

Report

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Evaluation of Age No Barrier Project Rushmoor Healthy Living

November 2014



Age No Barrier Testimonials 2014

"I really love coming to crochet. It gets me out the house and teaches me something new."

"I absolutely love it. I can't wait for the next session."

"I am really happy and proud when RHL gave me a gold award for my involvement in community work. I will continue to support the community in my spare time."

"I feel so much better after this."

"Coming down here is a good way to meet people, I'm here most days on my own, and it is nice to have something happening"

"Meeting with new people and sharing experiences is vital to me."



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The borough of Rushmoor in North East Hampshire contains areas experiencing significant levels of multiple deprivation which starkly contrast with neighbouring affluent areas. It also has a high Nepalese population (circa 10%); of which many are older adults. Set-up in 2002, RHL works across Rushmoor and in surrounding areas in Surrey and Berkshire delivering health and well-being improvement projects. We target identified disadvantaged areas and groups where health and social inequalities are greatest and deprivation is clearly evident.
- 1.2 Age No Barrier was developed to empower vulnerable older people (primarily British and Nepali) to deal more effectively with future life-changing events by helping them make physical, mental and social changes which will help them to cope better and recover more quickly.. It focused on encouraging the creation of peer support groups, friendships which can help provide future support. The project aimed to do this by running the project along similar lines to the young persons' 'Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme' where participants would be supported to set and achieve goals under each of the four strands; Volunteering, learning a new skill, Achieving a physical challenge and undertaking a personal challenge. Bronze, silver and gold tiers were awarded upon progression where the participants' achievements could be shared and celebrated.
- 1.3 Age No Barrier is an 18 month project financed by The Big Lottery Fund. It commenced in February 2013 and will complete on 1st November 2014 after a three month extension.
- 1.4 The purpose of this report is to detail the findings of the evaluation and to demonstrate the impact that the project had in the local community.
- 1.5 Should you require any further information, please contact:

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2. Background

General Issues Targeted

- 2.1 As established by The Big Lottery there is a need to equip vulnerable Older People to cope more effectively with life-changing events which can otherwise seriously impact on physical & mental health, social isolation & quality of life.
- 2.2 The detrimental effect that loneliness & isolation can have on older people's physical and mental health and wellbeing is now widely recognised. Research suggests it is as great a threat to an individual's health as smoking & obesity. It is estimated that one in ten older people experience chronic loneliness and can spend 70-90% of their time in their own home; this inevitably increases as they get older and frailer. The problems of isolation & loneliness can be even greater for people from minority ethnic groups, especially as they may find it more difficult to access information (quote from Ageing well in Hampshire; various sources including government strategies)
- 2.3 We have an ageing population; by 2016 the number of older people in Hampshire is projected to rise to 20% of the population, with the greatest rise in the number of over 85s.

Local Issues addressed

- 2.4 As stated in the older persons Plan for Rushmoor "it is clear that there are already many good quality services available to support older people, but not all older people are aware of them"
- 2.5 Rushmoor contains pockets of significant deprivation which is starkly contrasted with neighbouring affluent areas. For example four areas fall within the worst 20% nationally on the income deprivation affecting older people domain of the index of Multiple Deprivation 2010 (IMD) and nine within the worst 20% on the education, skills and training domain.
- 2.6 Rushmoor experiences significant health inequalities. It has two areas in the worst 10% and three in the worst 20% on the Health Deprivation and Disability domain of the IMD, the greatest modelled adult obesity prevalence in Hampshire. Life expectancy for men living in the least deprived areas is more than eight years higher than for those in the most deprived areas.

- 2.7 Both RHL and Rushmoor Voluntary Services have found that local older people attending activities will often say “it is the first time for a long while that I’ve looked forward to a Monday” or “it is the first time that I’ve been out on a Sunday for years!”
- 2.8 Rushmoor has a high Nepali population of approximately 10%. It is believed a very high proportion of these are older adults. Needs identified by the NHS’s Nepali Health Needs Assessment include key health problems being Type 2 Diabetes, Cardiovascular disease and Hypertension, depression being common in older ladies and a large proportion of the Nepali community unable to speak English.
- 2.9 Coronary Heart disease, Stroke and Cancer are responsible for 55% of deaths in Hampshire and lack of exercise is a key risk factor.

Consultation

- 2.10 Extensive consultation with older people was recently carried out by Hampshire County Council during compilation of their older people strategies. Ageing well in Hampshire - Older People’s Well-Being Strategy 2011 – 2014 included;
- 1- Information about what activities are available nearby.
 - 2- Finding out about physical activities I can do.
 - 3- Help to use computers.
 - 4- Taking part in activities with young people.
 - 5- Opportunities to volunteer.
- 2.11 The Older People’s Plan for Rushmoor 2011-14 was written following consultation with older people (included questionnaires, focus groups etc) and circa 20 Partner Organisations and identifies nineteen resident-led local priorities for action spread across the nationally recognised Better Government for older people’s Seven Dimensions of Independence which included;
- 1- Increase awareness of community activities
 - 2- Develop and promote befriending schemes
 - 3- Offer more planned social activities
 - 4- Provide support for resident-led social activities
 - 6- Promote healthy lifestyles

Age No Barrier

- 2.12 The Age No Barrier project was designed as direct response to the challenges associated with older people in the Rushmoor area.
- 2.13 The project has three key aims:

1. Nepalese and other vulnerable older adults will have increased self-esteem and self confidence which will better equip them to cope with future life-changing events and which will result in more positive mental attitudes and improved mental resilience which will enable them to recover more quickly from future negative situations.
2. Nepalese and other vulnerable older adults will feel more 'recognised' (in terms of value to community and appreciation of skills, knowledge and experience) and experience a greater sense of community involvement and participation; leading to an increased sense of achievement, motivation, contentment and pride resulting in longer-term better mental & physical health thus enabling them to better cope with future life-changing events.
3. Nepalese and other vulnerable older adults will experience reduced social isolation and will have created peer support groups/ friendships which can provide support during future life-changing events.

Evaluation Aims and Methodology

2.14 The aims of the evaluation were to:

1. Evaluate the performance of the project against its targets.
2. Evaluation the project outcomes and impact for the target community.
3. Identify key lessons learnt from the operation and delivery of the project to support design and delivery of future interventions.
4. Provide an evidence base and option to support the future sustainability of the project.

2.15 Figure 2.1 illustrates the evaluation methodology and demonstrates how the approach aligns with an assessment of the aims of Age No Barrier.

Figure 2.1: Evaluation Methodology

2.16 **Phase A** involved a review of all project information to enable a review of performance against the specific project targets to plan future actions.

2.17 **Phase B** involved engaging with service users so their support plans could be started, one on one and group interviews were conducted and specific case studies carried out.

2.18 **Phase C** involved a final questionnaire and the analysis of the results gained from the other processes, which provided additional insights to the production of this report.

Process

2.19 An initial questionnaire was carried out on all participants to collect personal details, interests, health background, and gauge their starting point to measure their progress across the course of the project. This information was then stored on a database where it could be monitored against the projects targets.

2.20 Each participant had a support plan where their progress, engagements and feedback could be tracked.

2.21 Where possible class registers were kept to keep track of the number of participants attending specific events or classes.

- 2.22 Upon completion of Age No Barrier participants filled out a final Questionnaire which mirrored their initial one enabling their progress to be tracked and evaluated.
- 2.23 Because sometimes people answer questions in terms of how they think they should respond rather than how they actually feel, also known as a social desirability bias, observations were also used get reliable data.

Procedure

- 2.24 One to one interviews were used to collect a large proportion of the data that needed to be recorded. This was done in an informal way and helped to get participants to express their personal opinions as to who the project had impact them and what areas could be improved upon.
- 2.25 Group interviews when done where one to one interviews were not possible. With a large proportion of Nepali participants of whom little spoke English, it was decided that speaking to a group through an interpreter would be better suited. In some sheltered accommodation group interviews were also carried out in order to cause as little disruption to the residents as possible, as many suffered from mental health problems.
- 2.26 Class visits were carried out to gather information from observing participation levels and observing the impact of the sessions. This particularly relevant in the singing groups where many of the participant suffered from mental health problems, but throughout the projects engagements staff and tutors were encouraged to feedback any observation to aid the evaluation of the project.
- 2.27 All monitoring data was recorded and participants progress was tracked in order the appropriate awards were achieved.

3. Management Information

- 3.1 The Age No Barrier project was set a number of quantitative outputs targets which were agreed with The Big Lottery at specific time periods of the project. Analysis of the performance of the project against the targets is set out below.

Figure 3.1: Project Targets

Project Outcome Indicator	Target	Timescale	Actual Achieved	Final Variance
The number of people who have taken part in and achieved one of the project strands	600	By the end of the project	677	113%
The number of people who have demonstrated their increased self esteem and self-confidence (noted either via self evaluation forms or noted by a partner of staff)	600	By the end of the project	631	105%
The number of people who have successfully achieved at least one of the projects strands	600	By the end of the project	677	113%
The number of people recognised (by award) for achieving at least the bronze medal.	500	By the end of the project	594	118%
The number of people who note on their self-evaluation forms that they have made new acquaintances	500	By the end of the project	639	128%
The number of people who note on their self evaluation forms that they have joined a group or participated in a group activity	500	By the end of the project	675	135%

3.2 We would comment as follows:

- In 18 months, the project achieved or overachieved all of its output targets.
- There were only two activities undertaken that were not classified as group activities. One of these was fishing and the other was Midas training for one of our volunteers.
- Confidence level were monitored by answers the service users gave on their support plans, observations made by coordinators and project staff and group interviews.

Summary of Performance

3.3 For the 18 months that the Age No Barrier project has been in progress, there has been a positive performance against all the output targets set of the project. The ability of the project to achieve these outputs is evidence of the demand for this type of project as well as evidence of the positive impact it is having in the Rushmoor area.

4. Participant Feedback

Who Age No Barrier engaged with

- 4.1 **Older People:** 677 older people undertook activities under Age No Barrier.
- 4.2 **Nepali Older People:** 77% of all activities undertaken were by Nepali older people. The success the project had with the Nepali community was due to the uniqueness it presented. Word of mouth is extremely important in the Nepali community which actually made engaging with larger numbers easier.

- 4.3 **Hard to reach:** Older adults who are extremely isolated and often cannot be reached with conventional methods, such as advertising and word of mouth. They were engaged through the following means:

Sheltered Housing/care homes: Crochet classes and singing groups were used to engage with older people with physical and mental health conditions and provide them with a platform to socialise and build relationships with each other.

GP Referrals: For many older adults the only time they contact with another person is when they see their GP. From liaising with GP surgeries Age No Barrier received referrals for older people looking to get involved in social and fitness activities.

TalkPLUS: A team of Therapists, Counselors and Psychologists who help with many common problems including depression, anxiety, panic, phobias and low self-esteem. Through referrals to Age No Barrier they helped get hard to reach older people into physical and social activities.

Neighbourhood watch:

- 4.4 **Carers:** Those looking after older people with long term health conditions saw Age No Barrier as an opportunity for their patient to improve the physical and mental well being. One example was when a Community Nurse contacted Age No Barrier about a 65 year old man with dementia she was caring for. He went on to go fishing, an activity he hadn't been able to do for a long time, and the benefits of this to the man and his family were vast.
- 4.5 **Health Problems:** Age No Barrier engaged with older people with health problems through the following avenues:

Southlea Surgery:**Talk Plus:**

Hollies: An integrated health and social care team with focusing specifically on adults with severe and enduring mental health problems. The Hollies provides a service to clients with registered GPs predominantly in the Aldershot area but also several Farnham GP surgeries.

GPs: Older people with health problems were also referred directly from GPs.

- 4.6 **Housing Association:** These provided Age No Barrier access to older people on low income or in need of extra support. Social groups provided those in sheltered accommodation a chance to build peer support groups.

Thames Valley: Own, manage or take care of loans for over 14,500 homes in London, Berkshire, Surrey, Hampshire, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Wiltshire and Sussex.

First Wessex: A Hampshire-based housing association providing homes and services within local communities throughout Hampshire and parts of Surrey. Managing and maintaining around 20,500 affordable homes for rent or purchase; developing over 300 new homes each year.

Anchor Housing Association: Anchor is England's largest not-for-profit provider of housing and care for the over-55s. They provide services to over 35,000 older people.

Participant Profile

- 4.7 Figure 4:1 shows the distribution of nationality and gender of those that participated in the project. The largest proportion of those that undertook the project was Nepali at 77%, with 67% of all participants being women.

Figure 4.1: Nationality of Participants

	Number of People	Percentage
Total Activities Undertaken	677	100%
English	154	23%
Nepali	523	77%
Male	221	33%
Female	456	67%

- 4.8 Figure 4:2 show the age distribution of all the people that undertook the project. The largest proportion is people aged 60 to 69 years old. One of the reasons there were a large percentage of peoples ages that were undetermined was because many of the Nepali participants didn't know their date of birth. Often the Date of births for ex-Gurkha families were ones they had been given by the army.

Figure 4.2: Age Distribution of all project participants

Age Range	Number of People	Percentage
50-59	104	15.3%
60-69	204	30.1%
70-79	121	17.9%
80-89	37	5.5%
90+	12	1.8%
Undetermined	199	29.4%
Total	677	100%

- 4.9 Figure 4:3 shows what participants considered to be barriers in their own lives that prevent them taking part in more social activities in the community.

Figure 4.3: Word cloud of barriers to community involvement.



How Age No Barrier engaged

Boat Trip

4.10 In September 2013 a boat trip along the Basingstoke Canal was organised for a group of 22 older people that had expressed an interest in sightseeing and day trips. They were a group of older adults had often found it difficult to get out and take part in such activities so the trip was ideal. The group was a mixture of Nepali and British and it was also a great opportunity to for socialising, sharing knowledge and meeting new people. The trip involved a journey down the canal to Odiham Castle (also known as St Johns' Castle). The British participants were able to explain the historical significance of the castle to the Nepali participants who were



very interested in the historical site. The trip presented participants with the opportunity to venture out of their normal surroundings and experience a greater sense of community with people they wouldn't

normally interact with. Overall the trip was a very enjoyable experience.

Following on from trip, each member of the group was contacted by telephone in order to feedback on the benefits of the trip and to engage with them further on how the Age No Barrier project could benefit them. The boat trip itself served as a spring board onto other events and activities as many of the participants who went onto attend the local social groups, yoga classes and others activities Age No Barrier provided.

International Older Persons Day-Young at heart

4.11 On 1st October 2013 an event was put on at The Prince's hall in Aldershot to celebrate international older person's day and showcase all older people's service in the local area. This was a great opportunity to engage with people and introduce them and invited them to get involved with the Age No Barrier project.

From the day details were gathered from people who expressed an interest so it could be gauged what the needs were and what activities could be run in the future. The project could also maintain contact with people as it developed in order monitor their progress.

Crochet

4.12 There were 5 crochet groups providing a total of 35 participants across the groups. Four were held in the communal sitting rooms of 'supported living' accommodation within the borough and a further session was held in a local day care centre. The crochet tutor and participants agreed on an individual and a group goal to which they would all work towards.

Comments from those who participated included: 'I really love coming to crochet. It gets me out the house and teaches me something new' 'I absolutely love it. I can't wait for the next session.' 'I feel so much better after this.'

Other residents from the homes would come down and sit with the groups when the crochet session is in progress, whilst they didn't crochet they sat with the group doing their own thing, one commented 'It is so important to have these activities; it gives me a reason to come down and have a natter.'

Feedback from this group was positive and it was evident it was a real benefit to the community. "Coming down here is a good way to meet people, I'm here most days on my own, and it is nice to have something happening".

The participants themselves have decided to continue to meet each week over the summer. They decided that they would help each other with their crocheting and continue to fund a monthly session with the tutor.



London Eye

4.13 On 29th December 2013 a group of 65 Nepali and 3 British travelled by train to London to go on the London Eye. The majority of those that travel were in their sixties and the trip was facilitated by 8 volunteers. For the Nepali participants this was the first time they had travelled by train and the first time they had visited London, so the overall experience gave them confidence and empowered them to use trains in the future, reducing the potential risk of isolation in future.



The British volunteers, who attended one of the social groups, saw the trip as an opportunity to experience a greater sense of community involvement and integrate with the Nepali community. By going as volunteers they were able to raise their self esteem levels by taking on a responsibility towards others. The trip did pose a challenge where 68 people had to travel from Farnborough to Central London but the team of volunteers did extremely well. The experience has led them to set up their own social groups to benefit their community, which is a true sign of the positive impact the trip has had.

Following on from this trip many of the participants went on to take part in other activities such as the Farnborough football club information day, yoga classes, awards ceremonies and the Church of the Good Shepherd social.

Socials

- 4.14 The social groups were set up in response to the growing demand of the project. The aim of the socials was create an environment where participants could take part in light exercise and creative activities, but on top of that give a platform for them to start forging their own relationships with one another while giving us access to and the ability to monitor their progress.



One participant of the Mayfield social highlighted the problem of isolation in the area when she was asked what could be change about the project she replied, "...to hold the group on other days, I look forward all week to Fridays," One of the results of that groups achieved was that the participants, because they have started to build up their relationship with one another, were now more aware of what goes on in the community and are subsequently more confident to venture out and do it. All the participants of the Mayfield social had increased their weekly social activities by the end of the project.

There were two main social group that were set up, the Mayfield Centre and North Town Community Base, they were ran by a fitness instructor but participants were encouraged to come up with their own ideas as to where they would like the group to go. The Mayfield group organised a picnic and a walk at Frimley Lodge which was an opportunity to build on the friendships they had started with each other. Many of the Mayfield group now attend the Church of the Good social in which the majority of



the participants are Nepali. At the beginning of the project they would have perhaps been wary of joining the group, as not many of the Nepali group are English speaking, but as their confidence increased and their relationships with the instructors grew, they have felt empowered to join in and help as volunteers. One lady commented that "I wanted to do this a thank you,"

Those that have attended the North Town social group reported they got a lot out of the sessions. The activities offered at these groups included computer skills and crafts such as crochet. Other activities included low impact exercise and indoor bowls, all aiding improved physical and mental health.

Farnborough Football Club information day

4.15 The event that took place on the 26th February 2014 was organised to showcase the project and engage with new participants in the heart of the community. On the day there was yoga, zumba gold, fitness circuits, sing-a-longs and aerobics demonstrations where those attending were invited to participate and try out new things. Over one hundred people attended on the day and there was a large turnout of the Nepali community.

Those who expressed an interest in being a part of the project were signed up and directed as to how they could get involved. The event enabled Age No Barrier to increase its database of interested people and subsequently maintain contact with people to keep them informed of future engagements and obtain feedback on how the project has impacted each individual.

The demonstrations served an opportunity for older people who would perhaps not try an activity to try it out in a safe environment. It was clearly evident that this increased the confidence levels of those taking part because by the end of the event many were singing and dancing, visibly having a great time.

From this event the local Farnborough social group at the Mayfield centre and The Church of the Good Shepherd group were able to increase numbers and have a positive impact on the community.

Church of the Good Shepherd

4.16 The Church of the Good Shepherd group was set up after the Farnborough football club information day where we were able to engage with a large proportion of Nepali men and women. Though language provided a barrier

at the beginning the group developed a format that was really successful. The session involved light exercise circuits, teas and coffees, and finishing with some singing and dancing. Health checks were also carried out at these sessions so it was a really beneficial group that addressed the health needs of the Nepali community. As the group progressed more English participants also started attending which helped the local community bound together. One English participant commented that her Nepali neighbour also attended the session and they now help one another with the gardening, whereas before their relationship would only be simple greeting over the fence.

The best example of how participating in the group increased the confidence levels was when they performed a song at the Age No Barrier



awards ceremony in front of a large audience. The majority of those performing the song were Nepali who could speak little to no English, so singing a song in English was a big step. Many of the Nepali women lack confidence when it comes to speaking English. Singing was used as a tool within the group as a way of engaging the Nepali to speak more English and learn other words. Due to the success of the group the sessions

have been able to continue beyond the timescale of the project with the participants willing to make a small contribution towards hall hire.

Computer Classes

4.17 Computer skills proved popular among participants. It has been noted in the news media that internet training would cut down loneliness in older adults, [1] so the response of Age No Barrier was run sessions alongside the other social groups. The sessions were fairly informal and were flexible to the needs of those attending. They covered many areas from social media, internet shopping, online security to general browsing.

As a result of the classes participants were not only able to learn new skills but were able to connect with one another in a new way, which meant that they could stay in contact with each other throughout the week and were not just reliant upon the social group. Since the session participants have been able to keep in contact with family and friends and send the project feedback via facebook and email.

[1] <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-27577143>

Walks

- 4.18 Walking was a much requested interest by Age No Barrier participants and it has great health benefits as it is an outdoors activity and has a strong social aspect to it. One of the Age No Barrier walks was to Virginia Water where a group of 62 older people were taken by coach to walk around the lake. Two separate walking routes were planned, a short and a long one, to cater for the differing health and fitness levels of those participating. The walk was facilitated by three Age No Barrier staff and a team of volunteers who were trained as walk leaders. The walk leaders have since gone on to join a walking group, where they regularly lead walks in the local area.



Yoga

- 4.19 Over the course of the project Age No Barrier engaged with over one hundred people with yoga classes. This proved very popular with the Nepali community and 2 classes were held each week. One was at Farnborough Rugby Club and the other at Aldershot Library.

The great success of the classes, (apart from the health benefits such as increased strength, flexibility, posture, breathing and stress relief) was that when the classes were started with an English instructor but by the end some of the Nepali participants had taken over the running of the classes. This shows how Age No Barrier empowered people to do things that they perhaps would have never tried before. Through the learning of this new skill, participants felt sufficiently confident to pass on that knowledge onto one another which in turn brought sustainability to the classes.

English Classes

- 4.20 Age No Barrier engaged with 54 people with English classes. These were held at the Mayfield Centre on Mondays and The Prospect Community Centre on Friday and lasted for 2 hours. Most of the learners were retired Ghurkhas and their spouses. All participants were either diabetic or caring for a family member who had diabetes. Before joining the classes the

learners were confused about how to manage diabetes and unconfident in speaking and understanding English.

The classes set out to develop functional English language skills, to increase knowledge on how to manage diabetes and other health issues and to create awareness among Nepalese elderly people about the neighbourhood.

At the end of these classes most of the learners were able to communicate simply in English through reading writing and speaking simple English. Many now travelled independently as they could understand road signs and posters. The learners who were employed found that the English classes had made it easier for them to understand their work and as a result they needed less supervision. The program also contributed a lot to the health and wellbeing of participants. They were now better equipped to manage their diabetes and other health needs. They could go independently to the GP and sort out benefit related issues. The tutor concluded that most of the learners were more confident than when they had joined the classes and that he could see "that the classes have contributed a lot to settle former Ghurkha and their spouses in the Farnborough area".

Older Person's Forum

- 4.21 An Age No Barrier representative gave presentations to the forum to raise awareness and discuss issues that older adult face and how the Age No Barrier project was involved in this. This forged relationship with other bodies that helped reach a larger proportion of the local community, including hard reaching people.

Singing Groups

- 4.22 Frogmore Day Centre offers social activities to around 25 elderly adults each day. 25 participants took part each week Friday with another 12 taking part on a Thursday. Participants sing along with the group leader who provides a large screen showing the words and a system that provides the music of popular songs primarily from the 50s and 60s. The average age of the participants is 85 and the oldest to attend the session was 100 years old. Many have mental health problems such as dementia



and Alzheimer's but it was clear from observing the group that through the duration of the sessions they would grow in confidence and their participation level would go up. By the end of the session many would be clapping, some would even get up and dance.

Awards Ceremonies

- 4.23 One of the key components of the Age No Barrier project was rewarding the participants and recognising the achievement of those that had undertaken personal and physical challenges, those that have learnt new skills and those that have been instrumental as volunteers. The first awards ceremony was held on 1 October 2013 alongside the International Older People Day celebration. Certificates were given out to those that had participated in the yoga and crochet classes. The crochet class also got the chance to display the work they had done.

On the 23rd July 2014 another awards ceremony was held at Farnborough Football club. This was an event hosted entirely by RHL so it was able to comprehensive celebration of all achievements that had taken place under Age No Barrier. Specific groups were able to showcase their



achievements with demonstrations of their classes. Local councillors got involved with the ceremony and it was a thoroughly enjoyable event for the community. Medals and certificates were given out one by one to warm applause, as well as some special recognition awards to those that were integral to the running of the activities. Overall the occasion was a positive event that encouraged community involvement and recognised those that have been making a difference. It was clearly notable that those attending left encouraged and in high spirits.

Personal Case Studies

Taffy

- 4.24 Taffy was a 65 year old gentleman who had been recently diagnosed with dementia. ANB were contacted by his community nurse who had become aware that his health problems were isolating him and impacting on his ability to take part in the hobbies and pastimes he used to enjoy. One activity Taffy had particularly enjoyed was deep sea fishing, but due to his poor health this particularly physical type of fishing was no longer possible. However, Taffy had always wanted to learn how to coarse fish

but this required knowledge of a new technique and equipment that Taffy did not possess. Therefore an ANB team member met with Taffy at his home to see how he could be supported to achieve this goal.

After a number of phone calls ANB found the Angling Trust who was able to put us in contact with a fishing coach who could assist Taffy to gain the skills needed to achieve his goal. A day of fishing was arranged with the coach at a lake conveniently close to Taffy's home in early June. Taffy spent the day fishing with the coach. He showed Taffy how set up rod and line and cast off. When ANB visited by mid afternoon Taffy was sat in the hazy sunshine, rod in hand, fishing.

Feedback from Taffy suggests that he got an awful lot out of the day. He said, "the day has given me a new lease of life, from being a prisoner in my home I now have the ability to confidently go out and do fresh water fishing and meet new people with the same interest which will in time lead to me meeting a larger group".



The coach gave Taffy a fishing rod and a box of fishing tackle that had been donated to the Anglers Trust. This has enabled Taffy to continue fishing on his own. He has made plans to fishing with his son and grandson in the near future. He also provided Taffy with a small booklet with clear and simple instructions to prompt Taffy to remember what he had learnt.

Lillian and David

4.25 Lillian and David came along to our Age No Barrier information day at Farnborough Football club after seeing an advert in the local newspaper. On the day, after getting to know some of the Age No Barrier team, Lillian joined in the yoga demonstration, which was something she had never done before. They commented that one of the main reasons that they were drawn to the Age No Barrier project was due to its focus on working towards achievements in wide ranging activities.

Before joining Age No Barrier David had a heart bypass and Lillian had been really ill in December with pneumonia. Lillian described herself as shy, nervous and said she 'hated fuss' so the programme would be a chance to meet new people and develop new relationships. They both were finding that they were at a time in their lives where they had little to

do, both are in their late seventies and having concerns over their health due to lack of activity. Upon discussing with them their hobbies and interests they stated that they were interested in joining a walking group but were unsure who to contact and how to get involved with one.



Since the information day, they both decided to go along to the social group at The Mayfield Community Centre. Upon arrival they were nervous but found the welcome 'amazing' and soon the nerves and shyness was forgotten. The sessions at Mayfield usually involve light exercise circuits,

Computer help, and teas and coffees. They felt no pressure but were encouraged to join in with the activities, and expressed that they 'immediately made new friends'.

On one occasion the social group decided that instead of meeting at the Mayfield centre they would go to Frimley Green and have a picnic and walk. David loved the idea that he could suggest ideas and new activities and said he 'felt supported throughout'.

Lillian and David attended the group from February to July and over that period they never missed a session. This demonstrates the positive affect that the programme was having upon them and that they clearly enjoyed it. After going to five sessions Lillian and David both said that their confidence is now 'sky high' and 'more of a 10 than a six' which at the beginning of the programme they said their confidence levels were low, Lillian giving herself 2 out of ten. The exercise that they were taking part in would have also been integral in this transformation because improved self-esteem is a key psychological benefit of regular physical activity. Regular exercise has been proven to, reduce stress, ward off anxiety and feelings of depression, boost self-esteem and improve sleep patterns. This all adds up to a healthier lifestyle.

When asked if any areas in his life that had been affected by the programme David said, 'Yes, confidence and health. Now that I'm taking part in exercise I feel much better, physically and mentally.' With such notable improvements observed by those participating shows how effective the project can be and how people's lives can be impacted.

From joining the Mayfield social they then started going to the Church of The Good Shepherd social as volunteers, which was a great progression from where we first met them. Their eagerness to support with this group was an important objective that was set out to accomplish with this project. By supporting this social Lillian and David we engaging with a large number of the Nepali community as close to thirty Nepali men and women attended each week. Lillian and David said that they had enjoyed the Mayfield social so much that they wanted to come 'as a sort of thank you'. In fact Lillian and David joined in all the activities at The Church of the Good Shepherd, helped with teas and coffees, and said they would both come along again.

Upon completing the programme when asked whether he had made new friends over the last month his response was, 'Yes lots, especially Nepali'. This points towards a success within the project because upon first meeting Lillian and David they were isolated and shy, so to reach the point where they reaching out into their own community is testament to how the project has influenced them. One of the other factors that had caused isolation in their lives was their current neighbours were all Nepali, while they would often say hello over the fence the obvious language issue had built up a barrier stopping the furthering of their relationship. Upon attending the Church of the Good Shepherd they found that their neighbour also attended and they currently help one another with the gardening. This is a real success in the project.

Lillian commented, 'I'm now outgoing, love meeting Nepali people as my perception has now changed. Started off with the project just to get out of the home but now, I think what else do I want to do!' Lillian clearly recognised that the project had changed her perspective towards isolation and steps she could personally take to reduce it. The fact that her awareness towards the Nepali community had also changed also cements the positive impact of the project in the community.

On 23rd July 2014 RHL held the Age No Barrier awards ceremony, which both Lillian and David attended where they were awarded their silver medals. This was a great celebration of the project and a chance to reward those that have taken part. David was clearly moved by the presentation, as he said he wasn't expecting anything, but this goes to show how the recognition people received through the awards process can only benefit them as



individuals. The both achieved Silver awards.

One issue the project was keen to avoid upon completion was participants would not revert to how they were living before the project but would continue living in the confidence generated by the project and the social groups. When it was decided that the Mayfield social should end, the acid test would be what people would do next. It turned out upon contacting Lillian and David they had since joined a walking group. If you contrast that with how they started the project when they were doing no activities whatsoever each week and by the end they were doing something 3 to 4 times a week. This shows how Age No Barrier empowers people to do more in their local community.

Laura

- 4.26 Laura is 81 years old and lives in Aldershot. She joined one of the crochet groups after one of the Age No Barrier coordinators spoke with her. When she started the group she set herself a target to make one granny square and one circle. As she had never crocheted before this gave her something to work towards. As it turned out, after a few months she had made two granny squares and two circles. Working closely under the tutor's guidance Laura was able to achieve a bronze award which was awarded to her on 1st October 2013. The tutor commented, "I feel she is really benefiting from the class." The project ensured that participants could set themselves targets to work towards giving them a sense of achievement at the end. The award ceremony enabled participants to be recognised in front of their peers.

Sylvia

- 4.27 Sylvia was referred to Age No Barrier from Hollies Community Mental Health Team Older Adults which offers assessment, diagnosis, treatment and support for people over 65 with functional mental health illnesses; deterioration in cognition and/or dementia. She was looking to access a local group for depression sufferers, to make new friends which would lead to her taking part in social activities such as going out for coffee and shopping.

Upon first meeting her, she gave her confidence levels a rating of four out of ten, so she clearly was in need of something to boost her self esteem. She stated that she had not recently made any new friends, and wasn't taking part in any weekly activities. So after this meeting it was clear that she was isolated and vulnerable in her current situation. Sylvia herself identified her need to find and make new friends.

Sylvia first started going to the social group at the Church of The Good Shepherd and she took part in the light exercise. The attendees at this

group are the majority Nepali, and speak little to no English, but Sylvia found that her Nepali neighbour also attended the group. Although language is still a barrier that needs to be overcome between British and Nepali people, this demonstrates how the project helps bring communities together by reinforcing and building upon existing relationships.

On the back of attending this group, Sylvia was then empowered to attend one of our other groups in the local area whereas previously she hadn't been attending anything. At this group she learnt how to use her tablet to send email, use the internet, interact with family and friends on social media, as well as internet shopping. This help has enabled her to have a line of communication with family and others from the social group that she would have otherwise not had.

Another positive outcome was that from attending the group at The Church of The Good Shepherd she is also attending the church's coffee morning. This enabled her to interact with other people and forge relationship and discuss her interests in gardening and exchange tips. Her motive now is to invite other to maybe start up a gardening group.

Sylvia still struggles with depression and though at times when she's been feeling down she hasn't been attending the groups, she is now much more aware of the options around her and feel far less isolated. The last time Age No Barrier spoke with her she said she was now looking to attend a group at the 6th form college which demonstrates her keenness to make new friendships and be a part of different groups. The fact that she is now so proactive in finding new friends and social group shows how her confidence has been increased over the duration of the project.

Phurlhamu

- 4.28 A wife of Ex-Gurkha, Phurlhamu lives and works in Aldershot. Since joining Age No Barrier she has taken part in; Yoga, London Eye trip, MacMillan Cancer training, Computer skills, Zumba and walking groups.

With word of mouth being so important in reaching into the Nepali community, Phurlhamu has played a massive part in engaging with the Nepali older people. She commented, "I have committed to support Nepalese community in health and wellbeing issues through RHL. " As a Macmillan Cancer Ambassador she helps connect with her community on important health issues, so the impact is reaching far beyond her social circle. Age No Barrier has rewarded her contribution in the Nepalese community by giving her a special recognition award at the ceremony in July 2014. Not only has she achieved goals that improve her own health and wellbeing but her has looked to do the same for others. She said, "RHL has done so much support to the Nepali community and I am proud to be a part of such Nobel work."

The project not only provided support for those at risk but also mobilized key figures in the community to bring greater sustainability and greater reach "Age No Barrier gave me the chance to come up front line and support my community"

Derek

- 4.29 Derek is 69 years old and suffers from memory problems which means he needs to be spoken to clearly and he often requires instructions to be repeated. When asked about how his condition affects him, he stated that he felt "isolated because of his memory problems, which also affects my confidence levels." He stated that one of the barriers to him not participating in physical and social activities, apart from his health concerns, was that he was not aware of what facilities were available to him. This was a common answer among many older people in the area.

Derek first started going to the Mayfield social group in February 2014 and at the beginning he gave himself a confidence rating of three out of ten. He also stated that he had not made any friends in last month. At the Mayfield social Derek took part in light exercise circuits taken by a fitness instructor and he regularly played table tennis with one of the other participants. He found this thoroughly enjoyable as he used to play when he was younger and it also gave him the opportunity to bond with the other male participant. The social aspect of the group also helped Derek feel a part of the local community and he often spent time with the other participants sitting down with a cup of tea.

Derek commented, "I'm absolutely enjoying it, I feel good at the end of it. It's very worthwhile." He recognised how it is useful to keep fit in old age and it was clear the sessions were benefitting him greatly. By the end of the programme his confidence had increased and he gave himself five out of ten, which he put down that this was due to the socialising. The social group enabled him to make new friends and he said he now feels confident enough to go out cycling on his own. The exercise sessions have now motivated him to be more active and get out and about.

Ashari

- 4.30 59 year old Ashari undertook the Age No Barrier activities; Yoga, English, The Church of the Good Shepherd social, the London Eye visit and the boat trip. She is also a member of a Diabetes group and a cancer support group through the programme. The Age No Barrier programme gave her opportunities to socialise with other people in the local community and she is now confident to talk to others about different issues. She is very proud to be linked with RHL activities. She herself is diabetic and a sufferer of high blood pressure and she commented, "due to the yoga, exercise and the education I received I am now more knowledgeable on

the diabetes and blood pressure issues. I am aware about the importance of diet and exercise on her health.” She is now promoting the Macmillan work in The Nepali community as a trained Cancer Ambassador. She said “I am proud of my work and the support the project gave me the confidence to do it”.

Janet

4.31 Janet is 65 years old who has lived in the Rushmoor area all her life. She started attending the North Town Social and was pleased to have something she could get involved in that was in her local area. She stated, “I am a single lady living on her own! A social group was just what I needed. As apart from talking with my neighbours do not see anyone.”

Her confidence level that she gave herself at the start of the programme was eight out of ten. This shows that her concern of a lack of community involvement could be impacted by a greater awareness of the things that go on in the community. Although she wouldn't be described as lacking confidence by the end of the project she rated her confidence as nine out of ten. This demonstrates a positive change across the duration of the project.

At the social groups Janet was shown basic computer skills and how to use a digital camera. She was shown how to use social media, send emails, upload photographs and general internet browsing. She commented, “Since taking part I have found the assistance with using my digital camera helpful and I now have been able to make the right decision on which to buy between and laptop and a tablet.” As a result of attending the social Janet now has the confidence to purchase and request tutorials for her new laptop. She can also keep up to date with local events and activities via our facebook page, which will aid to prevent the risk of isolation.

The social side of the group was really beneficial and she has found meeting new people very helpful, as apart from the group this would be difficult. The group has enabled her to make new friends and increase her social circle. Since this group has finished Janet has been able to contact RHL and leave feedback via facebook as well as stay in contact with others from the group.

Dambar

4.32 Dambar is a 55 years old ex Gurkha and since his retirement from British army he has been working as security officer. He lives in Farnborough and came to UK in 2002 as an illegal migrants (before Gurkhas got their settlement right). He contacted Age No Barrier because he was interested in becoming a walk leader volunteer. At the time he was not active like he is today but was interested in becoming more active in the community. He immediately got



involved in; Yoga classes, volunteered at the international older peoples day, volunteered at the Age No Barrier Information Day, undertook Macmillan Cancer ambassador training, went on the London Eye Trip as a volunteer, and trained as a walk leader. Through these activities he was able to achieve personal challenges, learn new skills, and become more involved with the community.

He commented, "Age No Barrier has made me so active and given me the interest to work in society." The confidence that Age No Barrier has given him has led him to become general secretary of local diabetes self help group and secretary of a Cancer support group. He is now a speaker of Diabetes UK which demonstrates how the new skills he has learnt has empowered him to become an influential figure in his community. The opportunity and recognition the project has given Dambar with now impact into the wider community. "I am really happy and proud when RHL gave me a gold award for my involvement in community work. I will continue to support Nepalese community in my spare time."

Molly

4.33 Molly is 84 years old and suffers from Arthritis, Glaucoma, Kidney problems, walks with a stick. She said one of the barriers for her not taking up activities was there was a lack of opportunity. "I would like to go out more; they don't seem to do much in the home."

She moved into St John's Court in February following the death of her husband and started attending one of the Age No Barrier social groups in April 2014. When asked if she had made any new friends she stated, "No, I am shy, I have not got to know many people at St John's yet. I would like to." She explained that she finds it hard to put herself forward and feels everyone knows each other in the group and she doesn't want to

intrude. At the end of one of the sessions on she was introduced to another participant, Ivy, and they got into a discussion about living in St John's court. Ivy too said she had found it difficult to settle in at first.

By May 2014 Molly seemed more involved with the group and sat in the middle with the other residents. She was helped by another participant, Jim, to draw a landscape picture.

As the project progressed, there was a noticeable difference in how Molly interacted with the group, she said that she socialised more as a result of the singing as it helped her feel more comfortable with the other participants. "I feel more sociable but still want to get to know the people more here."

Since attending the group she has seen her confidence increase and feels more integrated with the community where she lives. One of the aspects of her life she said she would like to change was to go out more, as a result of the Age No Barrier programme she now attends the singing classes on a Thursday and comes down to the crochet group just to socialise.

Ganga

- 4.34 Ganga is a 72 year old lady from Aldershot. Before moving to England she worked in Nepal as social worker and also as a female community health volunteer, so before starting the Age No Barrier project she had a high regard of the importance of voluntary work in the community. Living in Aldershot one of the main problems she faces is with the English language, however she enjoys working as volunteer among Nepali community. Ganga is a cancer Ambassador and member of Diabetes group which, because of the Age No Barrier programme, has empowered her to get involved in different social activities which have helped her to make new friends and contacts. She said, "Coming in contact with Age No Barrier was crucial for me in socialising with the local Nepali people as well as English people. "

Seti

- 4.35 Seti came to the UK in 2011 with her husband. Since moving to the UK she was diagnosed as a Diabetic and with high blood pressure. She regularly takes part in Age No Barrier activities participating in yoga and The Church of the Good Shepherd social. She has also improved her Basic English through English classes. Over the course of the project she noted various health improvements and she commented, "The improvement in my health is as a result of the Age No Barrier project". She noted that because the sessions were run by Nepali speaking people and there was

no cost to attending it enabled her to make improvements to her wellbeing. She said, "I have benefitted a lot through these activities."

Cathy

- 4.36 Cathy read about Age No Barrier in a local newspaper and started coming to the social group at Heron Wood in September 2013. She was 62 years old at the time and suffers with a Heart disorder, chronic fatigue, Costochondritis, among other things and this had caused her to become isolated. She said, "I want to be more involved with community activities but I am in pain a lot." And when asked about her community involvement she said, "Most of the time I don't feel part of the community".

Kathy was keen to get involved with the project as a volunteer. She rated her confidence level as eight out ten so clearly had the potential of being an asset to the project, in spite of being quite lonely and isolated herself.

She attended the North Town social where she undertook art and craft activities as well as getting to know the other locals that attended the group. In November Kathy was invited to be part of the Age No Barrier Sounding board where the needs of the project and of the community could be discussed with a range of community figures. This led up to December where she went as a volunteer to the London Eye trip with group of 60 Nepali people, which demonstrated how the project helped her get involved with the wider community. With the relationships she has formed as a direct result of the project Kathy now has a platform to build upon and is no longer isolated and has greater confidence to persevere with her health problems. By the end of the project she achieved a Silver award.

Purna

- 4.37 Purna is 65 years old and a retired Gurkha. He trained in Nepal as Auxiliary health worker and came to UK in 2010 and was interested in helping in his community. Age No Barrier provided him the opportunity to take up Yoga. From going to the classes, taught by an English instructor, he able to learn the necessary skills that enabled him by the end of the project to be teaching the classes himself. The confidence this gave him led him to train to be a walk leader, Volunteer on the London Eye trip and the Age No Barrier information day as well as assisting the English classes. He commented,



“My self-confidence has raised a lot and I am proud to be a volunteer of Rushmoor Healthy Living.” It is clear that the volunteer strand of the project, particularly within the Nepali community, helped participants feel recognised and have a greater self-worth.

The project helped Purna to learn more about the British culture, of which he’ll be able to pass onto others within the community. He said, “I have developed myself in different areas such as English languages, culture and society.”

He was awarded a gold medal for his achievements under Age No Barrier, but due to not being able to attend the ceremony, he was invited to RHL’s offices to receive his certificate and medal, and a special recognition award for all his efforts in making the project successful.

Following on from the project Purna now works as Desmond (Diabetes education and self management in newly diagnosed) lay educator where he is able to impact his community in raise awareness to health issues.

Dennis

4.38 Seven years ago Dennis moved to Japonica Court in Shawfield Rd, Ash. Dennis moved there after spending some time in a psychiatric hospital whilst suffering from mental health problems following the loss of his wife and his son. In addition to the serious mental health problems that Dennis was suffering from he also had to contend with a number of physical problems. Dennis suffers from arthritis and two years after moving into Japonica Court he had to have both knee joints replaced and became reliant on the use of a mobility scooter. In previous years Dennis had been quite heavily involved in a range of martial arts, in particular Tai Chi and Chi Kung – both disciplines that he qualified as an instructor and taught. However these were activities that Dennis took part in with his late wife, so understandably it took a while for Dennis to be able to reignite the will to take part in such activities to assist with physical rehabilitation.

Dennis was first introduced to Age No Barrier in spring 2013 at a meeting at Shawfield Day Centre in Ash which is right next to Japonica Court. The meeting was an Age UK organised meeting to look at implementing a new Age UK sponsored project called Men in Sheds. Dennis was attending as a local resident with an interest in volunteering to assist with the project and to take part in it as it evolved.

By his own admission Dennis often felt lonely, isolated and under stimulated. One of Dennis's frustrations was that while a number of regular activities were run at Shawfield Day Centre these were not really the type of activities that Dennis had any interest in. After speaking about Age No Barrier was hoping to achieve Dennis was interested to hear more. Dennis was added to our contact list of interested people and in September 2013 and Dennis took part in a multi cultural challenge/excursion organised by RHL. The challenge involved British and Nepali older adults meeting, socialising and sharing knowledge and experience with each other as best they could according to language and communication skills while taking part in a boat trip. There was a really positive atmosphere with all making an effort to learn about each other backgrounds and generally enjoy the company of people they hadn't met before.

A real triumph from this challenge on a personal level for Dennis was the fact that he was able to embark and disembark from the boat unaided and managed the walk around the castle and ruins. We noted a real positivity in Dennis which really came out in subsequent meetings.

At our next meeting we learned that was Dennis he had really worked hard to improve both his physical and mental wellbeing. Having got rid of his mobility scooter Dennis had gone from tentatively walking with sticks right through to making a regular walk to his local gym on a daily basis, using the treadmill and then walking back! The walk alone is over one mile and Dennis was doing at the least the same distance again on the treadmill. Dennis does this still and is very responsible in the way he does this ensuring not to try to overdo it by going too fast and being aware of weather conditions etc. This was particularly pleasing as Dennis had set



his own personal goals and achieved them. This is evidence that his confidence had improved and he had now started to feel good about himself. His self esteem had improved dramatically and we were very impressed with how positive he was. It was no surprise to hear that Dennis had more plans for himself!

Dennis now attends our Age No Barrier social group at the North Town Community Base in Aldershot. The group is made up of people similar to Dennis, who had become lonely and isolated and frustrated with modern communication methods. The group is now very socially active. At the request of the group and to overcome communication issues we introduced a computer support programme.

The computer support provided is valued very highly by the group. The purpose is to better equip participants to remain connected with friends and family using devices they already have, or would like to have but have been afraid of! Through this programme the group have told us that they have improved their independence, confidence and feel safe from potential scams and cyber threats.

Dennis is a very active member of this group and his feedback regarding the help and enjoyment he gets is always very positive. Having already achieved both a personal and physical challenge through the boat trip challenge in September 2013, Dennis has now really embraced the challenge of learning a new skill (modern computer proficiency) and is keen to continue to enhance this skill.

Without the engagement opportunity from Age No Barrier Dennis could quite easily be left to suffer badly from the degenerative effects of being lonely and isolated. Dennis acknowledges that he needed support and someone that would not only listen to him but encourage him to push forward. Age No Barrier has done this and Dennis is a different person from when we first met him.

English Classes

4.39 The English classes provided a much needed benefit to the Nepali community, and 54 Nepali older people took part. One 60 year old lady stated that the class helped her to; go to GP and make appointments and talk to the concerned staff, go shopping independently, travel on local bus easily, understand sign and posters, and feel confident to speak to people other than the Nepali language speakers.

Another 66 year old gentleman said that the class helped him to; Read notices, letters and express his opinions in a simple manner, to visit the GP and other service providers independently, and improve his spoken language. The skills imparted through these classes provided a real impact in the lives of those who took part.

Frogmore Singing Group

4.40 The singing group at the Frogmore day centre was found really beneficial by the group. One lady, in her nineties, said "I like coming because I live on my own". Living alone in a caravan she welcomed the opportunity to meet new people and take part in something each week. One participant, 88 years old, commented, "I absolutely love it, hearing all the songs I used to sing when I was young. It made me feel young again." The sessions provided participants a chance to reminisce about their past and the singing provided many benefits. Singing has physical benefits because it is an aerobic activity that exercises major muscle groups, even when

participants are sitting down. It also has psychological benefits as it has a positive effect on reducing stress levels and singing together increase the sense of community. Many of the participants had positive things to say about the sessions. One gentleman said, "I've been coming for a few weeks now and I enjoy it, it's really fun!"

5. Key Findings

Awards gained

5.1 Figure 5.1 shows the number of people that achieved each award across the 18 months of the project. Overall 597 awards were achieved.

Figure 5.1: Awards achieved

Awards gained through Age No Barrier	Number of people
Gold	15
Silver	128
Bronze	451
Special Recognition	3
Total	597

5.2 Figure 5.2 shows what percentage of participants completed what strand of the project. The most popular strands were the physical challenge and the personal challenge. The volunteer strand was the least popular.

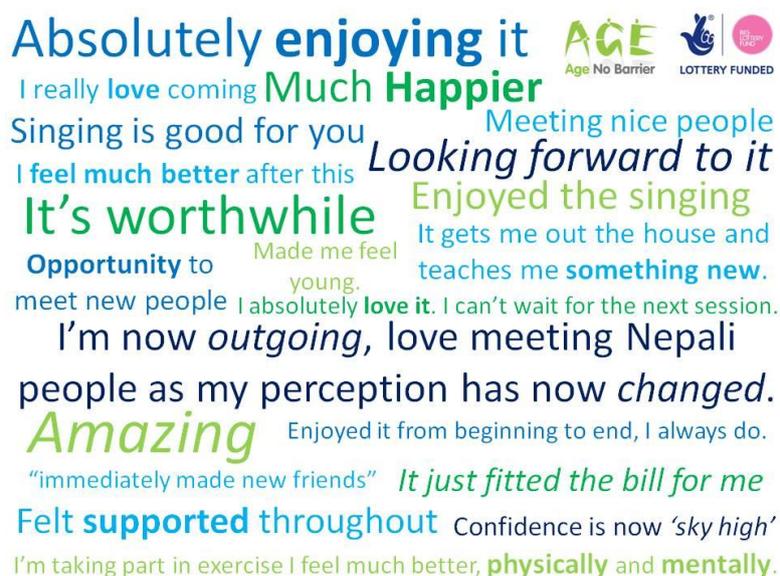
Figure 5.2: Breakdown of which strands participants undertook.

Age No Barrier Strand	Total Number of People	Percentages	Nepali	Other
Physical Challenge	215	32%	196	19
Personal Challenge	227	33.5%	178	49
Learning a new skill	139	20.5%	71	68
Volunteer	48	7%	40	8
Uncompleted	48	7%	38	10
Total	677	100%	523	154

Progression across the project

5.3 Each participant was asked to comment on the project upon its completion. Figure 5.3 shows what the participants had to say.

Figure 5.3: Word cloud of participants comments on Age No Barrier.



- 5.4 Figure 5.4 shows how confidence levels were impacted by the project. 77% of the British participants have shown signs of increased confidence levels after taking part in the Age No Barrier programme. The Nepali participants saw a greater increase in their confidence levels than the British participants and their average starting confidence level was lower than as well. From Speaking with many Nepali participants their understanding of the English language proved to be a factor in this. 98% of all the Nepali participants were recorded to have an increase in their confidence levels. 631 older people have demonstrated an increase in their confidence levels as a result of Age No Barrier. The proportion of undetermined confidence levels was due to participants either leaving the question blank when filling out the questionnaire or they were unable to be contacted after the project.

Figure 5.4: Impact Age No Barrier had on participant's confidence.

	Average Confidence rating at start	Average Confidence rating at completion	Average Difference
British Participants (154)	5/10	7/10	+2
Nepali Participants (523)	3/10	8/10	+5
Total (677)	4/10	7.5/10	+3.5

	Difference between start and finish confidence level										
	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6	+7	+8	Undetermined
British Participants (154)	1	9	34	36	18	15	8	2	0	3	28
Nepali Participants (523)	0	0	0	0	90	106	73	216	30	0	8
Total (677)	1	9	34	36	108	121	81	218	30	3	36

5.5 Figure 5.5 shows how the Age No Barrier influence participants' social circles and empowered them to make new friendships. 639 older people acknowledged that they have gone on to make new friends from participating in the Age No Barrier programme.

Figure 5.5: Impact of Age No Barrier on friendships.

	Have you made any new friends in the last month?	
	At the Start of Age No Barrier	Upon completion of Age No Barrier
Yes	18	639
No	623	3
Undetermined	36	35

5.6 Figure 5.6 shows how people's social calendar was impacted by the project. The people most at risk to social isolation saw the benefits of increased confidence and self esteem as they were empowered to take part in more weekly activities as a result of Age No Barrier. Those that were already quite active saw little change, but this is because they already had an adequate amount of social activities in their lives, with time constraints and other commitments more activities wouldn't be possible. Age No Barrier helped 590 older people to engage in more social activities.

Figure 5.6: Impact of Age No Barrier on social activities.

How often do you go out /take part in activities each week?	Age No Barrier Participants (677)		
	At the Start of Age No Barrier	Upon completion of Age No Barrier	Difference
0	392	1	-391
1-2	183	101	-82
3-4	11	199	+182
5-6	3	254	+251
7-8	4	35	+31
9-10	0	0	0
11+	1	1	0
Undetermined	83	86	+3

5.7 Thirteen participants from the Church of the Good Shepherd social group underwent a health assessments when the group started and again in seven months. Figure 5.7 shows that they all lowered their body mass index over the course of the project. Figure 5.8 shows how the thirteen participants also reduced their weight.

Figure 5.7: BMI of 13 Church of the Good shepherd participants.

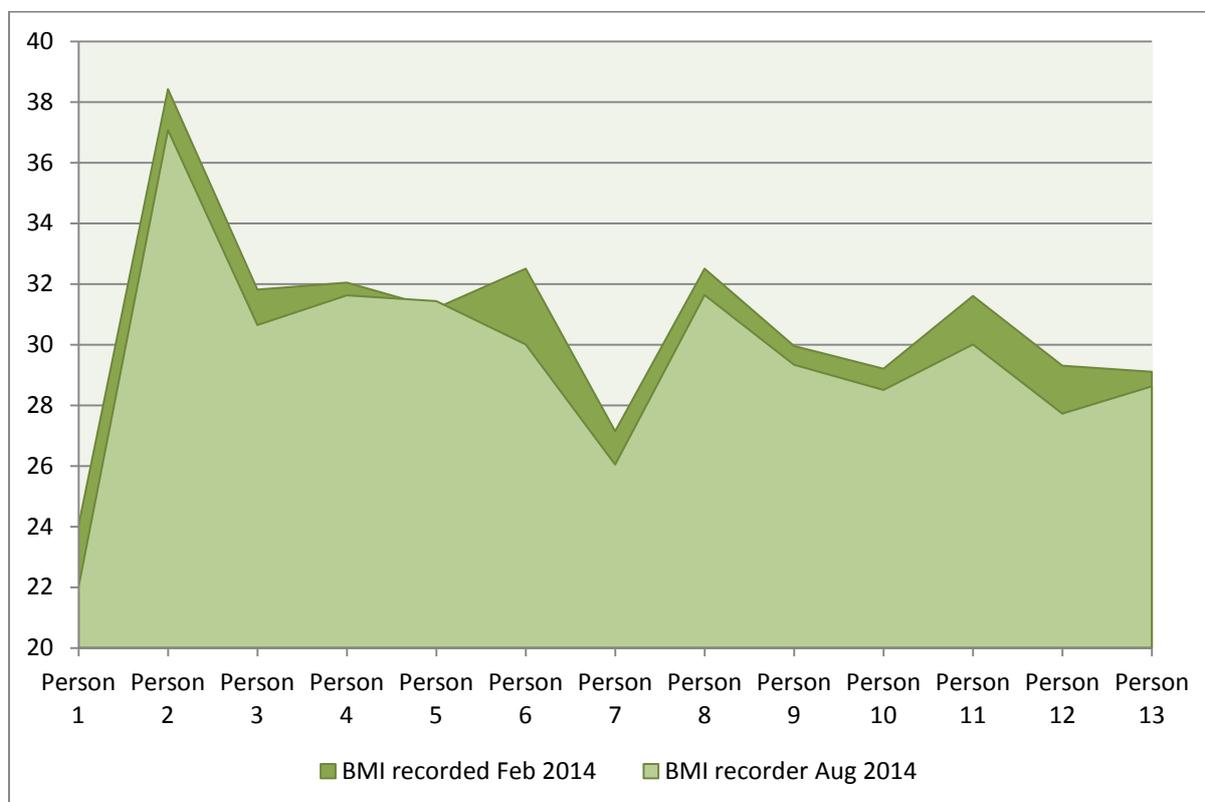
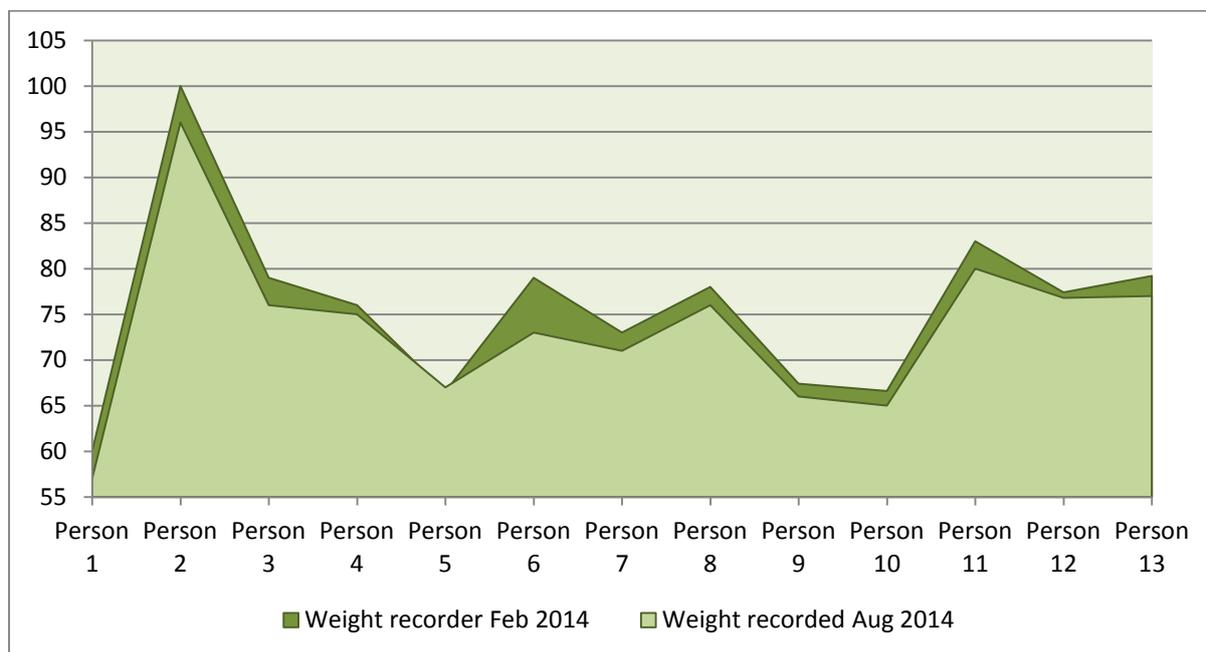


Figure 5.8: Weight change of 13 Church of the Good shepherd participants.



Intermediate Outcomes

- 5.8 Many Age No Barrier participants benefitted from the programme and feel more equipped to cope with future life changing events. For some participants the project provided them with the first few step towards the overall aim. The project gave people who were at risk, felt lonely and isolated a platform to move forward or just bring stability to their lives rather than regress into a worse condition.
- 5.9 Positive feelings broaden people's potential responses to challenging situations and build their personal resources and capabilities. Feeling more confident is not only a goal in itself but also a way of increasing people's potential for doing well. 631 people demonstrated their self confidence had increased over the course of the project, impacting their overall well-being long-term.
- 5.10 Age No Barrier has empowered participants to work towards establishing their own peer supports groups. The strong social element of many of the activities helped break preconceptions and uncertainties that they may have had and therefore making it easier for them to forge relationships in the future.
- 5.11 The volunteer strand was perhaps the most beneficial for participants looking to feel more recognised in the community. Participants tended to take up the volunteer strand having already participated in another strand

so it is realistic to predict that the continuance of the project would only bring participants to a greater sense of community involvement to those who still felt that it was lacking in their lives.

- 5.12 The singing groups would experience the benefits of the sessions, which included reduced stress levels and increased self esteem. Due to the age and mental health of the participants it's hard to gauge the long term impact but it is evident that it was having a very positive effect on the individuals.
- 5.13 Participants whose confidence levels were unaffected by the programme can be put down to them already being fairly outgoing and confident enough to deal with future life changing events. What the project succeeded in doing was facilitating an environment for them to demonstrate their skills and knowledge with others, which they would not have been able to do otherwise.

Outcomes

- 5.14 93% of all participants demonstrated increased confidence levels as a result of the project.
- 5.15 The two award ceremonies held by Age No Barrier gave a platform for participants to be recognised within their community and appreciated for their skills and efforts within the programme. 594 people achieved a bronze award or greater.
- 5.16 The three award tiers gave participants something to work towards which increased their sense of achievement.
- 5.17 The exercise classes and fitness based activities run by Age No Barrier left participants with better mental and physical health, leaving them better equipped to cope with life changing events.
- 5.18 Within the timescale of the project 87% of participants increased the amount of weekly activities they were undertaking.
- 5.19 94% of participants acknowledged that they had made new friendships as a result of taking part in the project.

Impact

- 5.20 Since the project completion some of the Age No Barrier activities have been able to continue, such as the Zumba Gold, Yoga, Church of the Good Shepherd social, walks and Clement court social, this has created peer

support groups for the participants and maintains long term health and fitness benefits.

- 5.21 The project has impacted individuals to produce healthier relationships within their families. Taffy, who suffered from dementia, after taking part in an Age No Barrier organised fishing trip noted an improved relationship with his wife, as his condition had caused a strain between them both. It was discovered that the new lease of life the fishing had brought him had changed their relationship for the better and they are now able to do more together as a result.
- 5.22 The project also helped with the integration between British and Nepali communities. The two Award Ceremonies brought both communities together and celebrated each other's successes. Since the awards ceremonies there has been an increase in British attendees to the Church of the good Shepherd social. It had previously been seen by British participants as a Nepali social but the events have changed people's perceptions and increased their confidence and willingness to join in.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

- 6.1 This section concludes the report by evaluating how Age No Barrier has delivered against its stated aims and making a number of recommendations for future delivery of activities for older people in the Rushmoor area.

Delivering the Aims of Age No Barrier

Nepalese and other vulnerable older adults will have increased self-esteem and self confidence which will better equip them to cope with future life-changing events and which will result in more positive mental attitudes and improved mental resilience which will enable them to recover more quickly from future negative situations.

- 6.2 The project has fulfilled this aim. It has met its target of increasing the confidence of 600 people by impacting 631 who noted their confidence had increased because of the project. This has enabled them to be better equipped to deal with life changing events and empowered them to forge new relationships and find new activities to participate in.

Nepalese and other vulnerable older adults will feel more 'recognised' (in terms of value to community and appreciation of skills, knowledge and experience) and experience a greater sense of community involvement and participation; leading to an increased sense of achievement, motivation, contentment and pride

resulting in longer-term better mental & physical health thus enabling them to better cope with future life-changing events.

6.3 The project has partly achieved this aim. As a result of the Age No Barrier Award Ceremonies older adults felt more recognised within their communities and have a greater sense of achievement, though not all those who achieved awards were able to attend the ceremonies. The presentations brought British and Nepali communities together and were positive community events. The volunteer strand of Age No Barrier helped participants to feel more recognised within the community where they shared knowledge and imparted new skills whether it was through teaching yoga or English, through walk leading or assisting in one of Age No Barrier excursions. If the project were to continue the number of participant taking up the volunteer strand would also increase, this would help with sustainability and would increase community involvement for those taking part.

Nepalese and other vulnerable older adults will experience reduced social isolation and will have created peer support groups/ friendships which can provide support during future life-changing events.

6.4 The project has fulfilled this aim with 639 older people acknowledging they have made new friends as a result of the project. It is too early to tell the long term impact of the new friendship people have made but the continuance of some of the activities will only help maintain this. The participants who have learnt computer skills now keep in touch with family and friends via their facebook pages which will increase their support through life's events. Nepali participants are now able to communicate with English people, go shopping on their own, use public transport, have improved their general health and increased their awareness of health conditions. All these things have reduced isolation in older adults.

Sustainability and Legacy

Church of the Good Shepherd

6.5 The social group at the Church of the Good Shepherd decided to carry on beyond the completion of the project and is now self-sufficient with participants willing to pay a contribution. This gives participants access to fitness activities as well as peer support in the heart of the community. Though the majority of the participants are Nepali, more and more British people are starting to attend the sessions. Over 50 older adults have attended the Social across the duration of Age No Barrier project.

Yoga

- 6.6 Age No Barrier engaged with 107 people, the majority Nepali, with Yoga classes demonstrating success it had. The hall the group have been using for the session has been made available free of charge so the group has been able to continue with them willing to pay a small amount of money for the session. This covers the cost of the Nepali instructor who was also an Age No Barrier volunteer. This makes the classes sustainable for the future and maintains the health benefits of the classes to the participants.

Walks

- 6.7 The walk leaders trained by RHL who attended the Virginia Water walk as volunteers have since joined a walking group which at no cost organises walks every two weeks in the local area.

Zumba Gold

- 6.8 Like the Yoga class, the Zumba Gold has been able to continue as the participants were willing to make a contribution of £1. The hall rent is charge at a subsidy rate which makes the session more sustainable.

Socials (Clements Court)

- 6.9 One of the social groups that meet at Clements Court, a shelter housing scheme for people over the age of 55, provided older people with light seated exercise along with sing a longs. Due to the success of the group, the sessions have been able to continue beyond the completion of the Age No Barrier project and this gives the residents a peer support group that will only help them in future. The nature of the activities also provides important physical and mental health benefits.

Recommendations

Award Presentations

- 6.10 In order to maintain the focus of rewarding achievements to increase community value it would be beneficial for all the participants if the awards were presented at care homes and sheltered accommodation as not all participants were able to attend the two award ceremonies Age No Barrier put on.

Increase British participation

- 6.11 With only 23% of all participants being British, it is important that more way are looked at to get British older people in Rushmoor involved. There was a difference approach between the engagement with British and

Nepali. With word of mouth being quite prominent in the Nepali community it made much easier to engage with a large number of people. It would also suggest that the British community is harder to reach and engage with than the Nepali community.

Increase male participation

6.12 With 33% of participants being male it is important to target more men with the project. Interestingly a large number of the Nepali volunteers were male in contrast to English where more often women choose the volunteer strand.

Improving evidence of participant progress

6.13 A crucial element to the success of the project is monitoring the progress of each participant. This must start from the beginning of the project; continue throughout up until the end. The more that can be evidenced of how participants are progressing the more their achievements can be recognised and the stronger any future evaluations will be.