



Q&A with the Age of Experience Group Mary

1) How long have you been a member of the Age of Experience group and what motivated you to join?

I have lived in Sparkbrook for 35 years and know the community well. In 2016 I was taking part in a seated exercise class when Nita (Sparkbrook network enabler) visited the group and told me about Ageing Better. Following this meeting I put a project together and was pleased to receive funding from the Ageing Better fund.

I then got involved with the age of experience group and meet the staff at BVSC and Lucy from Groundwork West Midlands, I was motivated as the staff had the interests of the elderly at the centre of their work.

2) What have been your highlights so far?

I have enjoyed the whole experience and have made great connections and friendships with other members of the group, in particular; Jeraldene, Diane and Millie. I hope to keep in touch with the contacts once the programme ends.

I enjoyed sitting on the fund panel and gathered a wealth of knowledge from some of the projects. I particularly enjoyed visiting the projects once they had received funding.

3) Looking forward, what do you hope to achieve through your involvement?

I would like to see as many people out of isolation as possible as I believe it is a killer. Lots of people only have a TV or dog for company and that is very sad.

As part of the age of experience group I am able to put forward my experience of bringing isolated people together. I will continue to reach out to those in need of support by visiting sheltered housing facilities.

I am interested to see the legacy that Ageing Better in Birmingham will leave, I do not want the project to disappear without a trace.

4) Do you have any advice for people who are new to the Age of Experience group?

Come along you are very welcome, you will gain experience and have the opportunity to share your experiences.

I would be happy to buddy up with new members.