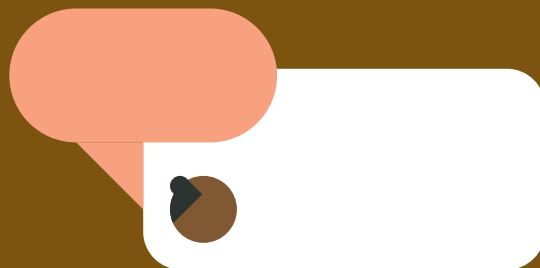




Stronger Together

**A co-production toolkit
from Ageing Better**

Developing a co-commissioning model



Welcome to our learning guide on developing a co-commissioning model.

This guide is for anyone involved in commissioning or funding decisions who wants to apply a co-governance approach.*

This guide will be particularly useful if you are:

- A strategic leader or change maker
- Working for an organisation in a service delivery or development role
- A provider or funder of community-based projects or services

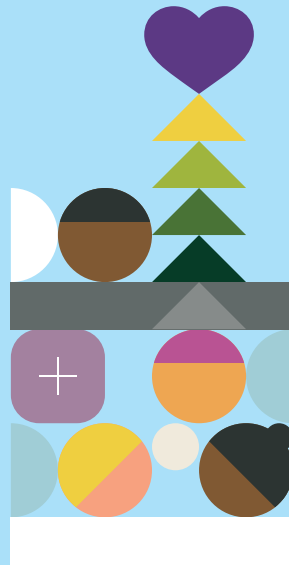
*While the Ageing Better programme focuses on reducing isolation and loneliness among people aged 50 and over, all of the co-production learning and resources featured in the learning guides and toolkit are transferable across all community groups and areas of working.



Our comprehensive co-production toolkit, **Stronger Together**, contains the information mentioned in this guide, plus many more resources.



In our **webinar recordings**, topics and themes surrounding co-production are discussed in more detail.



Recap: what is co-production?

Co-production is people working together to design and deliver services with meaningful and sustainable impact. It is a meeting of minds and hearts to reach a shared solution.

For an overview of co-production and the benefits of this approach, take a look at our [**What is co-production? learning guide**](#)

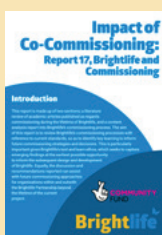


Impact of Co-Commissioning – Brightlife Cheshire

Brightlife Cheshire have put together a literature review of published academic articles related to commissioning, alongside their own review of the Brightlife commissioning process.

Among many others, key lessons for best practice include:

- Utilising different models of partnership working and joint commissioning
- Clarity in defining roles and responsibilities of different actors within networks and/or partnerships
- Awareness of complexity of the health and social care sector, and why it has developed in this way
- Balanced membership of commissioning boards, with service user representation
- Recognition of different evidence types, evidence cultures and how best to present data to different audiences



Impact of Co-Commissioning

can be found in the Theme 5 Resources folder of the Stronger Together toolkit resource library.



Interim report: What is Co-Commissioning and how did we do it? – Brightlife Cheshire

Brightlife has taken two very different approaches to commissioning services and activities that will provide community-based solutions to isolation and loneliness:

- Key Commissions follow a 'traditional' commissioning route with a competitive tendering process.
- Bright Ideas funding enables local groups and organisations to come forward with solutions that they think will work in their communities.



What is Co-Commissioning and how did we do it?

can be found in the Theme 5 Resources folder of the Stronger Together toolkit resource library.

Changing a Place: Microfunding, Co-Production and Community Development – Ambition for Ageing Greater Manchester

This document is one of three produced by Ambition for Ageing on the topic of wraparound microfunding. Key findings include:

- The approach has lent itself to different types of projects being funded compared to usual and has opened the participation of the programme to diverse people and groups.
- The openness of the funding criteria allows older people to identify where investments are needed and bring funding into those areas without the onerous procurement criteria of larger-scale funding.
- However, a significant amount of support from paid staff is required to provide guidance, mediation, and oversight.
- To ensure the inclusion of more marginalised people and groups, a community development approach alongside the microfunding is essential.
- The most value was generated in places where the right conditions of social networks and relationships pre-existed.



Changing a Place: Microfunding, Co-Production and Community Development can be found in the Theme 2 Resources folder of the Stronger Together toolkit resource library.



Co-Production in Micro-funding: Resources for funders – Bristol Ageing Better and Ageing Better in Birmingham

Collective learning for funders from the Ageing Better programmes in Bristol and Birmingham, split into two sections. Key learning centres around the following topics:

1. Encouraging a diverse range of activities to be funded through micro-funding

- Flexibility in the funding requirements
- Wide-reaching promotion and advertising
- An accessible and supportive application process
- Fair and transparent decisions
- Continuous process of review and improvement

2. How to ensure a co-produced micro-funding selection panel functions smoothly

- How and when applications are shared with the panel
- Scoring process
- Panel group dynamics and levels of motivation



Co-Production in Micro-funding: Resources for funders can be found in the Theme 2 Resources folder of the Stronger Together toolkit resource library.





Co-Production in Micro-funding: Resources for Individuals and Community Groups – Bristol Ageing Better and Ageing Better in Birmingham

Recommendations for individuals and community groups based on the collective learning from the Ageing Better programmes in Bristol and Birmingham. The learning is split into four sections:

1. Tips for working together with your community when making the application and running the activity
2. Jargon buster! Key words used in funding applications
3. Keeping your activity going after the micro-funding ends
4. Where to get information and advice about micro-funding



Co-Production in Micro-funding: Resources for Individuals and Community Groups goes hand in hand with **our selection of case studies** from individuals who have received funding from the micro-funding schemes in Bristol and Birmingham.

These resources can be found in the Theme 2 Resources folder of the Stronger Together toolkit resource library.

Top tips for contracts and commissioning – Brightlife Cheshire

10 top tips based on what Brightlife Cheshire have learnt about contracts and commissioning.

Tips include:

- Volunteer commissioners do work!
- Ideas from groups embedded in their local community or community of interest are more likely to be successful.
- Co-production is at the heart of the most successful projects.
- Rigid specification and contract management can inhibit innovation. Test and learn, review and adapt.
- Size doesn't matter. Big providers are not always the best.
- Marketing and evaluation should be built in, not an afterthought.
- Support and challenge. Ongoing support should sit alongside management of contracts.
- Many people do not like to join activities targeting a specific age range; thematic or interest-based groups are more appealing.
- Charging for a service is acceptable; it gives value and helps with sustainability. Be transparent about the offer from the beginning.
- Sustainability and legacy of projects should be embedded through the application and delivery phases. Sustainability plans should be developed long before the end of a project.



Top tips for contracts and commissioning

can be found in the theme 5 tools folder of the Stronger Together toolkit resource library.

All of the resources highlighted in this guide may be of interest to anyone who would like to develop a co-governance or co-commissioning model to make and oversee funding and policy decisions using a co-production approach.

It will be particularly useful if you are a policy maker, funding provider, service lead, or a funder of community-based projects or services.



Contact information

If you have further questions about co-production or the Stronger Together toolkit, feel free to get in touch with customercollaboration@syha.co.uk

Take a look at our other learning guides in this Stronger Together co-production series:



[1 Toolkit user guide](#)



[2 What is co-production?](#)



[3 Principles and values of co-production](#)



[4 Creating a co-production culture](#)



[5 Asset-based community development](#)



[6 How to grow sustainable groups](#)



[7 Increasing diversity of inclusion](#)



[8 Co-production in research](#)