunities that are available to for people affected by cancer.

***“There is a lot of support available for people, it is so important that they know about it! Where is it? How do I get there? Who Can Help?”***

This partnership and our collaboration with the community ensures that the project has a greater engagement and reach within local communities, helping the **right people at the right time and developing innovative results.**

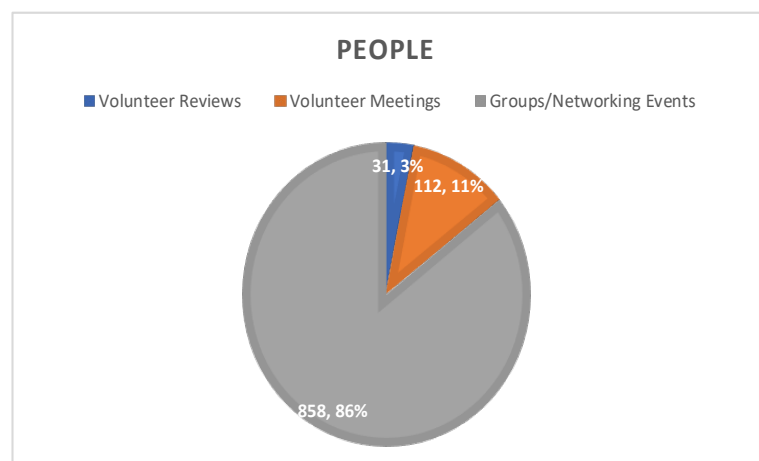
The Living Well Macmillan project **is unique, in being connected at both a strategic and grass roots level. This connection has created a rich output and has meant that our involvement is key in translating clinical information into everyday use, we build the bridges between the clinical world & everyday life.**

***“We need to listen if we are able to understand what people & communities want & need, not assume what we think they want & need is right”***

We have seen tremendous support for this project within the local community and continue to consult with our staff, the public, volunteers, **compassionate groups and Macmillan professionals. It is extremely important that we actively seek out these positive relationships and continue to cultivate the people & groups that want to make the biggest difference.**

## The Impact

Since October 2018, we have supported over **1,000 individuals at over 22 locations across Cornwall.** We have a training session tested and in place, fit and ready to create **Community Champions**, who are skilled and confident in understanding the needs of people affected by Cancer.



From Penzance to Saltash, and with the help of our 'Community Navigators' we have been able to target areas that **are often difficult to reach and truly provide a County-wide service.**



## The Impact

Since July 2018, we have identified & developed 4 key locations (**Bude, Newquay, St Austell & Liskeard**) where we host or plan to host future drop-in sessions for people to get information, advice and support.

### These drop-in sessions provide;

- a safe space for individuals affected by Cancer, to have open and practical conversations
- training and support mechanisms to upskill confidence & communication skills
- an opportunity to test Cornwall Link website and technology as a connector - e.g. what is it? How do we get on it? How can we use it effectively?
- practical advice & information for connecting & providing access to local services
- resource & learning requirements for peer support groups
- a place to recognise carers and their needs

**“My mother in law had cancer and we were very grateful of the support from Macmillan & the drop-in sessions”**

These drop-in sessions have provided us with a greater understanding of the issues affecting people and allowed us to share this learning throughout the community. **Perhaps the biggest take-away is that we need to give things time to develop & grow in a purposeful way, it is about making every contact matter.**

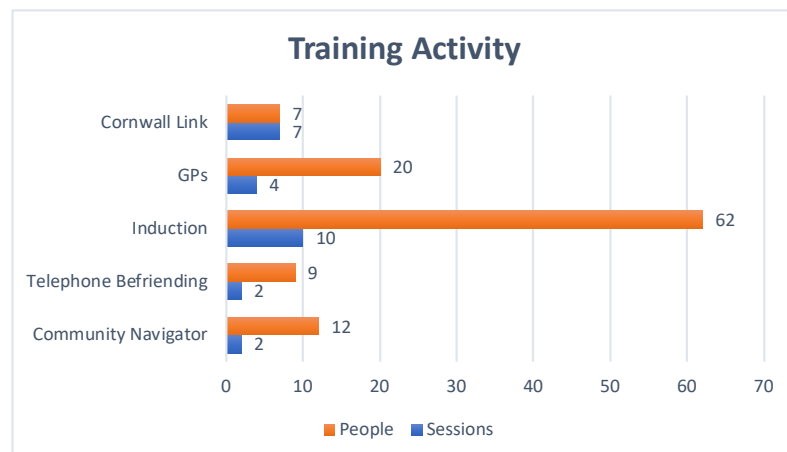


**\*Current data shows that we have facilitated 57 groups, with over 850 individuals attending.\***

## A Shared Approach

We include Macmillan in all aspects of our organisation, from initial enquiry to becoming a Volunteer, on our Helpline, in our Induction Training and in working practice across all our teams. **This means that people affected by cancer are more likely to be identified, and we are more able to have a conversation that offers them a range of support based on their needs and wishes.**

We have also co-designed a training session with the NHS & Macmillan that provides the following; **An Introduction to Cancer, Psychological Impacts of Cancer, Difficult Conversations & Boundaries and effective signposting.** This training module has been tremendously successful and significantly upskilled a number of our staff, volunteers and people delivering services or projects, whether they are cancer specific or not.



**\*In total we delivered 25 sessions and trained 110 people\***

A new approach and gaining an understanding of how it sits across an organisation will often involve a great deal of time & patience, however **we believe the stats (above) show the success of the training programme and the commitment our team, health professionals and Community Navigators have made in embedding this approach in everything we do.**

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Some key steps emerged during the project, which we have learned from, and will review as we approach the next phase of our collaboration with the Macmillan team.



## Our Learning

**Our partnership with Macmillan has given us a wealth of learning to support people within our community.** By testing support options, gaining feedback and engaging with the public, staff, volunteers, external groups and health professionals **we have identified solutions and ensured the aims of providing access and supporting people on their journey is the best it can possibly be.** The following points outline this learning:

### Our Learning:

Developing an effective training module, that meets the needs of the community and individuals is key, but takes time to deliver.



We need regular discussions with external colleagues to understand one another's priorities and approach to cancer support.



Listening to people cannot be rushed, hearing their stories and the messages within them is a good start.



It takes time to develop relationships and understand where value can be added.

The concern is that individuals affected by cancer are not able to connect to coordinated support.



There is a wide range of clubs, activities & support available if people have access to it. Cornwall Link & our dedicated Helpline can connect the dots and provide access to these services.



We have a better understanding and continue to develop the contribution of volunteers. They are key to providing person centred, on-going support to help build confidence and connect people to groups in their communities.



By upskilling our organisation, volunteers and our community, we are creating a sustainable legacy for Cancer support.



We have begun to learn a new language. It isn't necessarily clinical, but we are creating people-centred conversations in the right tone.



People definitely want these conversations, to feel free and able to talk & be respected.

## The Future

Our shared ambition was to make a difference to the lives of people across Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly and reach even more people, who are affected by Cancer, under a new model of support. **By collaborating with like-minded individuals, sharing our learning and listening to the needs of local communities, we can proudly say that this has been achieved.**

As our partnership continues to move forward, we have set some core actions:

- **We will continue to facilitate Community Navigator training, increasing the skills, confidence & learning for our staff, communities & Volunteers.**
- **We will continue to build confidence & increase community resilience across Cornwall.**
- **We will continue to expand our reach using a wide range of tools; supporting people in remote & rural areas and those that are most isolated.**
- **We will continue to offer & develop Community hubs, where people affected by Cancer can be heard, get information & engage.**
- **We will develop our Volunteer Champion roles and continue to recruit across Cornwall & The Isles of Scilly.**

**- We will continue to share our approach, learning and methods to a wide range of supporting partners.**

## What you said

We have had so much tremendous feedback during the Macmillan project, these are just a few quotes;

*“My mother in law had cancer and we were very grateful of the support, advice & time provided by Macmillan & Age UK Cornwall.”*

*“Training opportunities have been provided by Age UK Cornwall and I feel valued and supported by the organisation. I hope others will apply to join this hugely rewarding area of volunteering.”*

*“Judy, Emily and Sam delivered an excellent session, both from the volunteer and the more clinical points of view. The slideshow was very informative and everyone had ample time to ask questions and discuss. Everyone’s opinion and experience was respected. It was really good.”*

Jacqui Hodge, Macmillan Cancer Support, Partnership Manager for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly explained *“I’m so proud of what has been achieved to date with our partnership with Age UK Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, we’ve learned so much and reached a huge number of people who were really struggling with challenges such as isolation and depression exacerbated by their poor health.”*





