enabling communities to embrace the skills within

Community skills case study - further reading

Connected Care Programme
Turning Point

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/communityskills
**Connected Care: Hartlepool**

Turning Points Connected Care programme helps to give communities a say in decisions that affect them. Through Connected Care Turning Point has established a new way of working with communities. We help ensure local authorities can engage with residents. We listen to the communities needs in order to build better partnerships between statutory and voluntary sector agencies. Since 2006 Connected Care has now been carried out in 14 locations across Britain.

The first Connected Care project took place in Owton, Hartlepool. Owton is a ward in Hartlepool covering a community of 6757 people. The ward is within the 5% of most deprived neighbourhoods nationally ranked according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).

People were recruited from the local community and they were trained and supported by Turning Point and local agencies to become Community Researchers. 251 local residents participated in the research via one to one interviews, focus groups and a community “have your say” event.

The Community Researchers found that services could be improved by providing:
- Better information, at the right time and place
- Increased choice of services
- Easier to access services
- Continuity and coordination within services
- A responsible, flexible and well-trained workforce.

A Connected Care service has now been set up in Owton. It includes:
- Navigators working to improve access, promote early interventions, support, choice, ensure a holistic approach, and integrate with universal and long-term support
- A complex care team integrating specialist health, social care and housing support
- A project manager to oversee the service and promote change in the wider service system.

This service is delivered through a social enterprise managed by residents and local community organisations. The development of a social enterprise is seen as central to the pilot, helping to ensure it remains focussed on the needs of local people.

An independent evaluation has been carried out by the University of Durham in order to assess the effectiveness of the Connected Care service to date. The evaluation concluded that services are now more accessible to the community now, take-up of services has improved.
Earls Court Health and Wellbeing Centre

The Earl’s Court Health and Wellbeing Centre offers a range of NHS services with a commitment to delivering care that goes beyond simply treating medical conditions, but also addresses physical, mental and social wellbeing. The Centre is funded by the NHS and operated by Turning Point, Greenbrook Healthcare, Terrence Higgins Trust and NHS Dentist, offering services from amongst the most respected health and social care organisations both locally and in the UK.

The centre offers: NHS GP practice and walk-in service, NHS dental practice, free sexual health and contraception clinics, a varied set of wellbeing services including wellbeing coaching and community resources including a Timebank and rooms for community use. This care is all available under one roof in a newly renovated state-of-the-art building at the heart of the Earl’s Court community in central London.

The ethos of the centre is about taking a more holistic approach to health. The Centre is committed to addressing people’s health problems rather than just treating their symptoms and about helping patients navigate the range of services available to them with the centre, and beyond.

On offer at the centre is wellbeing coaching, peer mentors and a Time bank. Wellbeing coaches are healthcare professionals who are available to support and guide people to help them make necessary changes to improve their health and wellbeing. The peer mentors are volunteers who have experience of living with long term health conditions and other lifestyle issues and can mentors others to make real changes in their lives. The Time bank (called Earls Court Community Connect) is a new way of linking local people together to share their skills to help each other with everyday activities. There are also a range of healthy living activities and employment workshops taking place at the health and wellbeing centre every week, including a weekly job club, healthy walk, coffee morning and exercise classes.

The Health and Wellbeing Centre also builds on the Connected Care methodology by employing local people to be Community Researchers to undertake research within the local community and provide feedback in order to ensure the design of services is responsive to local need. This approach means that the community are at the heart of the service from the very start. Local people can work alongside professionals at the centre to make the service a success and to improve the wellbeing of everyone in the community. Changes implemented from past research include changing opening times to ensure there are two late evening GP surgeries.
Rotherfield St Martin

Rotherfield St Martin is a Church-in-Community project which aims to provide on-going social support, care and well being for senior citizens in the community of Rotherfield St Martin in East Sussex and the surrounding areas. It is a sort of ‘retirement village’, in which pensioners in the village receive the help and care they need to remain in their own homes, and maintain their independence, for as long as possible. It is all based on the tradition of self-help.

The idea for the project came to its founder, Jo Evans, in 2001 through her concern for the elderly in the village and particularly for the circumstances of a Mr Harry Martin who had lived and worked in the village all of his life. From this seed came the formation of a committee in June 2004 and the Rotherfield St Martin Project was launched in September 2005. From small beginnings - six people at a tea-and-cakes afternoon – the Project has grown to become a strong, supportive and caring facility for senior citizens in Rotherfield.

By 2010 numbers had grown with around sixty people attending each Monday session, enjoying a range of speakers, entertainment and activities that include bingo, musicians and artists, in a relaxed and happy atmosphere. This is supported by a band of volunteers, business and local organisations, groups and individuals.

The next exciting stage of the Project, to provide more comprehensive services, required a permanent base from which to operate, and a full-time project co-ordinator. This was a giant step that required substantial on-going funding which was beyond the Project to raise. An application was made to the Big Lottery Fund - Reaching Communities, and RSM were delighted to learn that the Project had been awarded £77,151 to cover substantially three years’ salary, rent and overheads for its operation, starting in January 2008.

Rotherfield St Martin now provide a wide range of activities and services for its members including befriending, activities and events, a wide range of therapies from Aromatherapy to toe nail cutting, an exercise programme, a volunteer driver scheme and computer services such as basic courses in how to use computers.
Beacon and Old Hill Estate Falmouth

Community involvement has helped turn around the Beacon and Old Hill estate in Falmouth, Cornwall. The Beacon and Old Hill estate used to be viewed by police as an "open prison" where families warred over drugs, mothers fought each other at the school gates, pets were tortured and six-year-old boys were found drunk in the streets.

The estate, then made up of long, dense rows of grey terrace houses and drab, low-rise flats clinging to the side of a hill in Falmouth, Cornwall, was a classic dumping ground for the disadvantaged and families with problems. Largely abandoned by the statutory agencies, police and social workers marked it down as one of the county's worst trouble spots.

However, after a pioneering and award-winning initiative, the Beacon is a thriving community. The source of the success has been the determination of a handful of residents, with the support of two dedicated health visitors, and local teachers, police and housing officers.

"The estate was sinking into ghetto status," recalls Hazel Stutely, one of the health visitors. "The place was a virtual no-go area for the police. Social services cutbacks meant there was no hands-on help for people. The number of child protection referrals just kept increasing, more and more people were suffering from mental health problems, there was lots of domestic violence and lots of crime and harassment. My colleague and I thought if we did not try and reverse the spiral, we would have another Toxteth on our hands."

What followed was a meeting between Stutely, with her colleague Philip Trenoweth, and the local police, education officials, and representatives from Carrick district council. Residents were urged to confront their "enemies" over tea and biscuits at a series of meetings attended by officials from the council and the police.

Twenty individuals were identified as having the skills to engage with their peers and were invited to work in partnership with the statutory agencies. Of these five agreed to participate. They received training in forming and maintaining a constituted committee. They went on to produce a hand delivered letter, along with a one-one chat with residents of their plans for the estate. A series of increasingly well attended meetings for residents were held. The result was the birth of Penwerris Tenants' and Residents' Association - and a successful bid for £2.2m of government capital challenge funding for central heating and energy efficiency measures throughout the estate. Subsequently, the Beacon Community Regeneration Partnership was set up - a multi-agency group, led by the tenants.

The most significant aspect of the regeneration process on the estate was that, from the outset, there was no initial funding, no hierarchy, no targets, no business plans – only a shared vision of what the community wanted.

The results are now there for all to see. The low-rise blocks on Old Hill are now painted in vibrant colours, all chosen by the tenants who want to re-name it Rainbow Hill. The grim terraces are no longer grey, but have been transformed by bright cladding. Recladding and energy conservation measures have been carried out on 900 properties and 300 homes now have central heating. Increased security street lighting has dramatically reduced vandalism. There is now a neighbourhood watch scheme and regular liaison with the police.

The reforms have produced some impressive changes in the residents and their families. Since 1995, the crime rate on the estate has halved, with 87% of those in the community now saying they feel safe. The number of children on the child protection register has fallen from 23 in 1995 to four in
And the number of mothers with post-natal depression has dropped over the same period from 18 to four. Children's exam results have improved dramatically: among 10 and 11-year-old boys, numbers achieving level four in national tests at key stage two have doubled. The number of childhood accidents has also fallen 50%.

### Surrey County Council Sensory Impairment Co designed Commissioning Strategy

People with sensory loss have recently benefitted from a co-designed commissioning strategy in Surrey. The Council in 2010 took a different approach to commissioning services for people with sensory impairment and identified that they needed to co-design services with the support of service users and their carers. The focus of the work is on achieving outcomes which make a real difference to the lives of people with sensory impairment.

The strategic direction and the priorities for the council were identified using principles of co-design, where people who use services, carers and a wide range of stakeholders have been centrally involved in the development of the commissioning strategy. People involved in the commissioning process included:

- People who have a sight impairment
- People who are Deaf and use British Sign Language (BSL)
- People who are deafened or hard of hearing
- People who have dual sensory loss
- Carers
- Providers of sensory impairment and disability services
- Voluntary sector organisations and groups
- Surrey County Council
- NHS Surrey

The council conducted a needs analysis and service users and other stakeholders clearly stated their views on how services should be delivered and their most important priorities. Overall it was considered important that services were provided by specialist staff, and that there may be advantages in these services being independent of the council in a new form of organisation, based on a social enterprise model.

In 2011 the social work team changed to a Community Interest Company now called FirstPoint: Hard of Hearing, Deaf and Interpreting Services CIC, works with people who are deaf or have an acquired hearing loss. The team consists of three main strands; the social work team, the hearing loss advisory team and the interpreting service. Some of the changes so far include: starting a volunteer database, for volunteers to come and work with service users and also for service users to have the opportunity to volunteer to develop their skills; offering a course on living with hearing loss for people with an acquired hearing loss, to improve their ability to communicate with family and the wider community; and improved access to us for clients through the use of Skype and video calls.

By involving service users in the commissioning process the council have radically altered their model of social care provision for people with sensory impairments in Surrey.
Bristol’s Older People’s Partnership Board and LinkAge

Bristol Older People’s Partnership Board involves older people in equal measure at the highest levels of service planning and decision making. The Board is made up of heads of service drawn from departments across the whole local authority as well as senior decision makers in health, community safety, pensions service and the voluntary sector. More importantly 50 per cent of the places on the Board are reserved for older people and carers, drawn from representative bodies in the area, who have an equal say in all discussions and have co-authored an “Improving the Quality of Life Strategy for Older People”. The Quality of Life Strategy identified that older people wanted to have access to advice, social activities and opportunities in their community and there was a need to reduce the isolation of older people. LinkAge was one of the five big ideas to come out of the strategy.

LinkAge is a community development approach to engaging older people in their community and facilitating the development of support, activities and information to meet the needs identified by the community. The aim has always been that older people lead LinkAge in Bristol. The LinkAge staff; two community development workers, two health improvement project (HIP) workers and two part-time administrators, have always been steered by what they are told by older people.

Older people have been at the centre of the development of activities and support in the two pilot areas where the scheme was tested. They have identified gaps in their communities and worked together with the LinkAge staff, either through hands-on support or by the provision of pump-priming funding, to address the gaps.

Since being set up LinkAge has achieved many thinks. For example, Linkage believe the Key to health and wellbeing is the opportunity to socialise with other people. Many of the LinkAge supported activities provide this opportunity. LinkAge has provided support to the Golden Agers club, a social club run by African Caribbean elders in one of the most deprived areas of Bristol.

Many older people told the Linkage staff that they wanted a chance to learn new skills or refresh and renew old skills and interests. One such opportunity has been the Older People’s Arts Group set up by acta (access creativity theatre arts). This is a local community-based arts organisation committed to increasing access to the arts, and to individual and community development through participation. The group has made puppets, scenery, written scripts and performed in a variety of venues including to more than 300 schoolchildren. Their play about growing up in Bedminster, Bristol has been an important piece of intergenerational work in the city.

LinkAge has also become a real voice for older people in Bristol. The LinkAge workers have created a positive, high profile with both statutory and voluntary sector organisations. This means that they can relay the concerns and views of older people when older people want them to, or bring older people and the representatives of these organisations together to share views. In one area the presence of drunk people on a main shopping street and near the Post Office was a real concern for older people as they found it very intimidating. The LinkAge worker talked to the local police and a police community support officer (PCSO) was positioned near the Post Office on pension days.