



AGEING BETTER CELEBRATION 2019

End of event evaluation



South
Yorkshire
Housing
Association



syha.co.uk



ATTENDEES

- 14 Ageing Better areas
- 157 attendees
- 54% of attendees were participants or volunteers from Ageing Better projects
- 23% of attendees were under 50 and worked for an Ageing Better project
- 14% were aged over 50 and worked for an Ageing Better project
- 4% worked for the National Lottery
- 4% were speakers or otherwise not involved with the programme



MOTIVATIONS AND OUTCOMES

At the start of the event...

50% of participants were most excited about picking up new ideas from other programmes, and 33% about learning about other Ageing Better projects and programmes.

9% were most excited about taking part in workshops, whilst only 5% saw the event as primarily an opportunity to renew friendships or make new ones. Only 3% were most interested in hearing speakers.

At the end of the event...

57% had most valued the learning and new ideas.

19% most enjoyed meeting new people and meeting up with old friends.

13% most enjoyed the speakers.

11% most enjoyed the workshops.

SPEAKERS

We had a series of fantastic speakers at the Ageing Better Celebration: Tony Stacey, Louise Ansari, Paul Cann, Sophy Proctor & Joyce Williams. Here is a summary of the feedback we received about three of the speakers:

- Inspiring
- Interesting
- Personally and professionally committed
- Thought provoking

“Good to have such an experienced person to do the opening talk and set the scene.”



Sophy Proctor



“Great to hear that the programme ‘leaders’ are looking towards sustainability of the legacy and all the good work that Ageing Better programmes have done across the country.”

- Motivationandinspiring
- Positive
- Refreshing
- Challenging(positively)
- “Broughtitalhome”
- Reassuring
- Mythbusting

“I hope I’m like her when I’m 80.”

Joyce Williams



WORKSHOPS

The following workshops were delivered by the 14 Ageing Better areas:

- Ageing Better in Birmingham: Older People's Voice
- Bristol Ageing Better: Nurturing Sustainability
- Ageing Better in Camden: Same but different
- Brightlife Cheshire: Commissioning
- T.E.D. (Ageing Better East Lindsey): Connections
- Ambition for Ageing (Greater Manchester): Getting your voice heard– having an influence
- Connect Hackney: Challenging Stereotypes
- Age Friendly Island (Isle of Wight): Transport and isolation
- Time to Shine Leeds: Transition
- Leicester Ageing Better: LAT and sustainability: it's not all about the money, money, money
- Ageing Better Middlesbrough: Creating Community
- Age Better in Sheffield: All voices created equal: an innovative approach to cogovernance
- Ageless Thanet: Health, wellbeing, isolation and loneliness
- Age Well Torbay: Creating engaging communities

Dr Sharron Hinchcliff, University of Sheffield also delivered her workshop: Intimate relationships and sexual health in the over 50s



WORKSHOPS

People loved

Overall, feedback from all of the workshops was overwhelmingly positive. People particularly appreciated:

- The shared experience of learning, group activities and discussion.
- How engaging and 'different' some of the activities were, such as Torbay's Gulls and Cones game.
- Hearing from older people from a wide variety of backgrounds, with a wide variety of life experiences.
- The workshops being presented by older volunteers and participants and not just 'professionals'.
- The feeling that the workshop had given them something to think about, inspired them,
- and given them things to take back to their own projects.
- Knowing that some challenges are shared challenges that we can approach together.

Things to consider for the future

- Giving presenters more information beforehand about room layouts and attendee numbers.
- Allowing time for rearranging rooms for workshops if necessary.
- Older people having more support to help them feel comfortable presenting.
- Ensure that everyone, including those further towards the edges or back of the room, can hear the presenters. Simple but easy to neglect!
- Don't interrupt or talk over each other, both presenters and those taking part in the group discussions. Setting out from the beginning that this is an expectation so all can hear and engage properly.
- Timing can be challenging for us all, but it's important to make sure there is time to let people get properly involved in the workshop.
- Giving too much detail can take away time needed for Q&A. Keep it simple!
- It's important to manage expectations, make sure the information provided about workshops accurately reflects what happens in the workshop so people know what to expect.



EVENT FEEDBACK

How satisfied were attendees?

The most frequent comment was regarding the organisation of the event, including the choice of venue, the progression of the day, and how well the Sheffield team and ODV worked together to ensure everyone had anything they needed and felt well looked after.

People enjoyed the “mix” of opportunities, be it the different workshops they could attend, how varied the activities were within the workshops, the ability to step out and not participate in a workshop and the actual mix of people; attendees and speakers.

There was a lot of positive feedback around hearing other people’s views and experiences, sharing ideas and learning and collaboration.

People often referred to how older people who attended our event were empowered by giving the responsibility of presenting a workshop and ensuring people could engage in meaningful and collaborative discussion, which is one of the things we aimed to achieve.

“The entire event was organised really well and ran smoothly. It all felt very relaxing.”

“Very well organised, little touches like a guide to hotel and Town Hall at night.”

“I loved Grandma Joyce Williams talk about her blogging activity, her view that older people should be visible, happy and willing to share their wisdom.”

“Good to feel part of the team.”

“It was one of the best conferences that I attended over the years.”

FUTURE SUGGESTIONS

Venue:

- Some people found the moving around difficult and mentioned that it would have been nice to be in a venue with natural day light.

Availability of sessions

- The timing between and in workshops – potentially longer with more time in between.
- Not everyone was satisfied with the fact they were restricted in terms of what workshops they could take.
- There was a suggestion that workshops could be videoed and this could be shared. Perhaps the alternative would be to have a form of minute taking and each workshop to be made into a short one-sided crib sheet with the main points on.
- No reference to ageing without children or a partner.

Catering:

- There were some issues with catering on Day 1 at the City Hall regarding dietary requirements, and the pie ran out at the evening event. We fed issues back to the venues so they are aware for the future, and we learnt that people really like pie! Perhaps a popular choice for an event like this.
- Try not to use single use plastics.
- Ensure venues understand that it is important to have a good offer when it comes to food both in terms of dietary requirements and making sure there is plenty to go around.
- Break out space to have refreshments as and when.

Evening event and range of activities

- There were very mixed reviews on the evening event and this possibly comes down to expectations. Some people really enjoyed the evening event while others felt they didn't have the opportunity to network or mingle, didn't enjoy the quiz and for some the music was too loud.
- People enjoyed the ability to do things other than attend workshops such as rest, network or go on a walking tour. Ensure that those running the walking tour are clued up on the area as people are really interested in learning.
- Make sure there's time for dancing!
- Having space for action as well as learning at this kind of event.

Logistics

- There was an ask for a map of the venue, which is useful learning for the future is using large venues.
- There was also an ask for maps from the different buildings to the hotel. These had been created for the volunteers so these could have easily been printed and offered to guests as well.
- Alongside translation didn't quite work.

ATTENDEE VIEWS ABOUT REDUCING LONELINESS AND ISOLATION*

Electronic voting gave people the opportunity to share their opinions on loneliness and isolation throughout the event and this is what they told us:

Resilience

- 59% felt very resilient (20%) or resilient (39%) to address their feelings of loneliness. Only 6% felt not at all resilient.
- 54% felt that investing in communities was best of the given options to help increase resilience amongst older people. Communities
- 55% felt that communities helped them stay connected through events, with 22% staying connected by talking to neighbours.
- 11% felt that there were friendly people working in local businesses whilst 12% felt that none of the above applied to their community.
- 41% felt that affordable and accessible transport was most important to help them stay connected in their communities.
- 35% saw more places for people to meet and socialise or do activities as their top priority.
- 18% felt funding for activities was most important, and only 5% saw friendly staff and local businesses as key.

Next steps for Ageing Better

- 33% felt that ensuring older people's voice is heard should be the biggest priority for Ageing Better programmes, 30% embedding good practice to make communities great places to grow older and 20% a greater emphasis on intergenerational work.

*** source: votes cast electronically throughout the event**

IMPACT

We asked people what would stay with them about the event. The responses to this were very varied and all very positive!

The only things that were repeated:

- **Grandma Williams.**
- **The general sense of positivity, enthusiasm and celebration.**
- **A piece of learning about other projects .**
- **People seemed to have learned a lot by the Bangladeshi women attending the event. They have been mentioned through the feedback in an incredibly positive way. It is clear this interaction has been enjoyable, has taught people a lot, given people chance to reflect (e.g. what life is like when English isn't your first language) and that the Bangladeshi women were very well respected. This is a testament to the importance of diversity.**

“The conference has acted as a real catalyst for change in the group with the women looking to take on more opportunities and their staff realising they can empower rather than do things for them.”

“The achievements of people across the country and passion for making change in their communities.”

People seemed pleased with the whole event, but especially:

- **Grandma Williams!**
- **People really enjoyed the workshops, and especially the fact that they were largely run by older people involved in our programmes.**
- **People appreciated the speakers in general and felt they were useful. It appears to have been very meaningful that Sophy took the time to speak with us.**
- **The event was well organised and people really noticed the attention to detail. People enjoyed being in Sheffield, the venues and the food overall.**



But don't just take it from us, you can hear what people told us throughout the event in the short video [here](#).