



# “TOOLS TO MAKE LIFE A BIT EASIER”

Good Practice Mentors case study with:

## Brighton & Hove Age and Dementia Friendly Alliance

Brighton & Hove City Council’s Age and Dementia Friendly Alliance initially participated in online and in-person Good Practice Mentors (GPM) co-production workshops, followed by several other workshops. They then reached out for bespoke GPM support to engage with local residents, whose voices are seldom heard.

### A trusted introduction

Davina, an Age and Dementia Friendly Public Health Specialist at Brighton & Hove City Council, explains how they heard about GPM via the Age Friendly Communities Network. For Davina, this introduction “***gave GPM credibility straight away, it us such a trusted entity***”.

Further credibility came from GPM’s roots in the years of learning from the Ageing Better Programme, “***the first thing I did in my role was research the Ageing Better partners and what they’ve done***”.

## From workshops to bespoke support

Following their introduction to GPM, the team took part in a range of support, including:

- Bespoke online and in-person co-production workshops, which, ***“were really well received, really fantastic”***
- An ageism session, followed by 1:1 support to develop a local Challenging Ageism training session
- Further GPM workshops, including *Hosting pop-up events in neutral spaces as a steppingstone to engagement*

Davina describes how ***“the great thing about our work with GPM is that we’ve been able to take it even further and it’s gone off in lots of wonderful ways.”***

This took the form of bespoke support with ‘Street Outreach as Social Action Research’ (SOSAR) and with the team’s communications and engagement materials.



## Practical, tailored and supportive

A key reason the team sought bespoke support was GPM’s approach: ***“It feels like you’re working in partnership. It doesn’t feel like a one-off – you’re being held and supported through the learning.”***

The ongoing relationship stood out, with Davina highlighting:

- The breadth of the GPM offer – ***“the team can’t believe the amount of work that GPM do, it’s a wide offer”***
- The willingness to say yes to support requests – ***“I can’t believe that everything I was asking for, someone was saying yes, it’s been so nice to feel that supported!”***
- An understanding that organisational pressures and change take time

## Practical tools in action

GPM support was valued because it focused on real-world application.

***“It’s not just information, it’s practical tools. We’re all looking for tools to make life a bit easier, and this is something I really enjoy about GPM.”***

This included the GPM team member undertaking the in-person street outreach alongside the team which meant they could ***“relay practical conversation advice”***, boosting the team’s confidence to do it themselves.

## Tailored to place and pace

The GPM support **“felt completely tailored to us”**. Davina describes how an understanding of a specific place and circumstances is **“incredibly important”**, noting that the GPM team **“had a real understanding of us, they really got it”**.

This includes GPM being led by the pace of each team because they **“understand that with people’s work pressures and organisational changes, things take time”**.

## Improved communications and partnership working

GPM’s support had a direct impact on how the team communicates and works with others.

Communications:

- Bespoke feedback on posters aimed at different communities
- Clearer, more inclusive language
- Visual changes, such as showing images of venues where activities take place

**“What always sticks out the most is the language we’re using.”**

Partnership working:

- Stronger collaboration across council teams, including:
- Wider partnerships with community organisations and local leaders

**“It brought everyone together – it made so much sense.”**

## Impact for communities

The changes in approach are already benefiting local residents. The team plans to:

- Embed street outreach as a regular activity
- Continue joint working across teams
- Use conversations with residents to spark new ideas, such as informal walking groups

**“The chats we had were really great – there’s real potential to connect people through shared interests.”**



## Conclusion

Through a mix of workshops, bespoke mentoring and hands-on support, GPM helped the Age and Dementia Friendly Alliance to:

- Build confidence to engage people whose voices are often missing
- Develop practical, place-based tools for outreach and engagement
- Improve communications so they better reflect communities and settings
- Strengthen partnership working across teams and organisations

For Brighton & Hove City Council, GPM support wasn't a one-off intervention, it helped embed new ways of working that will continue to shape how the Alliance engages with residents.

As Davina reflects:

***“It's been a massive reminder of the importance of face-to-face conversations and engagement with residents.”***



If you would like to discuss how GPM could support you to reach, engage and connect with your community then please drop us an email:

✉ [GPM@syha.co.uk](mailto:GPM@syha.co.uk)

For more information and resources please visit our website:

🌐 [GPM Website](#)

Please see our Eventbrite page for our upcoming workshops:

👉 [GPM Eventbrite](#)