

Getting the conversation started.

Older People, Health and Wellbeing

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All photos within this report were taken at the Well Being days run as part of this work.

Background information on LinkAge

LinkAge works with people 55+ and local communities to facilitate inspiring social activities that enrich lives, reduce isolation and loneliness and promote active participation

The LinkAge motto of ‘Involve, Inspire, Enjoy’ reflects our philosophy that people 55+ have a right to rich and fulfilling life experiences and an active place in society. It has been consistently demonstrated that strong social networks, involvement in local communities, and undertaking physical or creative activities, are a shield against the challenges of ageing.

LinkAge’s key delivery mechanism

1) Community activities for people over 55

- Taking a coordinated approach to raising the profile of existing activities
- Supporting existing activities to become sustainable
- Working with the community to generate new activities
- Intergenerational activities

2) Outreach work

- Befriending
- ACE project—peer support to encourage lonely people over 55 to engage in their local community
- Community and professional referrals

Introduction

During 2015 LinkAge worked with Healthwatch to reach out to local older people (classed as 55+) across Bristol to gain feedback on key issues that were important to them when it came to their health and wellbeing. We also promoted sources of support from a range of agencies, and ran taster sessions of activities during ‘wellbeing days’ to stimulate interest in physical activities that they could access locally.

With the consultation we wanted to find out what was working well for local older people and what else they would like to see developed in order to:

- Help address any health concerns, worries or problems that they might have
- Help them to maintain their health and wellbeing
- Help them to improve their health, wellbeing and levels of physical activity.

How we did this.

Feedback that LinkAge have gained from working with older people indicated that they don't really enjoy engaging with questionnaires or formal consultation. With this work we wanted to create something that was more creative and interesting and that would help to reach out to a wide range of local older people, getting them to share their experiences around health and wellbeing.

To do this we came up with a more interactive way of drawing people into answering the three questions that we wanted feedback on. For each of the questions we had two large Perspex tubes and as people came into the event they were handed three coloured balls and asked to put them into the yes or the no labelled tubes for each question. Around two thirds of the people that came into the event took part in this activity.





Once we got them thinking about the questions we then asked for further feedback on either 'what worked well' or 'what else they would like to see developed'. As they had engaged and made a yes or no choice for their coloured ball many of the people were also happy to make further comments. They were asked to write their comments in a speech bubble and place it on the 'LinkAge and Healthwatch' stand. We put a positive slant on the questions with the aspiration that it would generate useful, solution focused feedback around what can be done to make things better for the older people of Bristol. People were also encouraged to give more in depth and specific feedback around their experiences of local health services on the official Healthwatch forms. These were treated as confidential and were put onto a sealed box.

A few people were willing to talk on video but the level of engagement in this activity was much lower as people didn't always want to state their views on camera.



What we delivered, the level of engagement and impact

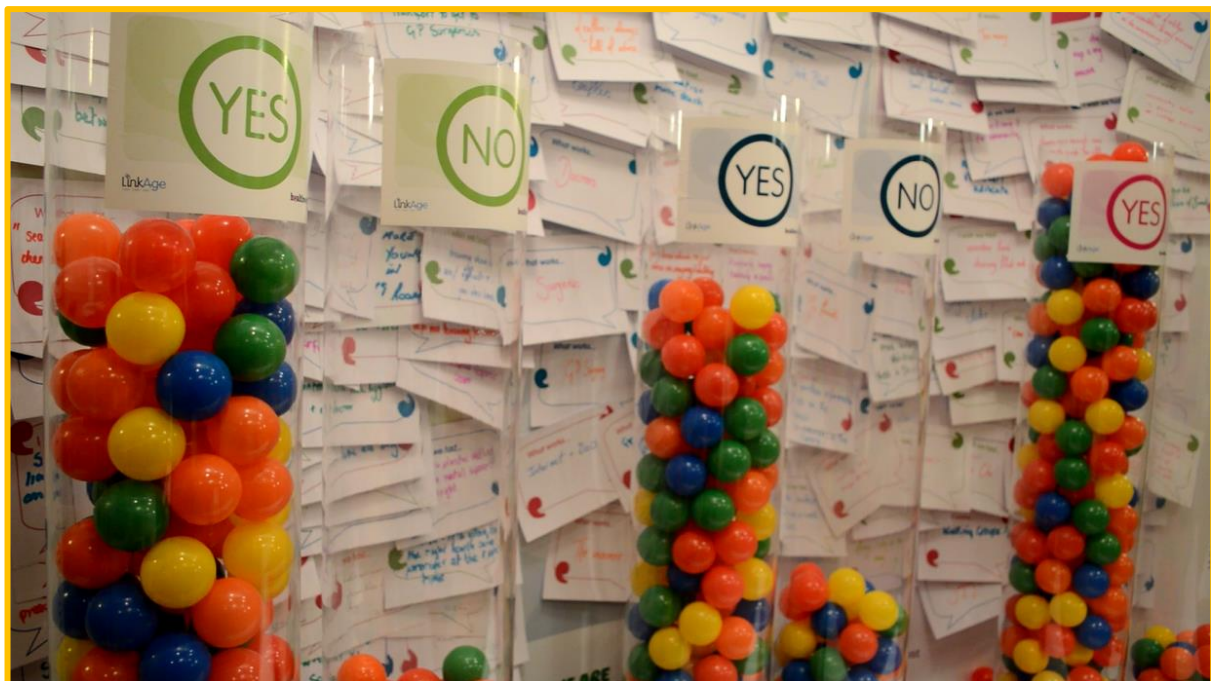
We held:

- **10 Wellbeing days**
- **4 Consultations**
- **425 older people attended**
- **Two thirds of the people that attended took part in the activity.**

The areas that the consultations were held in were areas where LinkAge has been working or areas where we have provided support for the local community. The length of time spent working in each of the areas and the level of resource to support the work varies between communities.

The areas of the city that we organised the wellbeing days and consultations in included:

- Whitehall and St George
- Lawrence Hill and Easton
- Bedminster and Southville
- Lawrence Weston
- Shirehampton
- Henbury Brentry
- Stockwood



The wellbeing events were open to the whole community with a focus on older people. We produced, printed and distributed leaflets to encourage attendance at the events. With some events we provided transport. We also placed adverts advertising the events in local publications and produced banners which were displayed in each of the communities on the run up to the event.

For each of the events we had a LinkAge member of staff present who encouraged people to take part in the Healthwatch consultation, facilitated the completion of the additional feedback and who undertook the videoing.



Key themes and findings

Summarised key issues

Can you easily access the support you need when you need it from health professionals

- There were a variety of responses and the majority were really positive.
- Suggestions included:
 - Access to professionals who they could talk to about issues before seeing a GP (and who may be able to spend more time listening/could offer suggestions/alternatives)
 - Open surgeries rather than a limited number of appointments that are only available by phoning on the day
 - Joining up of services and sharing information on patients with multiple morbidities (“one stop shop – not being pushed from pillar to post”)
 - Greater transparency and information around hospital appointments
 - Better access to physiotherapists
 - Better access to support and advice at the point of diagnosis (including opticians and dentistry). It would be good if health services could signpost to voluntary sector information and support – support patients wider wellbeing not just the medical condition.
 - Greater understanding of cultural issues and access to interpreters (not relying on family or community members)
 - More time with GPs and being able to discuss multiple issues
 - Better signposting and referrals to support services in the local community/offered in Bristol
 - Radio and TV in the rooms in Southmead Hospital
 - More mental and emotional support

Do you know where you can get advice on staying healthy

- There was a positive response to this question.
- Less people commented on this question than the previous question.
- Many people said that they use their GP as a source of support and advice.
- There were requests for greater access to information and support outside of surgeries/in community venues (possibly in libraries).



- Some people wait until an issue becomes a real problem before seeking advice or support. Greater access to information and advice in community venues would be useful (especially someone to talk to).
- Many people commented that they didn't know where to go for advice.

Have you got access to enough community activities

- The consultations took place in LinkAge hub areas. Most people were very happy with the level of activity although they had suggestions for other activities that could be developed.
 - We had requests from people who travelled to the event (from other Neighbourhood Partnership areas/wards) for LinkAge to begin to work in their community.
 - LinkAge currently has hubs in:
 - Whitehall/St George, Lawrence Hill/Ashley/Easton, Bedminster/Southville, Shirehampton/Lawrence Weston, Henbury/Brentry, Stockwood
 - LinkAge has undertaken limited work in: Hengrove/Knowle/Filwood
 - LinkAge has established: A walking group in Avonmouth, 'Friendship Club' and Wellbeing Group in Fishponds
 - LinkAge has supported local communities to produce a What's On Guide in: Henleaze/Stoke Bishop/Westbury-on-Trym, Southmead
- LinkAge receives frequent requests for us to work in neighbourhoods and communities across Bristol. We receive these requests from local older people, local community groups, councillors and potential partners. We receive these requests at Wellbeing Events, on the phone, by email, at other events we attend and once through a local MP.
- Barriers to taking part in activities:
 - Finance
 - Transport and issues with the bus service

Statistics

The majority of the respondents were happy with what they can access:

- 70% of the people said that they could easily access the support that they need when they need it from health professionals
- 70% of the people said that they knew where they could get advice on staying healthy
- 84% were happy that they had access to enough community activities to help keep them active

The depth of feeling was understandable greatest around the first question, accessing direct support around issues and concerns with health. We had some very specific feedback, case studies and vox pops that are covered in this report.

The responses varied greatly depending upon the area. The area that stood out the most was the responses from the BME Elders consortium. Only 20% of the people felt that they and their community could access the help and support that they need when they need it.

To provide further feedback on the issues around this I have included feedback that we had previously collected from the BME Elders Consortium around health, wellbeing and barriers to them getting the support that they need when they need it.

Can you easily access the support you need when you need it from health professionals? – Yes

What works well, I wish we had

Bedminster

“My doctor takes her time and listens to me.”

Henbury

“2 new hips, seen quickly once process started.”

“Mental health services really helped me they were wonderful.”

“I feel heard. Being listened to!”

“When the jigsaw joins up – joined up services.”

“Special sessions at GP surgeries eg. Diabetes.”

“Sign posting to other services.”

“GP Referral to food banks.”

“Always helpful to see the nurse at the GP.”

“Always get an appointment with GP.”

St George

“The service from my GP/Doctors is consistent”

“Since I lost my sight through a botched laser treatment, the NHS have been so supportive”

“Manor Road Practice, Fishponds are fantastic. Cannot fault them.”

“I can always get an appointment.”

“I find it easy to get appointments”

Shirehampton (2 events)

“Doctor takes time, he listens.”

“Sea Mills surgery, can’t fault them & dementia care for partner is perfect.”

“Avonmouth Medical Centre has been extremely helpful and supportive over the past 18 months. My mother is unwell and Dr Shouls has been amazing.”

“The later opening times in the Surgery.”

Easton

“Great support for my husband who has Cancer”

Lawrence Hill

“BRI rapid response team – the considerate care received”

“I was given good information at the hospital”

“Ambulance service was great when I broke my knee cap.”

“Good relationships with health care professionals”

“Having someone to talk to 1-2-1

Over 50’s Forum

“Southmead volunteers are very good helpers. They will take you if you are not sure.”

“I see a nurse for my Diabetes and I haven’t had any bad experience. She is lovely!”

“Helpful doctors and good listeners (when you get in to see them that is).”

“Helpful receptionist at Ridingleaze and General.”

“I feel very lucky to have an Eye Hospital local to me. I know of people who have travelled from Wales and Exeter



Can you easily access the support you need when you need it from health professionals? – No

What works well, I wish we had

Bedminster

“More emotional and mental support. They only offer short term things and never long term.”

“Diagnosis and physio always seems to be done through the phone. I had an experience where I was doing exercises advised a by a physio therapist and months later I found out that those exercises had caused more damaged. I wish things were done face to face.”

“You have to ring at 8am, when you finally get through after it being engaged, there are no appointments available on the day. I wish we had a better phoning system.”

“I had an injury several months ago that required ongoing treatment. I had to wait several months to get an appointment with physio, which was vital in helping me to recover properly. In the end, I paid to go private. Being a physio therapist I know how important it was for me to have physio. Physio should be made available as a priority to those who need it.”

“It’s a job to get a doctor sometimes. I wish the wait for appointments wasn’t so long.”

Central event (people from across the city)

“Open surgery rather than appointments only”

“Workers to listen more”

“Better health”

Henbury

“Transport to get to GP surgeries.”

“Better communication between agencies.”

“People listening to what we say.”

“Quicker hospital appointments.”

“See my GP sooner.”

“Less appointment cancellations.”

Shirehampton (2 events)

“Difficult to get appointment with hygiene and doctor.”

“Kept more informed with dates for scans, seem to be kept not knowing for weeks.”

“More TV and Radio facilities in our hospitals.”

“A halfway house for the elderly to help rehabilitate and relieve acute beds in hospitals.”

“More toys for young children in waiting rooms.”

“More access in hospital to activities.”



Lawrence Weston

“Difficult to get appointments.”

“Quicker access to hospital appointments. Waiting times are now in months, not a few weeks. GP’s help and advice is excellent.”

“Social workers to keep me more updated. Promised to put in a stair life and easily accessible shower within 6 months and a year later we are still waiting.”

Easton

“I have to wait for 3-4 weeks until you get an appointment”

“Charlotte Keel Health Centre – so difficult to get an appointment”

St George

“Weeks until next free appointment, would like to be sooner”

“Easier to get appointments, can’t get through”

“Same doctor, because they change all the time and so my prescriptions aren’t correct.”

Lawrence Hill

“A way of getting an appointment, phone lines are busy.”

“Someone who can sit/listen between healthcare professionals and the community.”

“Better access to your GP”

“More people to answer the phone”

“Quicker appointment times at GPs”

“Money can’t buy health – it’s going to the right health care provider at the right time”

“A one stop shop, not being pushed from pillar to post.”

“Having a plastic rather than a metal support at night”

“Better transport to appointments!”

“Having a health M.O.T at a younger age!”

“Health navigators who can signpost you to what you need.”

Over 50’s Forum

“I had a horrible experience at the new Southmead Hospital. The bathroom is not easily accessible and there are no televisions in the rooms.”

“Difficulty securing appointments. I don’t always get a phone call back.”

“My electronic prescriptions don’t always work. If there are any inaccuracies then delays are imminent. And I don’t know if anything is missing.”

“I’d like to be able to access

services at Shirehampton or Lawrence Weston like podiatry and hearing support.”

“Chiropody to cut toe nails.”



Do you know where you can get advice on staying healthy – Yes

What works well, I wish we had

Bedminster

“The internet”

“LinkAge give really good advice”

“My friends”

Central

“Adult education classes (but really expensive)”

“Internet and doctors”

“Doctors”

St George

“Common sense”

“Doctors”

“Nurse”

“Doctors”

“Doctors Surgeries”

Lawrence Hill

“Gyms are good to stay healthy”

“Staying happy, having a smile”

“Encouraging people to eat a diverse range of foods”

Easton

“Dhek Bhal”

“Leaflets – always full of advice”

“GP Surgeries”

“Well Aware”

Shirehampton

“Age UK Bristol.”



Do you know where you can get advice on staying healthy – No
What works well, I wish we had

Central

“More written information and less on the internet, for example in the library”

“More written information given to libraries and walk leaders”

“More information and advice when younger”

Lawrence Weston

“Don’t know where to get advice on staying healthy.”

Shirehampton

“I don’t know where to find out about things. I only found out about activities to keep active because LinkAge had put posters in the Tithe Barn windows.”

Easton

“Leaflets”

“People to visit local community centres and groups”

Lawrence Hill

“Information given more clearly”



Have you got access to enough community activities – Yes

What works well, I wish we had

Bedminster

- “Courses and wellbeing days like this”
- “Plenty...there are too many.” Jo
- “They are really good, they get you out.”

Central event (people from across the city)

- “LinkAge”
- “LinkAge events at libraries”
- “There is so much variety.”

Henbury

- “Walking groups.”
- “New Age Kurling.”

Shirehampton (2 events)

- ““Lots of activities going on all the time.”
- “Activities, e.g. Bush craft and activity days.”
- “Outings e.g. The Hippodrome.”
- “Chair aerobics, walking and exercise classes.”
- “Community spirit e.g. quizzes and LinkAge activities.”

Lawrence Weston

- “The walking group is my favourite.”

Easton

- “There are too many activities”

St George

- “There isn’t enough time in the week for all the activities”
- “If it wasn’t for LinkAge there wouldn’t be any activities in the community”

Lawrence Hill

- “Having a befriender”
- “Having community activities to help people socialise and get out of the house”



Have you got access to enough community activities – No

What works well, I wish we had

Bedminster

“I can’t always afford it, money can be an issue. If LinkAge could introduce a support scheme for people like me with money issues that would be really helpful.”

Central event (people from across the city)

“More willing volunteers, especially those in 50s & 60s”

“Singles clubs”

“A Canasta club”

“LinkAge in Hotwells”

Henbury

“Activities specific to certain health conditions!”

“More community volunteers and advocates.”

“More walking groups.”

“More exercise classes.”

Shirehampton (2 events)

“Activities and events advertised better – mailing lists? Through the door?”

“Walking groups that are slower paced and have shorter walks.”

“Table tennis.”

“LinkAge in the Clifton area of Bristol.”

“Ukulele band or some kind of musical session.”

“A social dance with live music.”

Easton

“Singing/Choir”

“Tai Chi”

“More proactive activities”

“Financial support for cost of activities”

“Access to transport. Buses don’t go around the houses anymore”

“Healthy Advice groups”

“Sports – football, cricket, tennis”

“Fun drama groups”

“Exercise classes at the Wellspring Centre”

“55+ Flash Dance to go on in the community”

“Transport/easier access to venues”

“I have to catch 2 buses to get anywhere and I seem to spend more time at the bus stops”

“Knowing where the centres are is the biggest problem, it’s difficult to find if you don’t know”



St George

“Another line dancing flash mob”

“Tai Chi”

Lawrence Hill

“Prioritising funding for community activities”

“More of everything in Horfield”

St George consultation – based in a sheltered scheme

“More social activities”

“Walking groups”

“More activities, Horfield area”

“Singing”

Tell us your story

More in depth case studies submitted by people at the events

Bedminster

- ✚ “Emerson Green surgery – “I had surgery on my eyes, they were very good, staff were patient, explained the procedure involved and were very helpful.” Female 80

Central event (people from across the city)

- ✚ “I am happy with my care at the Shirehampton health centre and I like going to the same doctor. I do find that is difficult to get an appointment with him and have to wait several weeks before I can get one.” Female 72
- ✚ “I would prefer to have a doctors appointment at Shirehampton Health Centre when I need it, I don’t like the fact that I have to wait three weeks for an appointment. I feel that this should improve, as my needs aren’t met adequately.” Female 74

Henbury

- ✚ “I was very ill and needed an appointment and I had to wait 4 days unless I went and sat down in the waiting room for a doctor, which is wrong.” Female 69
- ✚ “Monks Park Surgery, Doctor Langton –Experience with GP has been great, very easy to get an appointment on the same day. Able to obtain a repeat prescription 3 months in advance, without having to worry.” Male 93
- ✚ “Bristol City Council Housing –Wasting time, poor service in terms of time taken to get a shower fitted due to using private companies
- ✚ to do work. However the quality of service was good in terms of the shower fitting.” Male 67
- ✚ Social worker – “good service, good assessment, got a result from assessment and service was good quality.”
- ✚ “Housing Associate United Housing in Lower Horfield –No pavements, no white lines on road, rat run, high speed traffic.”

Shirehampton (2 events)

- ✚ “She was advertised about local walk she attended. This was useful and helped to open the door to local gardening group. We are involved with Bristol Zoo gardens community plant collection it has helped me know lots of people and we all work as a team and look after Shirehampton Station, we also work with the severn beach line entry into South Western Bloom. It has helped my health and wellbeing and we go out and I enjoy the chair aerobics and singing and a number of other activities.” Female 70
- ✚ “Ridingleaze Health Centre –GPs part time, very unsatisfactory service. Different doctors each time you go. No conformity of service.” Female 77
- ✚ “Shirehampton Health Centre Very good appointment system. GP’s very helpful. Explains everything properly to me.” Female 69
- ✚ “Very pleased with the service provision of the Health Clinic in Shirehampton. It is easy to get a doctor’s appointment and only have to call the doctor when I really need one, which is not very often. If you need a particular doctor though you do have to wait several weeks.” Male 70

- ✚ “I was in Southmead Hospital for 15 days after having a spinal operation. The care was excellent and I couldn’t complain about anything. The nurses were great and available whenever I needed them. The doctor was great at giving me feedback about my operation and performing my operation.” Male 72
- ✚ “Ridingleaze Medical Centre, Lawrence Weston –provide a good service. You do need to be on the ball to keep ringing to make an appointment though. I feel my family and I are being provided with a good service and I am happy with it. The nurses are very helpful and provide the necessary treatment and provision required for my disabled daughter.” Female 61
- ✚ “Knightstone provided care for my elderly mother and the carer was excellent. However, the time allowed to for the carer to do the jobs that needed to be done was not enough as they seemed rushed.” Female 74
- ✚ “Shirehampton Health Centre is very efficient however getting an appointment is difficult and sometimes I feel I have to explain my problem to the receptionist before I can get an appointment. I feel I shouldn’t have to do this as my problem should be confidential.” Male 70
- ✚ “Tracey is brilliant and provided a great service caring for my husband with dementia. I can’t fault them and care direct was also very good and make the necessary adjustments to ensure my husband’s movements were better.” Female 70
- ✚ “I feel that the dental service that I am receiving is very satisfying. The dentist surgery is Redland Dental practice.” Female 84
- ✚ “Shirehampton Health Centre – They provide a good service but getting appointments are difficult. Doctor Crane is very caring and takes his time and has a good bedside manner, really good.” Female 67
- ✚ “I had a heart attack and I was cared for at Southmead and they cared for me very well. I am still being monitored by the hospital. Shirehampton Health Centre has provided me with a good service and has also monitored my health needs.” Female 75
- ✚ “The local health centre in Shirehampton is very good, especially as I am new to the area. I attend ladies fellowship in the public hall which helped with my health and wellbeing and met people as it was difficult to meet people. Mothers Union was very good in St Mary’s Church and has given me a chance to meet more people.” Female 69
- ✚ “I quite often have problems with my back and so after a few days of it locking, I went to the Shirehampton Surgery. When I arrived, I asked the receptionist if they had any appointments, (I understood that they probably wouldn’t as it is always so busy). I wasn’t however prepared for how she next acted. She said that there weren’t any appointments, throwing her arms in the air and acting very annoyed. She did say that a doctor could instead call me at 2pm at home, but I explained to her that I wouldn’t be home at that time, which then frustrated her further. She then acted as if any other time would be an inconvenience for the doctor. I asked if I could instead have one of the next available appointments in the upcoming weeks. She listed two to me but I didn’t hear her fully, so I asked her to repeat the dates, the receptionist then made a comment to me and acted even ruder. I only go to the surgery if I am really desperate, and they are meant to be there to help me. I know that there are signs which say don’t act aggressive and I wouldn’t, but they shouldn’t act that way towards me. When I did get an appointment, the doctor did say how sorry she was to me and that I should have been given an emergency appointment. It really puts me off going to the GP to ask for help.”
- ✚ “I find that at the doctors’ surgery, the receptionist aren’t always fully aware of all of the alternate options. I had a water infection previously and so wanted to see a lady nurse as

soon as I could. I was told that it would take several weeks to get an appointment and I suggested to the receptionist that I could drop in a sample of water and then they could phone me with the results and suggest a prescription, without having to get an appointment. The receptionists were unsure of this, however I knew this could be done as the nurse had explained this as an option to me previously. This turned out to be the better option as I got my results and medication very quickly. It might help the doctors' surgeries to free up appointments if the patients are made aware of quicker and more efficient options."

Lawrence Weston

- ✚ "Rheumatology Department BRI – Very good services, they have changed the way in which patients are assessed in the event of a broken bone which can possibly identify osteoporosis. However, diagnosis of osteoporosis is still very poor but is clearly getting better." Male 65
- ✚ "Lawrence Weston Medical Centre - Very difficult to get a diagnosis, been told I got the flu 2 months ago but still not well. Went back to the GP surgery to get appointment, unable to get one for two weeks." Female 62

St George

- ✚ "When I was working I had to have bridge work done. After I retired it broke I was told that they couldn't fix it. The dentistry hospital said it was cosmetic and they wouldn't do it and my NHS dentist didn't have the right tools and equipment. They referred me to a private clinic but they said that it would cost £3000 and I'd have to have an implant. I complained as the work really wasn't cosmetic, I needed the work doing as I had a gap in my mouth on my lower jaw where I had four teeth missing. I couldn't eat properly without dribbling. I went back to my dentist and asked if they could just remove the other teeth so that I could have dentures instead but the dentist refused and said that they wouldn't remove teeth with healthy roots. My annual income is only £7000 a year as I am on a basic pension and having to pay for the implant has caused me a lot of worry and financial problems. There's a lady in our Tai Chi class who is 94 and is experiencing the same thing now." Female 77
- ✚ "I went to my optician as I couldn't see properly and thought that I needed new glasses. She told me that I had age related Macular Degeneration. She told me what vitamins to take and I left. I was quite shocked at the news and didn't really understand what it was or who to go to to find out more and how it would affect me. It is only after you walk out of an appointment after being told something like that that you begin to think about it and worry. I decided to go to A&E. I apologised for turning up as there wasn't anything wrong with me but asked if they knew who I could go to to find out more about Macular Degeneration. They suggested I go to the Eye Hospital, which I did and I picked up some information. A year later I had to go back to my optician for a check-up and they told me that the Macular Degeneration had got much worse and they formally referred me to the eye hospital. Since the referral I have had good care for the condition and I have regular check-ups. LinkAge told me about sessions run by the RNIB for people who are losing their site and I am so glad I went along. The RNIB have been absolutely brilliant. A gentleman now comes to visit me in my home to give me advice on living with site loss. I struggle with little things like pouring milk and liquids, seeing the microwave display, he's given me advice and some little gadgets to support me. During the last visit he asked me how I cope with flights of stairs if there isn't a hand rail and I said I don't, I'm too worried that I'll get stuck half way up. Next week he's coming along with a cane and we are going to go out and practice. I'm so glad that LinkAge recommended the RNIB

sessions and it's helping me so much. It would have been good if the optician or the hospital could have let me know about the help and support that is out there as it makes such a difference to your life and how you cope and how you feel." Female 77

St George – sheltered housing scheme

- ✚ "Broke kneecap so attend BRI. Excellent treatment, offered aftercare." Female 78
- ✚ "Lawrence Hill health clinic have also always treated me well."
- ✚ ""I used to attend classes at community link and I did for months. I thoroughly enjoyed the class however due to funding cuts the class is now unavailable to me. I am disgusted with how council cuts affect people with learning difficulties. Also we had to catch the buses each way as our local community link did not run the class as there was no room there. I would like to see more classes in more areas for people with learning disabilities." Male 66
- ✚ "I really enjoy living at Glebe Villa, they are friendly people that look after me and care for me. I go out most days and enjoy myself, dancing, going to the gym, watching films. I love my home." Female 56



Feedback from a previous and specific consultation with the BME Elders Consortium

Transcript of video responses to questions re Health Care experiences of BME Elders when visiting GP (for Paul Williams, Practice Manager Fishponds)

Representation from: The Golden Agers Group (African Caribbean); Dhek Bhal (South Asian); Asian Group (Sikh); The Malcolm X Elders (African Caribbean); Bristol & Avon Chinese Womens Group; The Evergreens Group (African Caribbean)

Members of above groups range from 60 to 98 years old. Combined membership of the above groups is around 400 elders.

Issues: 1) Support

- To be listened to by GP
- Social prescribing rather than just medical prescribing
- Culture/language are barriers to accessing support
- If people rely on family for transport/interpreting – sometimes not comfortable discussing health in front of family members
- Care of elderly shouldn't be left to outside agencies
- Transport – may be less available from local authority in future. Funding cuts
- Bristol City Council are losing £38k from budget. They are asking for contributions from groups for Dial-a-Ride. Transport is not well coordinated – it's always booked up, doesn't cross boundaries.
- Receptionists – want to know details of health problems, older people not always comfortable with this. Dignity important.
- GPs – not enough time per appointment. 10 minutes only!
- Waiting time for appointments – could be 5 days up to 3 weeks
- Ring-back service: mixed experience, some had good service, some waited in and received no call back
- Locums spend more time listening than the regular GP
- Treatment of new patients (by reception staff): need to be welcomed properly, shown how systems work
- Systems (phone) set up for appointments
- Cultural sensitivity, language barriers
- Age equality, 60+ are more vulnerable
- Appointments: waiting times
- GPs need to understand that **prevention** is cheaper than cure. Day centre rather than drugs.
- Want to discuss more than one issue per appointment (often interlinked)

Issues 2) Mental Health

- Prevention is key – based around family/carers
- What help is available – give information to different communities
- Understanding of Mental Health issues in different communities
- Shouldn't get to last stages before treatment – Prevention
- Counselling before medication
- Family need support too
- Some GPs attitude on dementia is that it is an inevitable consequence of aging
- Early treatment could reduce sectioning
- Not much community care – limited time, 15 minute sessions are too short. Community care is not working well
- Awareness of services available: for example Red Cross visitors when people come home from hospital
- Isolation/loneliness
- Carers don't have the time to listen
- People don't talk to/know neighbours
- Loneliness in hospital – some people don't have visitors
- Tracker devices for dementia patients could offer peace of mind for patient/ carer
- Mental health and links with criminal justice system
- Need interventions that are accessible to BME communities
- How different communities perceive mental health
- Mental health – issues are often all interlinked
- Community groups make people less alone

Issues 3) Physical Health

- Need information for carers (There was insufficient time at the end of the session to cover Physical Health)

BME Consortium Group Meeting

**18 Nov 2015 at Barton Hill Settlement
Meeting Notes – (17th meeting)**

Attendees included members from:

Dhek Bhal, Golden Agers, Malcolm X Elders, Evergreens, LinkAge, BOPF

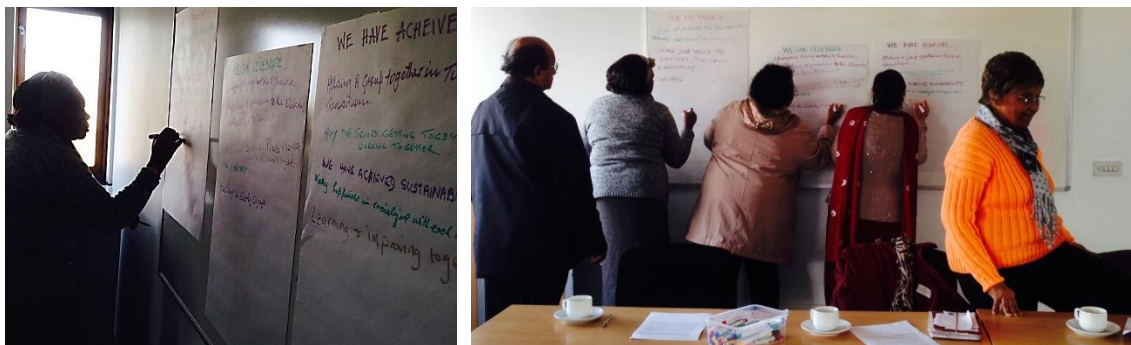
The meeting reflected on previous work undertaken by the Consortium and to discuss as a group how they want to forward in 2016. The LinkAge representatives wanted guidance on what the BME Elders Consortium Group thought about the Consortium, what they wanted to achieve and what they wanted in terms of support from LinkAge.

1. What does the Consortium do? – reflection

The group were asked to think about what the Consortium does. Their answers were:

- Supports groups
- Brings the community together
- Provides a forum to share experience and information
- Educates
- Helps promote the groups involved
- Provides opportunities for joint funding

2. Purpose /what we bring/what we want to achieve as a group/what's worked well?



The group identified more aspects of the Consortium under the following headings:

We are proud of.....:

- Giving a voice to the over 55s
- Keeping older people out of isolation
- Using our skills to support the group financially
- Giving friendship and confidence to our elders
- Working together

We can celebrate.....:

- Providing information to the Elders to enable them to connect
- The Living Legacies photo project brought all groups together
- Continuing a group in a time of transition
- Our diversity
- Keeping the Elderly engaged

We have achieved.....:

- Holding a group together in a time of transition
- Many different groups getting together and working together
- We have achieved sustainability
- Much happiness in socializing together
- Learning and improving together

3. What has worked well?

The group then worked in small teams to discuss what has worked well for them as individual groups and/or as part of the Consortium. Consensus was:

- They received help/advice and direct support from LinkAge on funding streams and help with bids
- They had direct support in terms of LinkAge attending functions/events/taking photos/helping to publicise/profile raising
- Information sharing
- The food festival in St Pauls was a great success
- The Living Legacies project was a great success
- Activities they run are enriched by being part of the Consortium

Following this discussion Zia described his vision of a Local Elders Diversity Day which he'd like to be held at City Academy. He's like a festival to celebrate all BME cultures (food, clothing etc etc) and time it with a 12 hr badminton marathon. This could gain publicity.

4. A short film about the work of LinkAge was shown to the group you can watch it here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jeC4_cjGsic
5. Update from Raj

Raj gave a brief update on LinkAge's work. There are 4 main areas where everyone can engage:

- Advisory Groups: Please feel free to join your local Advisory group – this way you can input in to the direction of the organisation
- Activities: Join in activities or suggest new ones
- Befriending: Can you spare an hour or know someone who could? Do you know someone who needs befriending

- ACE: This is where someone is befriended to find out what they are interested in, and then accompany them to an activity where they will gain confidence.

Raj also talked about a new cooking class he wants to set up, specifically around cooking for diabetics. He is looking for around 10 people to join him for a class so could everyone ask around. He is looking engage men, as men can being left widowed and unable to cook has been raised as an issue.

6. What would you like to see more of?

- More activities i.e. New Age Kurling once a month at Evergreens, not every week, and activities not just within the group setting but could be around the wider community as well
- Occasionally could the Consortium have a meeting outside of BHS and go to each other's settings so we can see what others do?
- More activities in the group setting i.e. after dance exercise at Malcolm X lots of people leave although the Elders group is booked for longer. They'd like more activities to keep people there
- Bring in taster sessions to group settings once in a while
- Intergeneration activities – inspired by what was in the LinkAge Film. Make more of the work that LinkAge is doing in that field and run intergenerational activities

7. What could be done differently?

- At the meetings everyone gets 10mins to present/share info/hand out leaflets
- Visit other groups more – please supply information to each other about your activities
- The consortium should have some fun!
- Have meetings at other settings

8. What support would you like in the future?

- Continue the consortium
- Create opportunities for the groups to get to know each other socially outside of the Consortium – could the consortium be held in each of the groups locations – or could members visit each other's groups – to explore further
- Funding support – the group agreed it would like to find more support to access funding in the shape of a volunteer or paid fundraiser.
- More volunteers to help in group settings – Hannah can help identify and write job roles for volunteers so you have a clear picture of what you want which can be advertised widely through various networks across the city. There is a lot of help out there matching volunteers to settings through Volunteer Bristol (www.volunteerbristol.org.uk)
- Befriending service – take advantage of what LinkAge has to offer. A lot of the groups can identify potential befrienders and people who need befriending (i.e. someone stops coming to a club but no one knows why? Are they now housebound?).
- More taster activities at group settings
- Joint activities and events
- Support and advocacy

- Keep sharing information
- Intergenerational project - could take consortium groups in to a new direction
- Multicultural cook book – there was talk of creating one previously but nothing happened
- Transport: or the lack of affordable transport, is a real issue. How are the Elderly supposed to get to the group settings? BCT are costly and seem to only want to drive one way. Malcolm X have an issue with Dial -a-Ride. They feel they pay a lot for a bad service (a lady with visual impairment was told she'd have to make her own way home)
- The Elders Community Festival: Zia would like to work with Hannah on this. Could get the halls for free. Need to look at timings with St Pauls and also the Celebrating age event (link it?)

9. Dates for the diary.

- 2nd December 2015 Evergreens Christmas Service at All Hallows Church.
- 4th Feb 2016 BOPF meeting will be at Barton Hill Settlement 10.30am to 12.30pm. Please bring members of your groups.
- 27th Feb 2016 Malcolm X is having a Caribbean evening
- June/July 2016 is Golden agers 25th Anniversary

10. AOBS

Zia is going to Bosnia as part of a EU scheme to look at reconciliation following turmoil/war. He would be happy to talk about the project when he returns in mid-December. If you know of any groups who need speakers please get in touch.

Results from the consultations

Feedback from the events

Area	Date	Number of people who attended	Number of people who answered the three questions: Q1: Can you access the support you need when you need it Q2: Can you access the advice you need to stay healthy Q3: Can you access support to get fitter?					
			Q1 YES	Q1 NO	Q2 YES	Q2 NO	Q3 YES	Q3 NO
Stockwood Wellbeing day	13/05/15	70	Took place prior to the production of the consultation materials					
St George (Whitebeam Court) – Wellbeing day	03/06/15	36	25	3	18	10	20	8
Lawrence Hill & Easton – Wellbeing day	24/06/15	26	11	5	12	5	12	2
Shirehampton – Wellbeing day	01/07/15	42	20	6	21	5	21	5
Lawrence Weston – Wellbeing day	03/07/15	23	6	4	7	3	10	0
Bedminster & Southville – Wellbeing day	08/07/15	30	12	5	13	4	15	2
Henbury & Brentry – Wellbeing day	10/07/15	34	13	8	14	8	16	5
Whitehall & St George – Wellbeing day	16/07/15	23	22	0	18	5	23	0
Over 50's Forum Lawrence Weston - consultation	03/07/15	12	10	2	7	5	12	0
Central – Celebration and Wellbeing day	30/09/15	58	11	4	14	1	13	2
BME Elders Consortium – Easton – Wellbeing day	23/09/15	40	6	22	14	12	19	7
Shirehampton – consultation	08/12/15	8	4	2	4	2	5	1
BME Elders Consortium	18/11/2016	7						
BME Elders Consultation with a GP (this wasn't part of this work but we thought that it was important to include this).	01/05/13	16						
Total number of older people:		425	140	61	142	60	166	32

Additional information on LinkAge

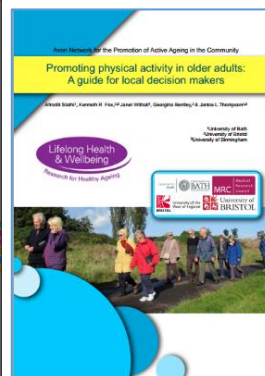
Coverage of LinkAge 2015-2016

- **January 2015** – Supported and spoke at the **SWFOA, SWSN, SW AAA** Collaborative Conference with **Lord Filkin**. Launched by LinkAge Happy Notes.
- **February 2015** – Supported **Public Service Transformation Service** with filming of LinkAge participants for a case study for them to use on their national website
- **May 2015** – ITV coverage of Say No to Loneliness launch
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zu4nsEtKyF8>
- **September 2015** – LinkAge support the launch of the Assisted Living Facility Launch at the Robotics centre – featured on Points West <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sSgd18x6Hol>
- **October 2015** – LinkAge were nominated this month, for the Outstanding Contribution to Sport and Physical Activity Award at Wesport's COSE Awards Ceremony
- **November 2015, Festival of the Future City 'health day'**. You can see a video of the section that LinkAge took part in focusing on reducing isolation and mental wellbeing
[http://www.linkagebristol.org.uk/article/linkage-and-the-festival-of-the-future-city.aspx?ct=t\(LinkAge_eNewsletter_November_2015\)](http://www.linkagebristol.org.uk/article/linkage-and-the-festival-of-the-future-city.aspx?ct=t(LinkAge_eNewsletter_November_2015))
- **November 2015** – LinkAge were guests at an **international symposium in Hamburg** that looked at the *Potentials of Old Age (organised by the Korber Foundation)*.
<http://www.linkagebristol.org.uk/article/linkage-in-europe---potentials-of-old-age.aspx>
- **December 2015** - One of our Advisory Group members was on **Aljazeera TV** discussing the impact of Loneliness with an international panel
<http://stream.aljazeera.com/story/201512011502-0025103>
- **December 2015** - LinkAge's work as an Earth Champion will be featured as one of 8 local Bristol projects and will be shown at the climate talks in Paris
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ABISE9VOWTw&feature=youtu.be>
- **March 2016** – LinkAge will be one of the key speakers in the national 'Generations Working Together Conference' [http://generationsworkingtogether.org/downloads/567932a03aabf-GWT%20Agenda%20nd%20MARCH%20%202016%20\(Final\).pdf](http://generationsworkingtogether.org/downloads/567932a03aabf-GWT%20Agenda%20nd%20MARCH%20%202016%20(Final).pdf)

Coverage of LinkAge 2014

- **Feb 2014 Medical Research Council** – (Project ACE focus)
<http://www.mrc.ac.uk/research/initiatives/lifelong-health-wellbeing/people-projects/>
- **March 2014 - AVON NET** (Bath Uni, Bristol Uni, UWE)- Promoting Physical Activity in Older Adults (project ACE focus)–<http://ageactionalliance.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/AVONet-report-2014-March.pdf>
- **April 2014 - CentreForum** – Ageing Alone report (LinkAge is one of the case studies)-
<http://www.centreforum.org/index.php/mainpublications/612-ageing-alone> *House of Lords Launch*
- **May 2014** – **The Guardian** brief mention and link to our website
<http://www.theguardian.com/social-care-network/2014/may/12/answer-combating-loneliness-lies-community>
- **June 2014** – **Age Action Alliance Photography competition** – Won one of the awards - focus on positive images of ageing.

- **June 2014** – **South West Age Action Alliance** – Second meeting
<http://ageactionalliance.org/theme/south-west-age-action-alliance-network/>
- **October 2014** – mentioned in the **Care and Support Statutory Guidance Issued under the Care Act 2014**
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/366104/43380_239027_77_Care_Act_Book.pdf
- **October 2014** - **Medical Research Council** – case study on ACE and mentioned LinkAge.
<http://www.mrc.ac.uk/documents/pdf/llhw-ace-case-study/>
- **November 2014** – **Spoke at the Public Service Transformation Conference – Elders as Assets**
- **November 2014** – Spoke at the Inaugural learning network Meeting – **Campaign to End Loneliness**
- **November 2014** - mentioned in **'Steps to Solving inactivity'** by Public Health England and presented to government week commencing 10th Nov. <http://www.ukactive.com/policy-insight/steps-to-solving-inactivity-report>
- **November 2014** – helped to launch the South West Senior Network Meeting and South West Forum of Ageing Conference. Malcolm X Singers, LinkAge Line dancers – talk by local LinkAge Volunteer and Advisory Group member
- **December 2014** – Supported AgeUK Nationally with filming



Evaluation of LinkAge

- Formal evaluation by UWE (conclusion – people more socially connected, less isolated, increased well being (ONS Happiness Index), more physically active. <http://www.linkagebristol.org.uk/evaluation-of-linkage.aspx>
- Centre for Social Justice – <http://www.linkagebristol.org.uk/uploads/documents/centre%20for%20social%20justice%20report%20-%20linkage%20oct%202013.pdf>
- Befriending evaluation - <http://www.linkagebristol.org.uk/uploads/files/LinkAge%20Befriending%20Evaluation%20PDF.pdf>

During 2015 LinkAge was evaluated by a Student from the University of Bristol in accordance with the requirements of the degree of ‘Master of Science’ by advanced study in Nutrition, Physical Activity and Public Health in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law. The final dissertation is in the process of being published, please see key exerts from the paper below. More details of this paper can be found on the LinkAge website.

PA=Physical activity

“LinkAge activities are social at their core and it is that dimension that means they are uniquely capable of helping improve the lives of older in Bristol. The activities organised by LinkAge are ideally suited to address NICE guidelines that state tailored exercise programmes are key to ensuring the mental wellbeing of older adults (NICE, 2015). This research supports the idea that community activities in this format also ensure the physical health of older adults. LinkAge not only provide specific PA Programmes but make them available in a social format that encourages participation from both inside and outside of the organisation. The social nature of all the groups means that members feel comfortable trying new activities and also that potential new members may be more likely to attend because the impetus in on being social rather than competence of the actual activity.”

“The researcher found that many members took part in multiple LinkAge activities because the members found they could rely on the quality of the organisation and the friendly nature of other groups. This also resulted in there being a smaller than expected solely social group. Many members commented on how they had chosen to go to a group because they were interested in the activity such as a film club or walking football, but then continued to attend because of the socialising and frequent occurrence of making long lasting friendships. There are older adult activities offered throughout Bristol, but not all of them offer the same social nature. A great advantage of having so many activities under the same organisation is that members come to trust the brand and therefore choose to try other activities. This is also likely to mean that someone who joins a social club in LinkAge feels more capable of joining a PA group, partly because of the brand but also because they may have created friends in the social group that attend the PA group.”