



BRIGHTLIFE LEGACY REPORT

8. BRIGHTLIFE EVALUATION:
BRIGHTLIFE PARTICIPANT
REPORT

*Evaluation
status report*

The University of Chester Evaluation Team

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PART 1: Background

1.1 Aim

The aim of this report is to formally update the Brightlife Partnership Board regarding feedback from participants who have completed the first round of Brightlife commissioned activities and inform the development of the service iteratively. This strand of the evaluation adopts a purely qualitative approach aiming to understand the experience of participants partaking in commissioned activities, feedback on the activities themselves, and the impact these activities have had for socially isolated older people in the Brightlife Target areas including any factors promoting or preventing engagement.

1.2 Semi-structured interviews

Eight individual semi-structured interviews were conducted by two University of Chester Co-researchers in January 2017, each lasting 1-2 hours. Table 1 lists participants' characteristics. For the purposes of protecting anonymity when reporting findings, participants were issued randomised numbers; P1-P8.

Table 1: Participant characteristics

Participant number	Town	Age	Gender
P1	Malpas	Unknown	Female
P2	Malpas	64	Female
P3	Malpas	71	Male
P4	Malpas	87	Female
P5	Winsford	77	Female
P6	Winsford	71	Female
P7	Winsford	75	Female
P8	Malpas	64	Male

Participants had taken part in the following activities in Malpas and Winsford areas, with attendance levels of 88-100%:

Area	Activity
Malpas	Awareness Tasters
Winsford	Awareness Tasters
Winsford	Awareness Tasters
Winsford	Awareness Tasters
Malpas	Ladies Birdwatching
Malpas	Bee Keeping
Malpas	Wildlife Photography

Participants were asked to talk about their Brightlife experiences by using a Grand tour question in interviews:

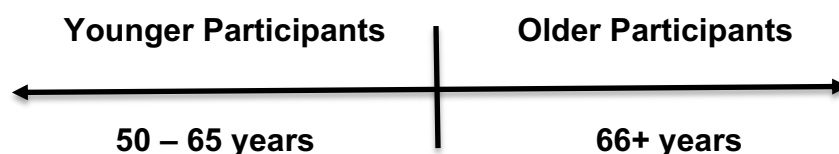
“Please would you talk to me about your experiences of Brightlife. If you could begin by starting with your first engagement and tell me all the details, one after the other, that you consider to be important. Please take your time in doing this and also give details, because for me everything is of interest that is important for you” (Adapted from Flick 2006).

PART 2 Results

Five main themes emerged from the analysis of the interviews. These were 1) has the Brightlife project reached its intended target group, 2) participant engagement with the commissioned activities, 3) the type and acceptability of the activities provided, 4) the benefits gained by the participants and, lastly, 5) areas for the Brightlife Team to consider.

2.1 Target Group

Brightlife's stated aim is to reduce social isolation and loneliness amongst older members of the population (over 50s) within Cheshire West and Chester (CWAC). Participants interviewed for this report were informed of this aim and fulfilled the required criteria of the Brightlife target group. However, the participants in this sample could be considered as belonging to two distinct groups; those under and those over 65 years of age. While 65 provided a practical chronological point with which to separate the two groups, it is acknowledged that the experience of ageing among older adults is more likely to exist on a spectrum rather than by an arbitrary age. Where individual's view themselves on this spectrum may differ depending on a range of factors, including overall health and well-being. Observing this chronological disaggregation, we suggest the following '**Ageing continuum scale**' for this report on which to define and inform on younger and the older Brightlife participants:



The analysis of interviews suggested there was indeed a divide between the experiences of those participants situated towards the younger end of the spectrum and those towards the older end. Participants towards the younger end of the spectrum did not view themselves as belonging to the Brightlife target group, particularly as they were fairly active and socially connected.

Participant Two was concerned that:

I am in the age group but I am quite an active person. I have got a reasonably good social life anyway so you know, I don't really think I am the target group perhaps...There are quite a few people that I have seen at meetings up there who ...probably don't see a lot of other people. I am not really quite in that position...The only thing I would say is that it is not meeting the needs of people who can't get out of their house particularly (P2).

One participant was concerned they may be taking the place of 'more deserving' participants:

The numbers being involved was getting quite small and we were thinking we had best go just to make up the numbers, we actually enjoyed it as well, but that's an extra reason. Whereas if it had been teeming with people who we felt perhaps was more of the aim of the Brightlife thing, we would have happily dropped out (P8).

The same participant went on to suggest the activity coordinators may have welcomed people who were not socially isolated as they were struggling to recruit participants who fit the criteria:

My gut feeling is that perhaps Brightlife has struggled to actually meet, achieve, the things it really set out to and you might have dragged a load of others people here at the same time and they were very pleased and thank you very much' (P8).

The participants situated towards the older end of the age continuum were more likely to identify as being lonely. Some older participants openly expressed loneliness as a motivating factor. Others keenly felt they needed the social interaction provided by the Brightlife activities despite regular contact with others and with no limiting mobility factors.

Participant Seven listed a ‘rota’ of activities to keep her occupied during the week. Another ensured she had activity planned for every week day because ***‘it gets you out of the house and it gets you mixing with people. It gets you through the day’*** (P5). Despite this she still reported:

At weekends I really am crawling up the walls because I don’t go anywhere or do anything – that’s the only problem I have Saturdays and Sundays (P5).

Several of the interviewees acknowledged the difficulty reaching and engaging those in the target group: ***“if people are lonely or whatever it takes a lot of courage to get out of the house and go”*** (P7).

2.2 Engagement with Brightlife Activities

Brightlife has commissioned activities from a range of organisations and will evaluate the different approaches providers are using to reduce social isolation amongst older adults. Table 2 summarises the contract length and financial award of each provider that received contracts in the first wave of commissioning.

Table 1: Commissioned Provider Summary

Provider	Activity	Length	Start	End	Value
Chester Voluntary Action	Business Sustainability	1 year	Apr-16	Apr-17	£50,000.00*
Cheshire Wildlife Trust	Great Outdoors Malpas	1 year	Mar-16	Mar-17	£49,500.00
Community Compass	Social Activity Malpas	1 year	Feb-16	Feb-17	£30,146.00
Community Compass	Social Activity Winsford	1 year	Apr-16	Apr-17	£41,810.00

**Not directly involved with participants*

Participants openly discussed the motivations for joining Brightlife commissioned or signposted activities, however they also suggested some potential factors that may limit engagement for others.

2.2.1 Factors promoting engagement

Whilst individuals had differing reasons for joining the commissioned activities, some common themes arose. The younger participants expressed an interest in learning new skills and developing hobbies and interests, whilst those at the older end of the spectrum preferred an outing with social interaction, particularly if they had suffered bereavement or ill health:

There have been some quite traumatic things that have happened. I lost my husband a few years ago and lost my granddaughter a few years ago...It's been where I have had to get out. I lost my dog. I used to spend hours walking on the field and screaming out there where it didn't bother anyone...If I sit here I just go into a depression. I don't think I would move again if I didn't get out. I just go into a depression and how people sit in all the time I don't know (P5).

Some of the older participants stated they had previously experienced social isolation and expressed a particular fear of being alone:

I felt isolated. My son came when he could but I really worried about it (P4).

Another participant, who had retired along with her husband 16 years previously and remained in the village, became socially isolated following the death of her husband. The realised effect of social isolation prompted her to take action:

Being a fairly active person I was already involved in keep-fit, Zumba, walking...finding myself on my own in the last two years....really at times I was feeling very lonely. The family were some distance away and I thought I have got to make an effort...I found that my conversation was becoming very limited (P1).

The occurrence of ill-health and/or bereavement appeared to affect confidence of participants. One participant was recently bereaved of her husband and then had a prolonged episode of ill-health in succession, explained:

I don't know whether it is nerves when you lose somebody...previous to that I could have bounced you on my shoulders...to me it was this walking business [Nordic walking] – it has been wonderful (P6).

Despite such adverse circumstances, some individuals were self-motivated and demonstrated remarkable resilience:

I have had lung cancer and then last year I had a massive cyst in my abdomen so I had to have all that removed from my bowel, bladder and everywhere ... I thought I am not going to give in, I am going to carry on trying to walk (P5)

This desire for social contact was less pronounced in those participants at the younger end of the spectrum, yet contributing factors (sometimes concurrently) including retirement and the associated loss of social networks, and moving to a new area were mentioned.

We were going to make a big effort to integrate into the community and take part in local things...initially it was just another local thing to take part in as we saw it, rather than something specifically aimed at people who were being encouraged to get out and about and not live as hermits...we didn't want to live as hermits, right from the start (P8).

Also associated with the cessation of regular paid work came a lack of structure in the day:

I think it is very easy to not make the effort to go out and do things, so if you have got something organised that you are going to regularly it does give you that impetus to go out and do it (P2).

Despite the main incentives for participants at the younger end of the spectrum to engage in Brightlife activities predominantly involving learning a new skill, developing a new or existing interest, and maintaining an active lifestyle, a clear division between the chosen activities of this group and those at the older end of the spectrum was not always the case. Some older people were determined to exercise for health reasons, and some younger individuals appreciating the need to stay engaged to prevent future social isolation.

2.2.2 Factors Preventing Engagement

Although all those interviewed appeared self-motivated to be actively involved in Brightlife activities, suggestions were made as to why other participants seemed less engaged. Many shared empathic views regarding the difficulty and apprehension associated with joining a new group, particularly in those who may be experiencing social isolation. One participant (P6) admitted to initial feelings of anxiety, stating she had felt 'quite brave' attending her first session alone. Others acknowledged a reluctance to become involved:

Some people sort of think: "Gosh, I'm so-and-so and I can't do that" or are they really telling themselves: "I shouldn't be doing that"? So it is not easy and again people who perhaps have led quite a lonely life...what's the point of all getting together...It doesn't come naturally to them (P1).

Lack of affordable transport was cited as a limiting factor for some, with descriptions of a previous service having been stopped:

A lot of people...were coming down...and they can't come now...They can get Dial-a-ride but that makes the dinners so expensive for them...so that has affected it...I used to use this bus then, which was a boon, it was wonderful (P6).

There was however also evidence of those who did drive taking others to sessions or being willing to do so:

Those of us who have got cars, if we are going, we can easily pick people up, it is not a problem, it's just knowing, it's getting the networks together (P3).

Sustainability of activities was a concern for some participants in terms of funding provision. Some participants cited cost of activities as being a restricting factor for future activity attendance once Brightlife funding had ceased. Furthermore, some participants reported they knew of participants who had stopped attending activities once a fee was imposed. There was a general consensus in the group at Winsford that whilst two to three pounds for a session may be acceptable, five pounds was beyond the financial reach of many participants. A number reported this as a key factor in ability to attend activities:

It's a lot out of the pension (P5);

If there is a couple, they were finding that that was a bit much (P7);

There are an awful lot of people who won't pay £5 (P6).

2.3 Thoughts on the Activities Commissioned

Those interviewed reported taking part in a wide range of activities and, at the time of interview, had participated in more than one activity. Activities included taster sessions and longer running sessions such as social 'clubs', exercise groups, creative writing, bee keeping, and arts and craft classes. All participants were generally positive regarding their experiences although some had concerns regarding the level of attendance.

The wildlife/organised walks were well regarded, with individuals impressed by the quality of the activities and professionalism and dedication of the staff. One participant spoke highly of a staff member who catered to and assisted less physically able participants:

She always scouts out the walks beforehand...and walks it to make sure exactly what it is going to be like...and she can make sure it is suitable...She would happily accept people of all abilities (P3).

However, one participant noted some activities were less suitable for their own ability:

We walked for four hours...now that to me was a long way. They did say that perhaps it hadn't been given a lot of thought that for people well into their eighties to walk for four hours...we did get a bit lost. So since then...the most we have walked is between two and a half and three hours (P1)

The mix of differing levels of fitness within a group was mentioned as a challenging factor by some:

You can go to the birdwatching. That has not been very good for people who can't...The more active people want to walk a long way. I can't walk very fast...When they stopped I was still catching them up and I felt I had to keep going...That's fabulous for people who are a bit younger than I am (P4)

This individual also however was sign-posted to the NHS walks which she found more suitable for her abilities. She also noted the organisation of this activity allowed for flexibility throughout:

If people wanted to come and walk and then if they found it was too much a volunteer would turn round and go back with them. So that has been wonderful for me because at first I used to walk up into the village and that was it really (P4)

Nordic walking was valued greatly by some but proved difficult for others:

It's too much for me to do a lot and I felt like I was holding them back because I used to say 'no use the other one' and I would walk that far and then I would walk back and meet them back at the car. They all used to go on a good ramble. It would take me as long to walk where I walked and then back (P20).

One individual stated she and a friend were given walking poles during the Nordic walking activity, and although they have not continued with this activity, they have been inspired to regularly walk shorter distances together. Others found the exercise strenuous but spoke of the encouragement they received from activity organisers and volunteers:

To be encouraged to walk up because I was being told there's a lovely ice-cream at the top!...I felt that if needs be I could do that again (P1).

Activity staff were praised for considering the more socially orientated groups, with one participant stating '***you need to know what these people have done for us***'(P4).

For some, the socialising was more important than any accompanying activity; when one individual was asked whether she had enjoyed the craft activities on offer she replied '***I joined in, but not really ...I am quite happy sitting and chatting***' (P6). In contrast, these primarily social groups did not appeal to the younger participants:

It wasn't meeting what I wanted from it. The sessions weren't stimulating me particularly...they were doing things that I could quite easily organise myself which wasn't really what I wanted (P2).

The more focused activities however were well received; bee keeping was said to have been '***delivered very well indeed***' (P8), whereas others such as the photography course were very much enjoyed, there were slight reservations:

They weren't very well organised...but they were well-meaning and...very nice ...and very informative. I think...it could have been better organised, if they sort of planned better' (P3).

Most participants expressed views on attendance at sessions. Attendance at the Dingle social sessions was reported to be good with twenty to thirty people each week. Creative writing also proved popular. Others expressed concern over what they saw as poor attendance as a possible reflection of not reaching potential participants:

There has got to be more than four people who would be interested in Wildlife Photograph, there has got to be more than three or four people who would be interested in going bird-watching, it is just a question of finding them (P3)

One participant reflected they felt obliged to continue to attend a particular activity to allow its continuation.

2.4 Impact on Participants

All participants reported they had benefitted from attending the Brightlife Programme. The most consistently reported benefits were in the areas of social contact, health, improved self-esteem and confidence and the learning of new skills.

2.4.1 Social Contact

A sense of social isolation and loneliness was reported as a major motivating factor for joining the commissioned activities. Many of the participants in the older end of the spectrum agreed the main benefit to the activity attendance was an increase in social contact. This was particularly the case for one participant who had moved into the area some years ago but felt she had not made strong friendships. Following participation in commissioned and sign-posted activities she stated:

It is since Brightlife that I am going to other people's houses and people are popping in to see me which I missed when I first came down. I was quite worried because I don't know Cheshire. I didn't know anybody near.....I didn't really settle. I do feel settled now and it's because of Brightlife (P4).

This participant went on to discuss how she previously felt unsupported, but she now felt safer:

I think for older people the worry is that you slip through the net (P4).

Furthermore, this participant reflected with the improved social contact, including contact with the local social prescriber, the feelings of unease had reduced greatly:

Because Brightlife is there every Friday you are on the map aren't you?... It's not by chance now that I am going to manage here (P4)

Other benefits through improved social contact included an increased enjoyment in the activity undertaken:

Whatever we found, being able to discuss it with others.....it was not much fun walking on your own so to be with a group of people and walk and visit places...it was such an eye-opener (P1).

Others felt encouragement to continue beyond perceived limits:

I wouldn't have persevered on my own...having company, I would never have done that on my own (P1).

3.4.2 Health improvements

Participants who were involved in physical activities reported health benefits. One Nordic Walker commented on extended health benefits:

So without Brightlife I would never ever have done any walking whatsoever ... [I have been] feeling the benefit of it because when I have not been able to go I don't sleep as well; I don't eat as well; I don't feel as well (P5).

Health benefits were more pronounced in the feedback from older participants, however one younger participant said she '**certainly felt better for going out regularly and doing it**' (P2).

There was also feedback that starting exercise classes had led to improved endurance:

It was a good walk. Each time you went we walked a little bit further and a little bit further (P6).

3.4.3 Improved Self-Esteem and Confidence

In addition to the physical health benefits through an involvement in the Brightlife activities, several of the older participants reported experiencing increased mental health wellbeing, including feelings of empowerment and self-worth. Many participants stating they realised they were more capable than previously thought. One participant had feared her conversation was becoming limited due to her isolation, but now felt she had a contribution to make when spending time with family:

To be able to say 'well, I am going to be interviewed by people from Chester University', aah...to go walking with them (the family) and pointing out things they may not [have known] (P1).

One participant felt more valued and involved in the running of the group. She believed she would be missed if she did not attend and valued for her contribution:

At least we are consulted. We say what we want and if we can do it ourselves we do it. If I am going to go there and have to sit down and do what they tell me to do I wouldn't enjoy it. We are being treated as though we have still got some contribution to make ourselves. We don't just want to sit there and people do things for us. So that is the best bit which I hope survives (P4).

Many participants reported they had discovered new capabilities with the opportunity to try activities they had done many years prior. Some reflected activities rekindled

memories of enjoyed past activity. For example, one participant who had not had opportunity to work with clay for many years enjoyed a renewed interest in themselves, and also in observing the enjoyment of others new to the material:

To see this lump of clay just going round and round on a wheel, it just conjured up so many feelings of warmth and interest and experience ... you could sort of tell the excitement of messing with this wet sloppy clay. They thought it was absolutely amazing (P1).

Another participant attending art sessions, felt enabled:

It is people coming and helping us and telling us we can do it...I would never have gone out on my own and looked for something like this (P4).

These examples highlight the importance of providing opportunity and encouragement to motivate socially isolated older people to participate in these types of activities.

3.4.4 Gaining New Skills and Knowledge

Gaining new skills and knowledge was the most commonly described benefit reported by the younger of those interviewed. One participant stated the main benefit he felt through attendance at an activity had been ***'knowledge....I did actually learn quite a lot so it was good, very good indeed'*** (P3). Another participant who had attended a bee keeping course described he and a group of others from the course had decided to join a bee keeping association, and felt this developed knowledge helped him start a new hobby:

I recognised it all when I came to do my own and then that hive was put together and then bees were introduced into that. There were various ways of getting bees, I won't bore you with the subject, but bees were introduced into it and it rapidly grew into a really good colony and I think we got thirty odd pounds of honey off that hive (P8).

Amongst the older participants, the opportunity to do art classes and creative writing gave impetus to little used skills, and reawakened past enjoyments which could be used shared outside of the activity:

I made a lovely bunting thing for Christmas that was lovely. I gave it to a friend who I knew would appreciate it. So it is really good that our lives, you know.... With our friends outside of Brightlife we can tell them about it. It's good (P4).

3.5 Considerations for Brightlife

3.5.1 Lack of Clarity over Ownership of Activities

All participants interviewed had previously heard of Brightlife, and were also aware that commissioned activities had limited funding. However, some confusion remained when distinguishing between Brightlife commissioned and signposted activities, with some participants expressing a concern over lack of clarity over ownership of activities:

It is a bit confusing for us I think. We all feel the same because it sort of started with Brightlife and then it merged with Community Compass (P6).

We have done a lot of activities since we came to Malpas and...at the time there was confusion to me as what was Brightlife and what wasn't (P8).

3.5.2 Future Recruitment of Target Group

The interviews revealed Brightlife and the commissioned activities were well publicised in the targeted communities. Participants recalled leaflets were distributed in the village of Malpas in the local GP surgery, advertisements were seen in the Parish newsletters, and the local social prescriber was mentioned as providing information. In Winsford, the Dingle centre seemed to be a major source of information although one participant mentioned an advertisement in the local press. However, when looking at how the group had initially heard of the Brightlife activities, four of the participants

interviewed, reported they had initially heard of Brightlife by 'word of mouth', with only one responding to an advertisement (another two participants had become aware of Brightlife via information posted in the Dingle Centre in Winsford). As discussed in previous sections, participants acknowledged the difficulty Brightlife had in reaching the target group:

You push something through somebody's door who is on their own, they will just pick it up and put it down...it must be quite difficult really to actually make yourself go out to these things; you probably need somebody actually talking to them and saying, "Look, come along" will they talk to strangers?... If people are actually in their houses, on their own, and not doing anything, how do you get them out? Because...pushing things through people's doors is not the answer (P3).

Participants did not suggest any means of resolution for these difficulties although increased involvement by social and health workers via the Dingle centre was mentioned as a possible vehicle for increased exposure of activities:

People that go into people's homes – carers, district nurses...whether they have a role? (P2).

Most participants were happy with the range of activities on offer, however some commented they would like an increased range and were delighted to offer suggestions for possible future activities; these included outside speakers, gardening, Bridge sessions, reading groups and local and family history groups.

3.5.3 Sustainability of Activities

Sustainability of commissioned activities following funds ceasing has always been a consideration of the Brightlife programme. Participants agreed this concept was important, with several recalling poor previous experiences related to this issue:

We get loads of people who come in and they are going to do this, that and the other for you and nobody does anything really to be truthful (P6).

There was concern that provision may not continue, particularly for those who had seen the benefits of attending activities:

There isn't anything else, no...what always bothers me is that now I can get out but now I have been through the stage where I realise how awful it is when you can't (P6).

The majority of participants who were interviewed could demonstrate evidence of some degree of activity sustainability, including personal continuation of an activity (such as the aforementioned continuation of Nordic walking or setting up a beehive) or the self-funded continuation of an activity previously commissioned.

The interviews generated much discussion with regard to how the social groups would continue in light of issues related to funding and volunteering. Sustainability was observed to be of greater concern for the participants at the older end of the spectrum.

Participants noted the popular creative writing course has continued attendance, with participants paying an amount for monthly sessions following the end of Brightlife funding period. Individuals who reported this seemed happy with this arrangement and valued their experience.

For some of the older participants, the continuation of the Community Compass social/exercise group was a major issue with cost issues arising, particularly for those in Winsford. One participant commented on how the money was used:

It is alright spending money on parties and that but from my personal point of view I would rather they spent it and kept this [the Dingle activity] open rather than spend it on other things (P7).

Many participants discussed the topic of volunteering, however no-one felt they wanted to take on this role. Younger participants reported being disinterested in volunteering having recently retired and not wanting to commit to this role. Older participants held concerns around the ability to perform the tasks required, with particular reference to limitations of mobility or energy levels. They were also unwilling

to take responsibility for the group and did not want their own lives to be restricted by the regular commitment required as a volunteer. Although none of the participants expressed a desire to volunteer to lead the activities, many suggested there would be several people willing to help with smaller roles. The willingness to help with transport was mentioned again, and some informed there was also a willingness to assist in 'duties' of a group:

It needs a regular person. If it was once a month maybe or something like that it may be a little different...you have obviously got to have a main person who is going to make sure they are there all the time. I am sure then...people now do move chairs and tables but you do that automatically without being asked if you have got somebody in charge (P6).

PART 4 Discussion and conclusion

4.1 Discussion and conclusion

There continues to be some conjecture amongst some participants over the Brightlife definition of 'older members' of the population being over 50s, with the eight participants interviewed in January 2016 being somewhat divided into the younger and older sectors of the group. Generally, this does not seem to greatly influence achieving the aim of reducing social isolation, however some younger participants commented they were taking the places of those who were older and 'more deserving'. Participants did view themselves as belonging to two distinct groups; arbitrarily those under and those over 65 years of age. Where an individual view themselves on this spectrum may differ depending on a range of factors, including overall health and well-being. Interestingly, some of those under the age of 65 did not view themselves as belonging to the Brightlife target group, particularly as they were fairly active and socially connected.

Factors influencing engagement in activities was slightly varied between the younger and older participants, younger participants expressed an interest in learning new skills and developing hobbies and interests, whilst those at the older end of the spectrum did identify with feelings of loneliness and preferred an outing with social interaction, particularly if they had suffered bereavement or ill health.

Despite the abovementioned variations in incentives, a clear division between the chosen activities of the younger and older participants was not always the case. Some older people were determined to exercise for health reasons, and some younger individuals appreciating the need to stay engaged to prevent future social isolation.

Factors affecting engagement in activities included apprehension and anxiety of joining a new group, and financial reasons including cost of transport and fees to attend activities that were no longer funded by Brightlife. All participants gave positive views on activities and enjoyed the flexibility of taster and longer run sessions. The range of activities was valued, however many participants stated they would like to offer suggestions to include other activities of interest should the opportunity arise in the future.

Some participants gave feedback that activities were generally well planned and pitched at the levels of clients, however occasional activities were beyond the abilities of some. This discouraged some participants from attending certain activities again, whilst it motivated others to strive beyond their perceived limitations and achieve what they previously believed they were incapable of; some stating they had achieved improved self-esteem and self-worth through new achievements.

Younger participants relished the new skills and knowledge gained from activities, with some mentioning they had developed new hobbies through the learning and had continued their new interest (individually and in groups) beyond the funded period. Older participants revealed how activities had rekindled previously enjoyed pastimes.

Participants reported they initially heard of Brightlife through a range of sources; word of mouth, advertising material in local papers, notice in local community centre or local GP. All participants acknowledged that it is difficult to reach those most at risk of social isolation, as much of the advertised material is found in public areas where the target group might not often venture. The feedback around leaflets through the letterbox was not encouraging; rather, some suggested community health workers may be a potential source of promoting the Brightlife activities during visits as a way of recruiting more participants.

Most participants reported they had been aware of Brightlife previous to enrolling in activities through these advertising mediums or word of mouth. They also understood that Brightlife activities were funded for finite periods. However, there was some confusion around distinguishing between Brightlife commissioned and signposted activities, with some participants expressing a concern over lack of clarity over ownership of activities, especially with merges.

Participant expressed concerns over sustainability of activities, predominantly around issues preventing engagement (lack of transport, and cost of activities after funded period). The possibility of continuing activities through participants becoming volunteers was met with hesitancy; younger members stating they were not keen to 'work' following recent retirement, and older members holding concerns around the

ability to perform the tasks required, with particular reference to limitations of mobility or energy levels. Participants also suggested they were unwilling to take responsibility for the group and did not want their own lives to be restricted by the regular commitment required as a volunteer. Despite the reluctance to volunteer, participants still indicated they would be keen to take on smaller roles to help out when necessary within their abilities such as helping with transport.

4.2 Recommendations

For:

- Brightlife to consider a wider range of activities suitable for ranging abilities and interests across the 50+ population,
- Brightlife to extend their 'advertising' to community health workers visiting socially isolated people within CWAC.
- Brightlife to encourage commissioned providers to train experienced participants to take on small volunteer roles.

For consideration to be given to:

- Sustainability of activities once a commissioned activity has been completed,
- Coverage of transport to reduce barriers for SPPs accessing activities,
- Existing participants to have more involvement in suggesting future activities.

References

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.