

To: Scrutiny Committee

Date: 5 April 2016

Report of: Head of Community Services

Title of Report: Tackling Isolation Projects

Summary

Purpose of report: To update the Scrutiny Committee on Council funded projects to tackle elderly isolation.

Key decision: No

Executive lead member: Councillor Christine Simm, Board Member for Culture and Communities

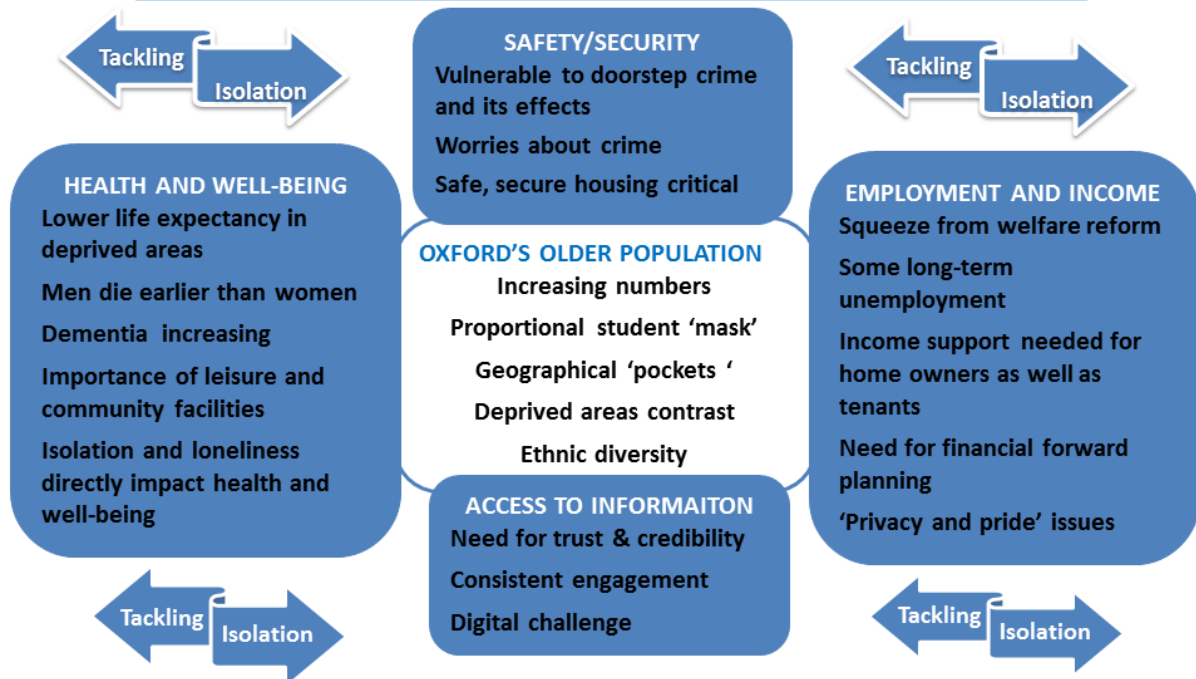
Report author: Luke Nipen, Communities Specialist Officer

Policy Framework: Strong, Active Communities

Tackling Isolation Projects

1. This briefing paper is to highlight the areas of work which have taken place to reduce Isolation in the Older Persons population of Oxford.
2. The Ageing Successfully Partnership, led by Oxford City Council, grant funded 8 projects which operate within the City to tackle isolation within the 50+ population. The basis for a number of these projects was the Older People Needs Assessment 2013, which was commissioned by Oxford City Council. Many of the funded organisations used the Older People Needs Assessment to focus their project on the key issues shown in the document summary.
3. The information provided below is from updates received from the organisations. Formal project monitoring will take place in April 2016 where successes can be identified and promoted.
4. Summary of needs assessment findings;

OLDER PEOPLE NEEDS ASSESSMENT, OXFORD 2013: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS



Full report available at www.oxford.gov.uk

Older People's projects

Clock House Project (£7,000) - *Outreach to isolated Older People in the Leys, resulting in higher attendance of activities and better relationships between older persons activities on the estate.*

5. Project is now completed. The project aimed to host 10 'taster sessions' to engage local people in a range of activities. These were seen as stepping stones into other projects within the estate. Successfully 10 events were organised to include:
 - Seated yoga at PRIMETIME
 - Inclusive dance and community socials at Longlands
 - Clockhouse Open Day involving 6 local organisations, with stalls and taster activities
 - Joint event with Potters Court plus promotion of their 2 August day trips
6. 30 potentially isolated Older People are now engaged with older people activities locally - 24 Leys residents made a first time visit to one of the social hubs. The project has assisted an additional 6 people who had minimal contact with Older People projects locally and they are now regularly attending the Clockhouse. The 'Monday Social' at the Clockhouse has grown from 4 members to 15.
7. Engagement method with the older people was varied dependant on the individual, ranging from face to face, phone calls or referrals via partner agencies.

Littlemore Community Association (£6,654) – *running a coffee club for isolated older people which links into food bank, increasing ICT and Exercise club provision.*

8. The Village Hall holds a fortnightly older persons gentle chair exercise class – this is well attended and continues to grow. The Hands on Social Group have used the funding for their art and craft sessions, this has included buying materials and tutor time. They have also used money to go out to lunch/afternoon tea, to experience something different than may normally be available in Littlemore. Hands on Social Group is working with Go Active to provide fortnightly gentle dance classes.

Bullington Community Association (£6,000) – *Bullington CA will use funding for community development time for older people groups one day a week in Bullington Community Centre and Wood Farm community room. There is currently very little provision for older people in this area.*

9. After a short delay recruiting a community development worker to undertake the outreach. Bullington CA now has a worker in post and the project is engaging older people to find their needs/wants locally for social activities to reduce isolation. The project is likely to continue to July 2016 due to the delay in starting.
10. So far the project has engaged with 90 older people regarding activities put on in the local area. A number of activities have started as a result of this engagement, such as a 'Craft and Social Club', a weekly Tai Chi group and a 'Fix It Café' which is mainly attended by men over the age of 60.

Low Carbon West Oxford (£2,000) – *disseminate Winter Warmth advice in West Oxford for older population.*

11. 115 households contacted including 25 housebound vulnerable residents, with 13 people receiving face-to-face visits/in-depth intervention.
12. The project coordinator has chosen to continue in a voluntary capacity having seen the benefit locally for this work.

Oxford 50+ Network (£2,000) – *Sustain current level of provision for two years and increase membership*

13. Oxford 50 + Network led on the organisation of the Older Peoples Day at the Oxford Town Hall in partnership with a number of key organisations. There were information and advice stands along with taster sessions like silver joggers/seated yoga plus a speaker from Health watch. 450 Older People attended this event and the 50+ Network carried out feedback in which an overwhelmingly positive response was ascertained.
14. Oxford 50+ Network's Chair continues to act as a key partner to a number of services regarding older person provision.

15. 50+ Network now has 188 contactable members. To date 140 people have attended public meetings. As a result of the presentations from the various speakers and the small group special interest meetings, older people have had the opportunity to participate in City Council consultations [Housing, Transport and Community Centre Surveys]. They have had the opportunity to find out and learn about the many and various services available in Oxford. Oxford 50+ is now represented at the Stronger Communities Group. An important bonus is the social contact between members.
16. Oxford 50+ Network has continued to run as planned. The additional funding has bought them more stability as an organisation which they are now using to hold a 6 week ICT beginner course in partnership with the Student Hub targeting older people.

Oxford Community Media (£6,000) now known as **Community Media Group (CMG)**– *Older Persons Page in each community Newspaper.*

17. Increased coverage of Older People issues. CMG have opted against a formal Older People page and instead tried to spread information throughout the paper.
18. CMG have appointed two new editors who are going to be targeting older people publishing good news stories and issues, this will continue to generate interest to encourage people to participate, engaged older isolated and vulnerable people.
19. The local newspapers have appealed to the older readers who like the look and feel of a newspaper as not all older people are comfortable with digital media.
20. Some examples of their current older person's related articles are;
- Woodfarm news stories promoting the Atkins Court sheltered accommodation residents group who have just been awarded for the best community garden, also reported on a intergenerational project with Full Circle and the primary school and advertised an over 60's craft group at Bullingdon community centre
 - Leys News half a page advertising a what's on a the clock house, CDI project

OCVA (£4,000) – *to visit a minimum of 15 older peoples groups across the city to establish more information on their activities and development needs.*

21. 20 groups across the City have been identified across a range of locations. These include Littlemore, New Marston, Barton, Iffley Road, Jericho, Cowley Road, East Oxford, West Oxford, Greater Leys, Marston, North Oxford, Florence Park, Lye Valley, Rose Hill, South Oxford and Headington. See Appendix 1.
22. There also some groups running in the city centre which are open to all residents across the City. Also there are some groups providing specialist support particularly for dementia and memory loss. The final report will list all groups in the City and any specialist support they offer.

23. The 20 groups being visited are being asked a range of questions and the results are being collated. Of the visits so far, the key issues arising are:

- More volunteers especially in the newly retired bracket
- Issues with keeping going in terms of finances and building availability
- Happy to link up with other groups but not wanting to attend meetings often

24. The final report will list all issues, comments and support required as well as details of the groups and contacts so that a database of older people's groups across the City is established.

Citizens Advice Bureau (£6,000) – *Continuation of benefits advice for Older People, this funding gives additional capacity to CAB allowing for home visits.*

25. The CAB used this funding to keep their benefit worker with an aim to maximising income for older people for an increased period of time. It enabled the CAB to have extra capacity to undertake home visits for those who may struggle to attend advice centres or attend the CAB offices.

26. The work has generated income of £2800 - £4800 PA per client.

27. Success story - a gentleman with dementia aged 89 with CAB support raised his income £4500 PA which they have been able to use to become less isolated.

Florence Park Community Association

28. Successfully running a weekly Older Peoples Lunch club for the over 60's. With average attendance of approximately 20 people.

29. Oxford City Council contributed towards the start-up costs for this group.

Name and contact details of author:-

Name: Luke Nipen

Job title: Communities Specialist Officer

Service Area / Department: Community Services

E-mail: lnipen@oxford.gov.uk

List of background papers: None

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