



Oasis Talk project, Bristol

# Ageing Better



## Ageing Better: Local responses to the COVID-19 pandemic – promoting healthy lifestyles to build resilience

### **The Ageing Better programme**

Ageing Better is a six-year programme which has funded 14 England-wide partnerships to address the issues of loneliness and social isolation in communities of people aged over 50. Commencing in 2015, the programme was entering its sixth year when the COVID-19 pandemic struck.

This is the final paper in a series of rapid reviews, which summarise key features of Ageing Better partnerships' responses, in reorganising their support to reach people over 50 most affected by the pandemic. The papers are based on a review of wider policy and practice, and products (including self-reported data) published by the Ageing Better partnerships. Each paper explores a different theme and will culminate in a longer review due to be published in the Autumn. Please visit: <https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/strategic-investments/ageing-better> to find out more.

We know that before the COVID-19 pandemic emerged, social isolation and loneliness presented enduring challenges for society. Research found that 17% of older people report they are in contact with family, friends and neighbours less than once a week; 11% report this contact is as infrequent as less than once a month<sup>i</sup>. Of people aged 55 and over, more than one quarter of men and two fifths of women report feeling lonely always or some of the time<sup>ii</sup>. The impacts of lockdown policies on social isolation and loneliness are yet to be fully realised. However, in a survey conducted in April, 26% of older people said they had felt lonely in the past seven days<sup>iii</sup>.

Ageing Better partnerships recognise that COVID-19 presents a significant challenge for communities. Although the national lockdown eased, local restrictions were introduced in areas reporting spikes, and limits on social gatherings are being reinstated across the country. Given this uncertainty, some people over 50 are experiencing fear and anxiety leaving their home and mixing with other people within physical distancing guidelines<sup>iv</sup>. Maintaining a healthy lifestyle can help people to feel resilient during these challenging times. Ageing Better has supported many people to become more mentally and physically active and connected within their communities over time. Learning from Ageing Better has consistently highlighted the importance of routine to people's overall mental health and wellbeing<sup>v</sup>.

In this paper, we consider two key questions:

- How has Ageing Better supported people over 50 to lead healthy lifestyles during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- What are we learning that can enable our communities to recover in the longer-term?

## **How has Ageing Better supported people over 50 to lead healthy lifestyles during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

Before the pandemic, Ageing Better tended to promote healthy lifestyles through face-to-face wellbeing, mental health and counselling activities. Some telephone and online support was available, but this has increased notably during the pandemic. This reflects wider changes in health and social care, such as GP consultations increasingly taking place online<sup>vi</sup>. Ageing Better partnerships rapidly adapted activities and support to continue remotely where possible, ranging from diverse, group-based wellbeing activities<sup>vii</sup>, through to one-to-one mental health and counselling support<sup>viii</sup>, and support provided through social prescribing models<sup>ix</sup>.

## *Immediate response*

### **Immediate response to support healthy lifestyles**

The building blocks of a healthy lifestyle are linked to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, with food, water, sleep and warmth being the most basic physiological needs<sup>x</sup>. Ageing Better mobilised an immediate response to ensure participants' basic physiological needs were met during lockdown, through the distribution of food parcels and prescriptions. This enabled people to adjust their routines and try and maintain their health and wellbeing.

Community helplines were also quickly established as an immediate response, supporting people to look after their mental health and wellbeing. Callers were signposted to online guidance on healthy lifestyles if appropriate<sup>xi</sup>. For example, the Five Ways to Wellbeing highlight the benefits of social connections and keeping active, in supporting mental wellbeing and physical health<sup>xii</sup>. This is complemented by guidance from the World Health Organization (WHO), emphasising the importance of healthy eating at this time:

*“To ensure a healthy lifestyle, the WHO recommends eating lots of fruits and vegetables, reducing fat, sugar and salt intake and exercising”<sup>xiii</sup>.*

Ageing Better's immediate response to the pandemic included staff and volunteers inputting to community helplines to identify need, ensuring people had food and medicine, signposting people in need of specialist support, and delivering supplies if needed<sup>xiv</sup>. Partnerships reported an initial surge in vulnerable people requesting immediate support to access food and medicine. For example, Ageing Better Torbay assisted Torbay Food Alliance, a partnership between 12 foodbanks, to provide the equivalent of 130,000 meals to local residents during the first three months of the pandemic<sup>xv</sup>. This partnership continues to provide food parcels and, where needed, pre-cooked meals<sup>xvi</sup>, with volunteers working alongside established Community Builders to deliver food and prescriptions as needed.

Through their initial response, Ageing Better partnerships identified emerging and longer-term needs. Once their immediate needs were met, some participants gradually disclosed more complex needs. This included mental health challenges (partly arising from social isolation and loneliness experienced during lockdown), financial issues, and physical inactivity. A rise in risky behaviours amongst the over 50s has also emerged, as people have found it more challenging to maintain healthy lifestyles<sup>xvii</sup>. Through the immediate response, Ageing Better also reached further into communities, supporting people who had not participated in the programme before. In this way, Ageing Better reached people experiencing new needs as a result of being disempowered by the COVID-19 restrictions, and people who were already in need but previously unidentified by local support mechanisms.

Telephone befriending schemes and community helplines encouraged Ageing Better participants to maintain or adopt healthy lifestyles. Support included promoting self-care where appropriate, and signposting people to specialist support if needed. Some partnerships have gradually developed triage services, with volunteers responding to practical queries and trained staff and volunteers with a professional mental/physical health background responding to more complex cases<sup>xviii</sup>.

### ***Building personal resilience***

During the pandemic, Ageing Better has helped people build their resilience to maintain, adapt or develop healthy lifestyles. The pandemic has brought challenges, but also opportunities to do things differently. The response has diversified delivery models, and empowered people to think and interact in new ways, thereby building personal resilience. Activities have empowered some people over 50 who were living independently before COVID-19 to adapt, and in some cases assist their peers. Other people experiencing new challenges because of the COVID-19 restrictions have been supported to follow a healthy lifestyle. Approaches include: promoting social connections and wellbeing through local food growing and healthy eating, exercising within physical distancing guidelines, and adapting mental health and wellbeing projects.

#### **Personal Resilience**

Guidance from mental health charities encourages people over 50 to build their resilience. The advice covers physical health (ensuring they get enough sleep, eat healthy and are active), use relaxation techniques, develop hobbies and interests, make time for friends and develop social networks<sup>xix</sup>. Evidence-based practice demonstrates how these approaches can help people over 50 experiencing isolation and loneliness to improve their mental wellbeing, social capital and self efficacy<sup>xx</sup>.

Ageing Better supports individuals to build their personal resilience through healthy eating, positive social interaction, wellbeing activities and exercise. Engaging in these healthy lifestyle behaviours helps people to manage stress and build adaptability in challenging circumstances.

### ***Healthy eating***

Promoting healthy lifestyles through food is a cornerstone of the Ageing Better programme. Local food growing projects strengthened mental wellbeing by empowering people to source raw materials and ingredients, work together to grow produce, and cook products to sell to the local community or share with peers. Ageing Better in Bristol ran food growing and cookery projects in parallel, to promote the connection between fresh produce and affordable, tasty meals<sup>xxi</sup>.

Over time, Ageing Better partnerships recognised the ability of food to reach marginalised groups and engender wellbeing around social connections. For example:

- In Sheffield, food helped engage people in an informal environment by providing a conversation topic<sup>xxii</sup>.
- In Camden, food helped engage men through a range of activities including food sharing and learn to cook sessions<sup>xxiii</sup>.
- In Leeds, sharing traditional meals between people of different cultures helped to bring communities together<sup>xxiv</sup>.

Some Ageing Better participants applied their healthy eating knowledge and skills independently during lockdown. Ageing Better partnerships have also built nutrition into their resilience building response. For example:

- As part of Greater Manchester's nutrition and hydration programme, the University of Manchester developed an evidence-based strength and balance exercises programme, to deal with risks of falls and possible increases in malnutrition and dehydration<sup>xxv</sup>.
- Ageing Better in Camden developed nutrition and wellbeing resilience packages, including internet shopping for necessities<sup>xxvi</sup>.
- In Leicester, activity packs with seeds and grow guides were distributed to encourage people to grow their own fresh produce, to supplement food parcels and promote healthy eating<sup>xxvii</sup>.

### ***Supporting general wellbeing through social connections and being physically active***

Ageing Better has consistently encouraged people over 50 to invest in their general wellbeing through a wide range of activities. In Thanet, for example, wellbeing activities ranged from exercise classes through to arts and craft and reading groups<sup>xxviii</sup>. During the pandemic, many of these activities have moved online, to help people keep motivated to maintain healthy lifestyles. Positive social connections are a key motivating factor, and Ageing Better partnerships have adapted their offer to help people keep in touch. For example:

- In Birmingham, accessing online communities through smart phones, computers and tablets is helping people to feel connected<sup>xxix</sup>.
- In Hackney, telephone befriending services are facilitating conversations by engaging people through a task or topic, rather than talking about COVID-19 directly. Matching people based on similar interests is working well<sup>xxx</sup>.

However, some of the digital inclusion challenges noted by Ageing Better partnerships over time<sup>xxxi</sup> have persisted during the pandemic. Paper-based materials remain important for promoting healthy lifestyles to particularly isolated people. Following

lockdown, Ageing Better in Camden quickly established a weekly newsletter to help maintain connections, which was posted to local people. The newsletter includes ‘letters from lockdown’, which promotes wellbeing by sharing people’s personal experiences around purposeful activities<sup>xxxii</sup>.

Physical activity classes have also moved online during the pandemic, to support people to continue exercising safely in their own homes. Social media has helped to engage participants, particularly WhatsApp groups and Facebook groups. Ageing Better partnerships have adapted their offer to encourage physical activity in the following ways:

- Signposting to online exercise initiatives. For example, Hackney<sup>xxxiii</sup> and Birmingham suggest BBC Radio 5’s ‘10 Today’ programme which features daily 10-minute exercise routines designed to keep people over 50 active, healthy and independent<sup>xxxiv</sup>.
- In Middlesbrough, a local fitness expert helped to adapt exercise classes for people to do in their own homes, including chair-based exercises and dancing<sup>xxxv</sup>.
- East Lindsey created YouTube videos on exercise and healthy eating<sup>xxxvi</sup>.

As the pandemic has evolved, the importance of in-person support to boost wellbeing has resurfaced, particularly for people living alone and who have experienced physical isolation. For example, the Torbay partnership highlights face-to-face interaction is often as important as physical support<sup>xxxvii</sup>. As lockdown restrictions have eased, some Ageing Better partnerships are reintroducing outdoor groups, adhering to physical distancing guidelines. For example:

- Camden has initiated walk and talk sessions in a local park.
- Through the Ageing Better Carers Hub in Birmingham, residents have organised regular exercise classes to take place outdoors. These residents are now also sharing other activities such as Post Box Bingo, crosswords and puzzles<sup>xxxviii</sup>.

Ageing Better partnerships have promoted general wellbeing through gardening projects over time. In Greater Manchester, for example, a gardening project was initiated at a sheltered housing site to promote wellbeing, providing an uplifting space for older residents to relax outdoors<sup>xxxix</sup>. These initiatives have helped participants maintain their wellbeing during the pandemic.

### ***Strengthening mental health***

The Ageing Better programme has tested a range of mental health and counselling approaches over time. Most face-to-face mental health and counselling support was paused during the lockdown, although trusted individuals, such as community connectors, did continue to support the most in need<sup>xl</sup>.

Concerns about the longer-term effects of lockdown on older adults are increasing, with some people over 50 experiencing depression and anxiety for the first time. This coincides with older people appearing to be more reluctant to seek medical help during the pandemic<sup>xli</sup>. Ageing Better partnerships have adapted their mental health support offer during the pandemic accordingly. For example:

- In Bristol, before the pandemic the Oasis Talk project provided up to six sessions of free counselling for people over age 50 to treat depression<sup>xlii</sup>. Ageing Better in Bristol also provided a tailored counselling service for carers through the Carers Support Centre, and free wellbeing taster sessions to existing community groups<sup>xliii</sup>. As part of its response to the pandemic, Bristol Age UK created a Coronavirus Support Hub which includes emotional support and counselling services. Support includes a weekly telephone call for lonely and isolated people over 50. Callers experiencing anxiety can be referred to a qualified professional for a free 30-minute telephone counselling session<sup>xliv</sup>.
- In Camden, Age UK offers a telephone counselling service as part of its nutrition and wellbeing resilience package<sup>xlv</sup>.

Ageing Better partnerships are finding that some participants need additional support to rebuild their confidence following lockdown, particularly people with underlying health conditions. The Leeds partnership highlights the value of a person-centred approach in talking through physical distancing guidelines to help people reconnect socially. Helping people to examine their feelings about the easing of lockdown restrictions can rebuild confidence and enable people to make informed decisions and reengage at their own pace<sup>xlvi</sup>.

Ageing Better partnerships have also introduced new measures to address challenges which have intensified during the pandemic, such as bereavement support and helping people manage/adapt to physical distancing from friends and family. Partnerships explain that people's wellbeing can be negatively affected by not being able to share the bereavement process or grieve with family and friends. During the pandemic, some people over 50 may also be concerned about friends and relatives they are unable to visit<sup>xlvii</sup>. Ageing Better in Sheffield has adapted its Ripple Effects project, providing telephone bereavement support through Activity Phone Calls and Walk and Talk Phone Calls<sup>xlviii</sup>. The project is also evolving in response to increased requests for training for professionals and volunteers providing bereavement support<sup>xlix</sup>.

## Building community resilience to support recovery

### Community Resilience

According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, once a person's most basic physiological and health and wellbeing needs are met (personal resilience), they can consider their social needs. At this stage people often seek acceptance and belonging through social connections and community groups. Following this, people may wish to gain the respect and appreciation of others by contributing to their community<sup>l</sup>. In this way, people can build community resilience by bringing together three essential elements: personal resilience, social action and voluntary capabilities<sup>li</sup>. Applying Maslow's hierarchy to the pandemic, we see the interlinkages between building personal and community resilience.

Ageing Better partnerships are building community resilience by supporting local action and maximising the use of community resources, including targeting social prescribing to reach those most in need.

### *Local action and neighbourliness*

Community resilience is underpinned by asset-based volunteering<sup>lii</sup>. Ageing Better has empowered local people over 50 to run activities and provide practical peer support such as face-to-face befriending<sup>liii</sup>. Ageing Better is supporting volunteers to sustain their inputs to programme developments and community activities during the pandemic. Peer support remains the underpinning principle; groups are keen to stay connected and support each other to solve problems and work towards a common goal. Groups trust each other and are happy to ask questions and learn together. For example:

- In Birmingham, the Age of Experience group are being supported to access Google Hangouts to socialise<sup>liv</sup>.
- In Bristol, the Babbers group are now producing their regular radio programme from their own homes, instead of a radio studio. The group have been supported to develop the skills required to use new technology<sup>lv</sup>.

The rise in neighbourliness and reciprocity during the pandemic has provided a wider volunteering base in communities. Ageing Better has embraced this opportunity, with new volunteers contributing alongside existing volunteers, increasing capacity to respond to immediate needs<sup>lvi</sup>. Some of these arrangements are continuing in the medium term, with door-step check-ins and in-person support in outdoor settings, following physical distancing guidelines, for the most lonely and at risk. This support is reaching people struggling to follow a healthy lifestyle at this time.

Local action is underpinned by a network of trusted relationships, at both the individual and community level. This approach can help engage people over 50 with multiple and/or complex needs, by building on existing contacts and referral agreements using telephone befriending. Ageing Better partnerships have trained telephone befrienders and ‘match’ people based on interests to enhance interaction. Connections between volunteer telephone befrienders and befriendees can develop over time. For example, Ageing Better in Middlesbrough set up a new telephone befriending service providing “low level” emotional support for existing participants and other local people referred from other services. The partnership is led by Mind, providing a straightforward, trusted referral route for people with higher level needs<sup>lvii</sup>.

### ***Social prescribing***

#### **Social prescribing**

Social prescribing is a referral mechanism, enabling local agencies to refer people to a link worker. Utilising person-centred principles, the link worker role is designed to:

*“give people time, focusing on ‘what matters to me’ and taking a holistic approach to people’s health and wellbeing. They connect people to community groups and statutory services for practical and emotional support”<sup>lviii</sup>.*

The National Academy for Social Prescribing was launched in October 2019, to promote health and wellbeing by collaborating with organisations working in the arts, health, sports, leisure and natural environment fields<sup>lix</sup>. Social prescribing is playing a key role in helping people adapt and rebuild their lives during the pandemic. The Academy has recently been awarded £5 million funding to support people’s connections and health and wellbeing in the medium term, as communities recover from the pandemic<sup>lx</sup>.

Person-centred<sup>lxi</sup> social prescribing models have been tested through the Ageing Better programme, helping participants build their confidence and resilience with one-to-one support. This support has been provided by a range of community connector/community navigator roles and ranged from short-term practical assistance to help people access community groups, through to one-to-one confidence building and emotional support over a number of months<sup>lxii</sup>. A range of initiatives have developed similar community connector approaches in recent years, to tackle social isolation and loneliness<sup>lxiii</sup>, and build community resilience. Much of this support has moved online and been adapted into telephone befriending services in response to the pandemic<sup>lxiv</sup>.

This resonates with Ageing Better developments, whereby social prescribing models quickly evolved to provide telephone support for people shielding during the pandemic. Telephone support represented a small element of this approach pre-pandemic. However, Ageing Better partnerships largely transitioned to a telephone based social prescribing model at the outset of the pandemic, to help people self-manage their own wellbeing where possible. For example:

- In Cheshire, community connectors telephone past and present participants to offer advice and support. The social prescribing manager triages new referrals, to ensure people needing specialist support are referred on to the relevant services<sup>lxv</sup>.
- In Middlesbrough, telephone support assists people experiencing anxiety. Callers are encouraged to discuss their challenges and consider solutions. Social prescriber link workers also help callers accept health conditions, by focusing on the positives<sup>lxvi</sup>. Social prescribers are also providing participants with tablets and training to engage online<sup>lxvii</sup>, and arts and craft materials, to encourage creative activities. Early indications suggest this support may help some participants feel more positive<sup>lxviii</sup>.

Ageing Better partnerships are currently exploring options for reinstating social prescribing support in-person<sup>lxix</sup>, as part of a hybrid model in the medium term.

## **What are we learning that can enable our communities to recover in the longer-term?**

The developments above resonate with views from the wider community sector, and suggest that longer term community recovery could:

- Empower communities to drive change, particularly around food production and distribution. How can new ways of working quickly established during the pandemic inform partnership arrangements going forward?
- Create opportunities for people to build their personal resilience, to adapt and thrive in challenging situations. How can this be harnessed to support the self-management of conditions and appropriate use of health services?
- Recognise that paper-based and in-person support better meets the needs of some marginalised groups. What can we learn about supporting people most in need?
- Encourage more people to take a role in leading activities through different mediums. What can we learn about building community resilience by creating very localised trusted relationships between peers? How can different delivery mechanisms combine to diversify opportunities for meaningful connections?
- Social prescribing has evolved during the pandemic. How can we ensure the most in need are reached?

## Looking forward

In our role at Ecorys, as the independent evaluator and learning partner for the Ageing Better programme, we are working with TNLCF and Ageing Better partnerships to generate programme insights and will share this through future learning papers and events to influence wider service design. This paper has been written by Ecorys, in collaboration with TNLCF. We have produced a series of rapid review papers summarising Ageing Better's response to the pandemic. These papers focus on topics including: adapting support during a pandemic and building social capital and neighbourliness. Details on the **wider evidence base** generated by the evaluation can be found on [The National Lottery Community Fund website](#).

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<sup>i</sup> Age UK (2015) cited in Age UK (2019) Later Life in the United Kingdom 2019 [https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/late\\_life\\_uk\\_factsheet.pdf](https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/late_life_uk_factsheet.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> British Red Cross (2016), Isolation and Loneliness: An overview of the literature <https://www.redcross.org.uk/-/media/documents/about-us/research-publications/health-social-care-and-support/co-op-isolation-loneliness-overview.pdf>

<sup>iii</sup> Office for National Statistics (2020) Coronavirus and Loneliness <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/datasets/coronavirusandloneliness>

<sup>iv</sup> Covid-19 Transition Phase – learning from Ageing Better <https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/media/documents/ageing-better/Ageing-Better-Covid-19-Transition-Phase.pdf?mtime=20200714115157&focal=none>

<sup>v</sup> For example, Ecorys with The National Lottery Community Fund, March 2020. Learning Paper No.5 Micro-funding: Empowering Communities to Create Grassroots Change. Available from: [https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/media/documents/ageing-better/Ageing\\_better\\_learning\\_report\\_5\\_evaluation\\_report.pdf](https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/media/documents/ageing-better/Ageing_better_learning_report_5_evaluation_report.pdf)

<sup>vi</sup> The NHS Long Term Plan includes a commitment that by 2023/24, every patient in England will be able to access a digital first primary care offer. Access to primary care services via online consultations is a core component of that commitment. NHS (January 2020) Using Online Consultations In Primary Care Implementation Toolkit <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/online-consultations-implementation-toolkit-v1.1-1-updated.pdf>

<sup>vii</sup> For further information on Ageing Better's group activities, please view our Marginalisation report: [https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/media/documents/ageing-better/prog\\_fulfilling\\_lives\\_ageing\\_better\\_learning\\_report\\_4.pdf?mtime=20200313105446&focal=none](https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/media/documents/ageing-better/prog_fulfilling_lives_ageing_better_learning_report_4.pdf?mtime=20200313105446&focal=none)

<sup>viii</sup> Positive Mental Health – learning from Ageing Better <https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/media/documents/ageing-better/Ageing-Better-Positive-Mental-Health.pdf?mtime=20200131160425&focal=none>

<sup>ix</sup> For further information on Ageing Better's initiatives linked to social prescribing, please view our Community Connectors report [https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/media/documents/ageing-better/prog\\_fulfilling\\_lives\\_ageing\\_better\\_learning\\_report\\_2.pdf?mtime=20181219102827&focal=none](https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/media/documents/ageing-better/prog_fulfilling_lives_ageing_better_learning_report_2.pdf?mtime=20181219102827&focal=none)

<sup>x</sup> Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. <https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>

<sup>xi</sup> For example, NHS guidance to improve mental health and wellbeing: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing/>

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- <sup>xii</sup> Connect Hackney partner the Shoreditch Trust report evidenced-based findings around the benefits of the Five Ways to Wellbeing in helping people look after themselves whilst self-isolating. <https://www.connecthackney.org.uk/uncategorized/five-ways-to-wellbeing-during-lockdown/>
- <sup>xiii</sup> World Health Organization's recommendations for a healthy lifestyle: <https://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/disease-prevention/nutrition/a-healthy-lifestyle>
- <sup>xiv</sup> For example, the Torbay community helpline. Torbay Community Development Trust (July 2020) Pandemic Response: Building resilience in the community in response to the COVID 19 pandemic. Ageing Well Torbay Learning Series <https://ageingwelltorbay.com/2020/07/15/pandemic-response-building-resilience-in-the-community-in-response-to-covid-19-pandemic-2020-report/>
- <sup>xv</sup> Torbay Food Alliance was set up in March 2020 to respond to COVID-19 <https://www.torbayfoodalliance.org>
- <sup>xvi</sup> Torbay Food Alliance is supported by Torbay Community Development Trust, Torbay Council and Torbay and South Devon NHS Trust. <https://ageingwelltorbay.com/2020/07/22/torbay-community-helpline-set-to-stay-for-the-long-run/>
- <sup>xvii</sup> People over 50 experienced a broad range of health challenges and reported a rise in risky behaviours, such as smoking, unhealthy eating and increased alcohol consumption, during lockdown. Centre for Ageing Better and Ipsos MORI (July 2020) THE EXPERIENCE OF PEOPLE APPROACHING LATER LIFE IN LOCKDOWN The impact of COVID-19 on 50-70-year olds in England <https://www.ageing-better.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-07/experience-of-people-approaching-later-life-lockdown.pdf>
- <sup>xviii</sup> The Ageing Better national evaluation team are currently consulting partnerships on this, and findings will feature in our forthcoming COVID-19 learning paper.
- <sup>xix</sup> Mind website. How can I be more resilient? <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/stress/developing-resilience/>
- <sup>xx</sup> Mind commissioned Ecorys to evaluate the impact of the My Generation programme. Mind Cymru (2019) Our work in Wales: My Generation Improving the mental resilience and wellbeing of people over 50 years old in Wales <https://www.mind.org.uk/media-a/4355/my-generation-report-english.pdf>
- <sup>xxi</sup> Ageing Better national evaluation team visit to the Bristol partnership, 2018.
- <sup>xxii</sup> Community Fund. The Role of Food in Building Connections and Relationships <https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/media/documents/ageing-better/Ageing-Better-Role-of-Food-in-Building-Connections-and-Relationships.pdf?mtime=20200622114244&focal=none>
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Community Fund. The Role of Food in Building Connections and Relationships <https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/media/documents/ageing-better/Ageing-Better-Role-of-Food-in-Building-Connections-and-Relationships.pdf?mtime=20200622114244&focal=none>
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Time to Shine report. (January 2020) Food for thought: community connections through shared meals. [https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/assets.timetoshine.co.uk/Food-for-Thought-TTS-report-WEB\\_final.pdf](https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/assets.timetoshine.co.uk/Food-for-Thought-TTS-report-WEB_final.pdf)
- <sup>xxv</sup> This briefing provides an overview of the COVID-19 impact on marginalised communities across Greater Manchester. <https://www.qmcvo.org.uk/news/equalities-briefings-covid-19>
- <sup>xxvi</sup> Ageing Better in Camden's blog post on health and wellbeing resilience packages: <http://www.ageingbetterincamden.org.uk/latestnews/2020/3/16/coronavirus-covid19>
- <sup>xxvii</sup> Ageing Better in Leicester provides online advice to support healthy lifestyles and build resilience <https://www.leicesterageingtogether.org.uk/wellbeing/keeping-active/>
- <sup>xxviii</sup> Further information on Ageing Better Thanet's Wellbeing strand is available online: <https://sekgroup.org.uk/community-support/ageless-thanet/>
- <sup>xxix</sup> Birmingham Ageing Better: Maintaining social connections with older people remotely. <https://www.ageingbetterinbirmingham.co.uk/media/attachments/2020/06/09/birmingham-ageing-better-learning-maintaining-social-connections.pdf>

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- <sup>xxx</sup> Ageing Better Connect Hackney (2020) Staying Connected: entertainment/leisure opportunities in the current covid-19 outbreak (non face-to-face contact).  
<https://www.ageingbetterinbirmingham.co.uk/media/attachments/2020/04/21/connect-hackney-project-ideas-for-covid-19.pdf>
- <sup>xxx</sup><sup>i</sup> Bridging the Digital Divide – learning from Ageing Better  
<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/media/documents/ageing-better/Ageing-Better-Bridging-the-digital-divide.pdf?mtime=20200519104603&focal=none>
- <sup>xxx</sup><sup>ii</sup> The ‘letters from lockdown’ are available online. Ageing Better Camden website.  
<http://www.ageingbetterincamden.org.uk/letters-from-lockdown>
- <sup>xxx</sup><sup>iii</sup> Connect Hackney partner Shoreditch Trust has evidenced-based findings on the benefits of the Five Ways to Wellbeing on how to look after oneself while self-isolating during the Coronavirus pandemic. <https://www.connecthackney.org.uk/uncategorized/five-ways-to-wellbeing-during-lockdown/>
- <sup>xxx</sup><sup>iv</sup> Ageing Better in Birmingham’s Maintaining social connections with older people remotely: <https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/media/insights/documents/Ageing-Better-in-Birmingham-Maintaining-social-connections.pdf?mtime=20200515162250&focal=none>
- <sup>xxx</sup><sup>v</sup> Ageing Better Middlesbrough’s “Getting Fit at Home” guidance:  
<https://www.ageingbettermiddlesbrough.org.uk/news/keeping-fit-at-home/>
- <sup>xxx</sup><sup>vi</sup> Further information on Ageing Better East Lindsey’s activities are available online:  
<https://tedineastlindsey.co.uk/self-distancing-but-still-connected/>
- <sup>xxx</sup><sup>vii</sup> Torbay Community Development Trust (July 2020) Pandemic Response: Building resilience in the community in response to the COVID 19 pandemic. Ageing Well Torbay Learning Series  
<https://ageingwelltorbay.com/2020/07/15/pandemic-response-building-resilience-in-the-community-in-response-to-covid-19-pandemic-2020-report/>
- <sup>xxx</sup><sup>viii</sup> Ageing Better in Birmingham Stories: Birmingham Carers supported through the pandemic.  
<https://www.ageingbetterinbirmingham.co.uk/learn-more-get-inspired-by-stories/stories/carers-supported-through-the>
- <sup>xxx</sup><sup>ix</sup> For further information: Ageing Better’s asset-based volunteering approaches, please view the Ecorys micro-funding report and film <https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/strategic-investments/ageing-better>
- <sup>x</sup><sup>i</sup> Community connectors in Cheshire for example, introduced door-step check-ins for participants most in need. The Ageing Better national evaluation team are currently consulting partnerships on this theme, and findings will feature in our forthcoming COVID-19 learning paper.
- <sup>x</sup><sup>ii</sup> Age UK (July 2020) The mental health of older people coming out of lockdown  
<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/discover/2020/07/mental-health-lockdown/>
- <sup>x</sup><sup>iii</sup> Talking Therapies Oasis-Talks <http://bristolageingbetter.org.uk/talking-therapies-oasis-talks/>
- <sup>x</sup><sup>iiii</sup> Talking Therapies Oasis-Talks <http://bristolageingbetter.org.uk/talking-therapies-oasis-talks/>
- <sup>x</sup><sup>lv</sup> Bristol Age UK Coronavirus Support Hub: <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/bristol/our-services/support-hub/>
- <sup>x</sup><sup>lv</sup> Age UK Camden’s Nutrition & Wellbeing resilience package:  
<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/camden/get-involved/coronavirus-appeal/>
- <sup>x</sup><sup>lvi</sup> Time to Shine learning briefing: (July 2020). Boosting confidence to regain independence.  
<https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/assets.timetoshine.co.uk/Boosting-confidence-to-regain-independence.pdf>
- <sup>x</sup><sup>lvii</sup> Covid-19 - Learning from Ageing Better  
[https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/media/documents/ageing-better/Ageing\\_better\\_Covid19.pdf?mtime=20200408124030&focal=none](https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/media/documents/ageing-better/Ageing_better_Covid19.pdf?mtime=20200408124030&focal=none)
- <sup>x</sup><sup>lviii</sup> The Ripple Effect – Getting creative with lockdown phone calls. Ageing Better in Sheffield website.  
<https://www.agebettersheff.co.uk/news/news-and-blogs/the-ripple-effect-getting-creative-with-lockdown-phone-calls/>

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<sup>xlix</sup> The Ageing Better national evaluation team are currently consulting partnerships on this, and findings will feature in our forthcoming COVID-19 learning paper

<sup>i</sup> Verrywelmind website (June 2020) The 5 Levels of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs  
<https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-maslows-hierarchy-of-needs-4136760>

<sup>ii</sup> Cabinet Office (September 2019) Community resilience development framework  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-resilience-development-framework>

<sup>iii</sup> Further information and guidance on community resilience is available online  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-resilience-development-framework>

<sup>iiii</sup> For further information on Ageing Better's asset-based volunteering approaches, please view our Micro-funding report and film <https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/strategic-investments/ageing-better>

<sup>liv</sup> Ageing Better in Birmingham <https://www.ageingbetterinbirmingham.co.uk/>

<sup>lv</sup> Babbers on a Break! Bristol Ageing Better <http://bristolageingbetter.org.uk/news/babbers-on-a-break/>

<sup>lvi</sup> COVID-19 – Rapid Report #2 –Local responses to the COVID-19 pandemic- neighbourliness and reciprocity

<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/strategic-investments/ageing-better#section-2>

<sup>lvii</sup> Telephone Befriending – Update

<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/media/documents/ageing-better/Ageing-Better-Telephone-befriending-update.pdf?mtime=20200715162628&focal=none>

<sup>lviii</sup> Social prescribing. NHSE website <https://www.england.nhs.uk/personalisedcare/social-prescribing/>

<sup>lix</sup> National Academy for Social Prescribing <https://socialprescribingacademy.org.uk/>

<sup>lx</sup> Department of Health and Social Care press release: £5 million for social prescribing to tackle the impact of COVID-19

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/5-million-for-social-prescribing-to-tackle-the-impact-of-covid-19#:~:text=The%20National%20Academy%20for%20Social%20Prescribing%20funds%20and%20supports%20innovative,support%20in%20their%20local%20areas>

<sup>lxi</sup> Working with community assets – learning from Ageing Better

<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/media/documents/ageing-better/Ageing-Better-Working-withcommunity-assets.pdf?mtime=20200519110231&focal=none>

<sup>lxii</sup> For example, Ecorys with The National Lottery Community Fund, October 2018. Learning Report No.2 – Community Connectors Available from:

[https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/media/documents/ageing-better/prog\\_fulfilling\\_lives\\_ageing\\_better\\_learning\\_report\\_2.pdf?mtime=20181219102827&focal=none](https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/media/documents/ageing-better/prog_fulfilling_lives_ageing_better_learning_report_2.pdf?mtime=20181219102827&focal=none)

<sup>lxiii</sup> From 2015 to 2019, the Co-op and the British Red Cross worked in partnership, delivering social prescribing-style services, connecting communities across the UK to tackle loneliness and social isolation. Co-op and British Red Cross (2019) Tackling Loneliness Together: British Red Cross and Co-op end of partnership report

<file:///C:/Users/Jenny.Williams/Downloads/Tackling-Loneliness-Together-British-Red-Cross-and-Co-op.pdf>

<sup>lxiv</sup> For example, the British Red Cross launched a coronavirus support line offering emotional and practical support <https://www.redcross.org.uk/get-help/coronavirus/support-line>

<sup>lxv</sup> For more information on telephone-based social prescribing, please visit:

<http://www.brightlifesheshire.org.uk/coronavirus-update/>

<sup>lxvi</sup> Ageing Better Middlesbrough, Social Prescribing Support During the COVID-19 Crisis.

<https://www.ageingbettermiddlesbrough.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/58487-Social-prescribing-Infographics.pdf>

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<sup>lxvii</sup> Over time, Ageing Better in Middlesbrough has also supported people to use social media and technological devices. Further information:

<https://www.ageingbettermiddlesbrough.org.uk/how-we-can-help/digital-inclusion/>

<sup>lxviii</sup> Ageing Better Middlesbrough, Social Prescribing Support During the COVID-19 Crisis.

<https://www.ageingbettermiddlesbrough.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/58487-Social-prescribing-Infographics.pdf>

<sup>lxix</sup> The Ageing Better national evaluation team are currently consulting partnerships on this, and findings will feature in our forthcoming COVID-19 learning paper.