

Shifting sands and different look-outs?

Perspectives from TED Ageing Better in East Lindsey 2015-2021

2021



About TED

Talk, Eat, Drink (TED) Ageing Better in East Lindsey is part of Ageing Better, a programme set up by The National Lottery Community Fund, the largest funder of community activity in the UK. Ageing Better aims to develop creative ways for people aged 50 and over to combat social isolation and loneliness. It is one of five major programmes set up by The National Lottery Community Fund to test and learn from new approaches to designing services which aim to make people's lives healthier and happier.

Commencing in 2015 and originally running for 6 years until 2021, the programme has been extended to include a seventh year. TED in East Lindsey is one of fourteen 'local' programmes funded by Ageing Better. Nationally the £87 million programme has a specific focus on the experiences of people who are aged 50 and above in relation to tackling loneliness and social isolation and creating 'togetherness' through a range of activities and initiatives.

TED in East Lindsey is grounded in the experiences of stakeholders in the district including people aged 50 and over, but the programme also recognises the wider international and national strategy and policy contexts. These include, but are not limited to, the Centre for Ageing Better and the World Health Organisation's advancements regarding Age-Friendly Cities and Communities, mirrored in relation to their 8 domains of Age Friendliness (WHO, 2018). These are:

1. Outdoor spaces and buildings
2. Transportation
3. Housing
4. Social participation



TED is funded by The National Lottery Community Fund and is managed by YMCA Lincolnshire

5. Respect and social inclusion

7. Communication and information

6. Civic participation and employment

8. Community support and health

All of these sources emphasise a relationship between ageing and social isolation and loneliness – as well as intersections with other demographics and socio-economic factors.

The overarching aims and objectives of TED in East Lindsey echo those of Ageing Better nationally and these have remained relevant and timely throughout the programme's life cycle, taking in the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic to date. They are:

- More people aged 50 and over being better connected with volunteering, social, leisure and health improving activities
- More people aged 50 and over reporting that they feel less lonely or isolated
- More people aged 50 and over feeling positive about the opportunities that ageing presents
- More people aged 50 and over having more opportunities to influence the design, delivery and evaluation of services and businesses available to them

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic the 'TED service offer' was characterised by three distinct strands of activity:

- 1. The creation and facilitation of Friendship Groups** which grew from the initial 'Teas with TED' meetings. These Friendship Groups are established and supported with a paid Community Officer with a view to becoming self-sustaining past the lifetime of the current funding for TED in East Lindsey. These groups recruit and draw on a significant number of volunteers
- 2. The promotion of Age Friendliness in Businesses via the Age-friendly Business Award.** Over 120 businesses in the district now hold the award, which recognises the efforts of businesses in acknowledging the role of age and ageing in how they design, deliver and sustain their services and products
- 3. Diverse projects delivered by 'specialist' Delivery Partners.** These projects range from a focus on Digital Inclusion, to activities for Male Carers, Citizen's Advice and Food, Health and Wellbeing projects



As a result of the pandemic and social distancing, the programme as a whole diversified to include forms of engagement and belonging that can be captured in a shift from 'getting out and getting together' to 'connecting despite distance'. Services across the programme (importantly including Age-friendly Businesses) developed methods of contact which included digital/online service offers, socially distanced deliveries and meetings as well as telephone contact. In this definitive shift the programme adapted service offers and delivery with the result of engaging with 'hidden' ageing populations and their needs and preferences. Combined with this the existing, trusted, relationships with communities also served as catalysts to programme-wide insight that would capture the emerging nature of needs and preferences in TED members who had taken up prior service offers. The ConnectTED service, for instance, involved creating a telephone befriending service for people aged 50 and over in the district. This made contact with people who had mobility issues, and those who preferred one to one contact and/or 'blended' approaches to delivery.

In this report we reflect on over 6 years of learning from TED in East Lindsey. Our partners, the University of Lincoln International Business School and Rose Regeneration have reported on research which the programme commissioned for a period of 2 years. Their detailed final evaluation report in line with HM Treasury's Magenta Book, features process, impact and economic components: collecting quantitative and qualitative data utilising mixed-methods approaches (University of Lincoln and Rose Regeneration, forthcoming). In contrast, this report is a reflective on learning reports and case studies the programme has produced to date. It does so by principally detailing core ways, or 'shifting sands', in how we both think about, and engage with, ageing populations from different perspectives (or lookouts). They include:

- Embedding the Aims and Objectives of Ageing Better
- Challenging Stereotypes and Changing the Narrative
- Working With Communities Collaboratively
- Enhancing Togetherness Through 'Grassroots Best Practice'
- Shifting to Sustainability? Maximising Resource and Harnessing Participation

Before turning to each of these thematic areas some headline characteristics about East Lindsey can be noted to give context to the findings of this report.

About East Lindsey: Rurality, sparsity and coastal populations

East Lindsey is a rural area that contains a number of towns, but also has a significantly sparse population made up of smaller towns, villages, hamlets and individual dwellings. A substantial part of the District comprises of coastline and The Wolds, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It has as an ageing population which is significantly disproportionately higher than the national average. A recent assessment of the Age-friendliness of the district in the context of the World Health Organisation's 8 domains of age-friendly communities undertaken by the jointly funded TED and East Lindsey District Council Age-friendly Principal Officer reports:

"East Lindsey has a population of 141,727, 53% of residents are over 50 years old and 38% of residents are over 60 years old. Life expectancy is lower than National Average at 77.8 years for men and 82 years for women. The national average is 79.9 years for males and 83.6 years for females. It is also reported that 1 in 4 of the population have long term illness or disability. The increasing ageing population means that by 2037, a quarter of the total UK population will be over 65. Lincolnshire, and in particular East Lindsey will continue to have a higher than national average number of older residents. Projected numbers state that 30% of the population of Lincolnshire will be over 65 by 2041; while in East Lindsey 40% of people will be over 65" (TED/ELDC Baseline Assessment , forthcoming)

Challenges for the population include: pockets of high deprivation in a national context, access to and use of (affordable) transport, access to other public services, leisure and town 'hubs', issues with internet connectivity and mobile phone signal in a number of areas, and an inward migration of people that move into the district to retire.



This includes a substantial number who present with and/or develop health issues or transport needs – see for example Lincolnshire’s (2018) Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (see <https://www.research-lincs.org.uk/Joint-Strategic-Needs-Assessment.aspx>). A similar pattern has been cited as taking place in neighbouring areas in North East Lincolnshire, specifically Greater Grimsby (North East Lincolnshire’s State of the Borough Report, 2018). This pattern also includes ageing populations who take advantage of affordable housing in affluent areas, whereas ‘local’ younger people are brought up and reside in significantly more deprived areas (with skilled ‘local’ graduates choosing to move out of these areas and the wider county. This has implications for recruiting and retaining staff needed in skilled occupations, see for example, ELDC (2016)).

TED in East Lindsey has further highlighted issues with infrastructure and how these can impact on social isolation and loneliness in our communities. Focus groups have revealed that transport is essential to accessing key services and whilst main routes from the City of Lincoln to the coastal town of Skegness are well served, rail links, bus services and other forms of transport remain problematic (Age-friendly Community Baseline Assessment of East Lindsey, forthcoming). This includes travel to main hospitals from outlier areas. In addition, the 2017 Lincolnshire Sustainability and Transformation Plan reported that 55,000 households in Lincolnshire do not own a car or van. In summer months additional demand for core services such as healthcare, transport and policing are reflective of the transient tourist population visiting coastal towns and villages. Park home and static caravan complexes also provide a base for ageing people to spend a substantial proportion of their retirement, but these people can ‘fall under the radar’ with implications for statutory services and the abilities to evidence levels of needs, issues and demand (Beatty, Fothergill, Powell and Scott, 2011). In addition, a number of East Lindsey market towns are heritage and cultural sites which limit the extent to which public spaces can be reconfigured or redesigned to engage and facilitate ageing populations (Age-friendly Community Baseline Assessment of East Lindsey, forthcoming).

The Centre for Towns (2020) has highlighted that East Lindsey – particularly the coastal towns of Skegness and Mablethorpe – contain some of the most vulnerable places to the impact of COVID-19 nation-wide. This is attributed partly to their demographic make-up, health needs and a reliance on income from the hardest-hit sectors affected by the pandemic. These sectors include accommodation, non-food retail, pubs and restaurants and arts and leisure. Towns in East Lindsey therefore have a combination of pre-existing issues regarding austerity and capabilities to recover from the pandemic specifically. These include economic decline and isolated populations. Recently these issues have been at the centre of proposals for community development projects that include government Towns Fund initiatives in Mablethorpe and Skegness.

The Towns Fund nationally is a £3.6 billion fund to invest in towns as part of government’s plans to ‘level up’ regions. For the two awards in East Lindsey, Mablethorpe have been allocated £23.9 million and Skegness £24.5 million. A significant part of this funding has been allocated to develop a Campus for Future Living in Mablethorpe, an initiative that will draw on the town, and the wider district, as a test bed for identifying best practice to responding to challenging rural and coastal issues which will also have local, regional, national and international relevance (see <https://connectedcoast.co.uk/?p=627>).



TED in East Lindsey has both a Programme Management Group (PMG) and Delivery Partner forum. The first of these provides strategic oversight, monitoring and programme design input which is made up of senior stakeholders from statutory services, VCS organisations and a designated ELDC lead who holds a 'better ageing' portfolio. The PMG is also chaired by an Assistant Director of Housing and Wellbeing from ELDC who is a key advocate for the programme. The Delivery Partner meetings include representatives of the specialist organisations commissioned to run diverse projects. Both sets of stakeholders have been, and remain, integral in contributing to the evidence-base on social isolation, loneliness and better ageing. As one PMG member described prior to the announcement of Towns Fund allocations:

"...reflecting on other funding opportunities that are coming our way, ...they are coming our way because of the extensive inequality and deprivation in East Lindsey in particular.. the work that TED is and has been doing has directly fed into and supported the evidence base" (PMG member, October 2020)

TED in East Lindsey has provided, and continues to be, a catalyst for change. One of the key ingredients has been the clear shared ownership of Ageing Better's national strategic priorities, aims and objectives. These have been embedded in a number of policy/practice interfaces. The first thematic shift, and one that has been crucial to the strategic and operational advances made by the programme, relates to how, over time, the programme has become integrated in policies and practices in the district (see, for example: 'East Lindsey – a place where everyone has a chance to thrive: Looking to the Future 2020-2030' (Corporate Strategy) (ELDC, 2020) Age-friendly Community Baseline Assessment of East Lindsey (forthcoming)).

For this thematic shift and others to start with an overview of their key dimensions or characteristics is given.

Embedding Strategy: The Aims and Objectives of Ageing Better

Key dimensions:

- Dedicated resource in building capacity through developing relationships over time
- The policy/practice interfaces and policy stakeholder commitment
- The role of sharing experience as part of 'test and learn'
- Establishing systems and processes

Ageing Better has provided clear aims and objectives which have also been accompanied by the advantages of having dedicated resource and time to support the design and delivery of projects within the programme. A key characteristic has been the ability to draw on existing relationships in the communities which the YMCA Lincolnshire programme team, delivery partners, volunteers and Age-friendly Businesses had prior to TED in East Lindsey commencing. However, the role of resource has been important in facilitating the early design and delivery of services as well as wider programme 'start-up'. An example of this can be found in the grassroots work done to start and sustain Friendship Groups. Early engagement featured 'Teas with TED' that provided a way of bringing people together for traditional 'coffee morning' style gatherings.



'Test and learn' was employed as a means of reflecting on emerging issues which could be addressed to ensure objectives of Ageing Better could be met. 'Reaching' communities and identifying potential barriers to engagement enabled modification of services 'on the ground'. Whilst some of this focused on 'practical' issues in working with ageing populations it has also covered emotional engagement:

"It's having that confidence to turn up to a group session on your own; it's hard for some people." (TED Community Officer)

The role of dedicated personnel to identify and act on issues served as a crucial linkage point for policy/strategy, programme management, service design and activities. Linking overarching programme management with dedicated staff built relationships in communities that engage and appreciate the challenges involved in reducing loneliness and isolation. The Age-friendly Business Officer role is an example of how dedicated staff provides ongoing relationships with businesses and builds credibility of the Award. By June 2021 TED in East Lindsey had presented the Award to over 120 businesses. Programme learning on resilience reinforces the importance of its relational nature, even when deprivation, structural inequalities and issues such as health impact on people experiences of ageing:

"One of the men described that only a year ago he was in a bad way with regards to his mental health and he said that there was no way he could have attended this group. He also said he had to re-learn a lot of things due to losing a lot of his memory. He commented on how he had enjoyed the session and he took part in many things and chatted with the others. He said: "I haven't been able to plan or look forward to anything for years, it was just day to day survival, but I will be honest with you that I am really looking forward to coming next week". (TED Delivery Partner Magna Vitae, CHAPS)

'I have never laughed so much in all my life. I have come to a few sessions now, at home I look after my cats and that's it really. I don't go out. I like to speak to the people here and have a laugh.' (TED Service User, Friendship Group)

Understanding the experiences of people aged 50 and over in the district remain essential to exploring ways in which to embed the strategic aims of the programme and give greater nuance on the diversities of ageing. This has been constant across changes in delivery as a result of COVID-19, including the role of developing telephone and digital service offers (be these as part of 'stand-alone' or part of 'blended' delivery approaches). For instance, following a review of Common Measurement Framework (CMF) data and working with existing interest groups the TED programme commissioned LGBTQ+ consultancy which recognised the role of training delivery partners, volunteers and the YMCA Lincolnshire staff team. This awareness training was foreseen as having distinct benefits in terms of reaching and engaging with people and their particular identities in the district's rural and coastal communities. At the same time this gave added strategic 'reach' and relevance to people sometimes portrayed or perceived as being 'marginalised':

'Training, oh yes, very much so. I think loneliness is a killer. I don't think there's anything worse than when somebody is sad at home and the reason they are at home is because they're afraid to go out the front door. You know my friend that I mentioned before? It would be difficult to make her feel included, you know the person who has had a full (gender) transition. And you've got people who are at various [transition] stages and there are so many versions of gender. Training could help with that couldn't it, and it could bring ideas.' (Mike, Service User)

Yet dedicated resource does not only link to the contribution of lottery funding for staff from YMCA Lincolnshire, or the commissioning of delivery partner-led projects and engaging with the recruitment and development of volunteers for longer-term sustainability. TED in East Lindsey and East Lindsey District Council (ELDC) have jointly funded the appointment of an Age-friendly Principal Officer as a lead for assessing and promoting the age-friendly community status of the district, harmonising and strengthening the outcomes of TED in East Lindsey in the context of Centre for Ageing Better and World Health Organisation strategic contexts. As well as Programme Management Group meetings being chaired by an Assistant Director from East Lindsey District Council, they are attended by a district and county councillor who holds the ELDC portfolio for Better Ageing (this lead figure also has wider links with YMCA Lincolnshire and other organisations undertaking community development work with relevance to ageing).

Cumulatively these have been integral to building insight into ageing experiences in rural/coastal communities, at the same time as contributing to an ongoing (and 'unfinished') evidence-base. TED in East Lindsey's written and oral submissions of evidence to an All Party Parliamentary Group Inquiry into Loneliness during 2020 reflected on these strengths and the aligning of these to different programme aspects:

“Integrating ongoing research and learning with service design has been essential in allowing us to adapt our services to meet the needs of beneficiaries. In short, we have found that by innovating in evaluation and service delivery we have made contact with groups who would otherwise have been described as ‘hard to reach’ or ‘marginalised’. These are crucial mechanisms in ensuring our knowledge of communities is timely and funding decisions remain informed over time. Through developing strategic and stakeholder relationships, we have been able to collate evidence that is disseminated at district, county and national levels resulting in a distinctive interface between ‘grassroots’ practice and community work on the one hand, and the development of strategy and policy on the other” (Director of Communities, YMCA Lincolnshire, oral submission, July 2020)

‘Closing the loop’, as depicted in the quote above, has been a core component in promoting Ageing Better aims and objectives through various processes of identifying ‘what works, for who, in what circumstances’. This is especially pertinent during definitive ‘shifts’ in delivery. In the TED Learning Report on Adaptation in ‘the Sector’ project case studies completed by delivery partners highlighted abilities to communicate and work collaboratively, consequently providing ‘wrap-around’ and ‘blended’ service delivery when working with people aged 50 and over during challenges of COVID-19. This has been shaped somewhat paradoxically: brought about (in-part) through pressures on resources (time, staff/volunteer dedicated resource, financial challenges along with additional work from different ‘new’ ways of working) and the prospect of increasingly competitive, short-term funding landscapes. Yet, this has taken place whilst also trying to match levels of demand from members of the community.

‘Closing the loop’ takes place with multiple stakeholders, importantly with ageing people in diverse communities. Sharing of information in a test and learn framework has been facilitated by establishing dedicated platforms for this activity. Our Programme Management Group (PMG) and Delivery Partner meetings were instilled from programme inception.



These have evolved, for instance, from the programme having a 'scrutiny panel' of community representatives to the inclusion of people with lived experience in the PMG. Establishing these platforms gave opportunities to document activity in the programme. This extends to reflecting critically and capturing 'journeys of change'. These 'mechanisms' were supported by establishing systems and processes. Combined, all dimensions of this shift contribute to embedding aims and objectives, but these dimensions were not static. For example, during COVID-19 and the development of the ConnectED befriending phone service, referral forms were created and spreadsheets developed for places in the district so befriending call activity could be logged. Similarly, procedures and responsibilities for keeping minutes, notes and actions were established at the beginning of the programme.

Embedding strategic priorities, aims and objectives of the programme were not the only result of the cumulative effect of the dimensions in this theme. Firstly, they were instrumental in the programme changing narratives about the 'elderly' (sic), 'older people', 'loneliness' and 'social isolation'. This involved challenging stereotypes about ageing people, their activities, services and providers. Secondly, these understandings enable TED in East Lindsey to occupy a distinctive position at the interface of practice and policy, understanding and delivering to communities and representing ageing diversities at different levels. These states are not necessarily 'complete' but they do also facilitate the remaining shifts outlined in this learning report, as well as a re-imagining of language in relation to loneliness, social isolation and ageing.



Challenging Stereotypes and Changing the Narrative

Key dimensions

- Loneliness and isolation - language as a barrier to participation
- Stereotypes of ageing - diversities, identities, relatability and 'meaning'
- Vibrancy not vulnerability (people, services, activities)



To start with the exploration of this theme we can use the example of Roger's story to illustrate wider findings.

Roger's Sporting Memories Story:*

Roger is in his late 80's, living on his own but has some mobility issues. Apart from seeing his son each week he was receiving mainly female visitors who were providing him with some support. When the Learning and Evaluation Officer spoke with Roger on the phone, it became apparent that he would like some contact with other men with similar interests in sports so Magna Vitae were approached. He was not 'online' so Magna Vitae gave him a call and mailed him the weekly Sporting Pinks newsletter.

They asked Roger if he would like to give the Sporting Memories quiz a try using conference call so he was included on the weekly quiz, with a small group of men the facilitator matched him with.

The facilitator explained: *“I wasn’t sure how he would engage on the conference phone sessions, but he seemed to come alive and when he realised there was an 84 year old also originally from Sheffield it gave lots to talk about. Each question in the quiz acts like a memory trigger and he was sharing several stories which the group enjoyed hearing about. He would often come out with some amazing fact or come out with names and places from years ago. He told me the sessions were enjoyable and he looked forward to them each week. During our chats I found out he had played for the youth side of Sheffield United which was called Oak Folds, which would have been around 1947. He told me how they would play in the old football shirts”.*

Subsequently Magna Vitae were able to link him with somebody who was in the same youth side and had gone on to become a professional footballer. Whilst Roger was not online, there were options to share his experiences via social media also – extending his networks and communities of interest. “I went over to meet the gentleman (with social distancing) which he really appreciated, and I completed a short video interview with him of his sporting memories. This is something we may use in our ‘throwback Thursdays’ on our Facebook community site as part of our sporting memories sessions... Although he isn’t getting out for these sessions he is benefitting from this regular input... He tells me it has been a big help to him and prevents him from just thinking about being lonely. He said the questions and conversations bring up some great memories and the positive effect lasts for days” (Magna Vitae, project case study)

**A pseudonym*

Roger’s story exemplifies a number of issues in this theme, the first of which involves a shift to understanding the subjective nature of loneliness and togetherness. Objectively Roger was not completely socially isolated, having visits from a family member and engagement with people providing forms of domiciliary support. However, his experience highlights a demand for access to communities of interest and services that extend beyond ‘getting together’ in coffee morning settings. His experience during the pandemic highlights that ‘doing together’ was an important ingredient, as were sharing identities and interests. This case study reaffirms the rationale for commissioning projects such as the CHAPS (Community Health Activity Projects) project (facilitated by Magna Vitae), and Men Do (facilitated by Carer’s First). Both were a test and learn response to the under-participation of men that came from CMF analysis early in the programme life-course.

Identifying services according to vulnerabilities like loneliness and social isolation were therefore limited in reach. Furthermore they were potentially exclusive ways of engaging some people but not others. In Roger’s case, like wider programme stakeholders, a positively focused approach to activities and services ‘reached out’ rather than rendered people and groups as ‘hard to reach’. Conveying inclusive language alongside engaging service offers are important levers in creating services focussed on ‘togetherness’ rather than ‘loneliness’ and ‘social isolation’.

For Roger this positive language was grounded in his interest in football and working class camaraderie, a result of being matched to a provider who could make links with peer groups that, in turn, could develop and grow other networks.



In our learning reports on resilience and digital inclusion activities were a focal point, providing a collaborative community resource which bring people together and develop relationships. This demonstrates 'Teas with TED' remain a key part of programme legacy, bringing people together through group and place-based meetings ('getting out, getting together'). However, as also indicated, 'doing together' plays a significant role in challenging ideas of a homogenous 'ageing population'. Services remain a key ingredient, that, at times change service users' own perceptions. For instance, TED members who accessed 'take over' gym sessions provided as part of the Magna Vitae-run CHAPS project for men commented:

'You know I didn't think I would find myself back in a gym again, not with my knees. Then I came here and what do you know I'm doing it again. I've even worked up to using the running machine...Arthritis in my knees, it's what getting old does to you. It's good here because we can use everything [all the facilities] and it's not busy and we can take our time about it. And there's people about to say hello and help you if you need it. Some [service users] just come and get on with it [their gym workout], but I like to say hello to people and see how their weeks gone and what they have been doing... There is a lift that I use sometimes to get up and down to the entrance if my knees are playing up. The sauna, I like going in there.' (Arthur, Service User)

'Now, I don't want to seem rude but sitting around drinking tea and coffee is just not for me. This [Platform 50 Men's Gym Takeover] is perfect really, just the job. It has to be things [activities] that people want to do and it has to come from the people. I used to do a lot of running.' (Frank, Service User)

Whilst projects designed for men may include activities that appeal to heteronormative and socio-economic group ideas of male identities and masculinities, Friendship Groups have evolved to include activities. Integrating guest speakers and commissioned partners at these groups provide features that create more accessible services. Friendship Groups and commissioned partners projects have mutually promoted each other. Examples include 'key speakers', digital skills training and Fitness, Food and Friends delivered at Friendship Group meetings. This is symbolic of wider cross-programme linkages. During COVID-19 changing service offers have identified ageing populations' diversities:

"Our group of learners all had very different needs, we were finding from talking to them those without devices wanted friendship and had very different needs to those with devices who were keen to try and connect with their families and friends, and wanted to try and be self-sufficient" (Lincs Digital, Delivery Partner Case Study during COVID-19)

Although, the population make-up of the East Lindsey district is not characterised by great ethnic diversity in comparison to other urban parts of the country. In 2016 the 'State of the District' Report found:

"The population of East Lindsey is predominately white, with 98.4% of the population being classified as white. This is considerably higher than in the East Midlands (84.5%) and England (88.8%). Other ethnic groups are considerably smaller, with the mixed/multiple ethnic group category being the second largest (0.69%). This is in contrast to regional and national levels where the Asian/Asian British category is the second largest with 7.7% and 6.4% of the population respectively compared to 0.53% for East Lindsey." (ELDC, 2016: 3)



Services that understand, adapt, and ‘reach out’ to diverse populations aged 50 and over were a core feature of programme activity pre-COVID 19. Opportunities have been present and exist for working with ageing populations throughout the pandemic. Our learning has shown the idea of a homogenous ‘ageing population’ can be potentially divisive and ‘exclusive’. Some of these dilemmas relate to ageist perceptions of ‘older people’ as being ‘passively vulnerable’. These additionally intersect with ideas on providing ‘types’ of services for ‘elderly people’ (sic) rather than coproducing with vibrant ageing populations. Our research partners at the University of Lincoln International Business School and Rose Regeneration have shown through their interview fieldwork that people access the TED programme based not primarily on the premise of their vulnerability, age criteria or loneliness, but through the appeal of dynamic, vibrant projects, activities and relationships. These too reflect ageing people’s vibrancy by indicating the nature of their own curiosities, interests and personalities.



Working with Communities Collaboratively

Key dimensions:

- Engaging through accessible design and communication
- Sharing ownership of aims and objectives
- Supporting innovation (e.g. TED supporting friendship groups to develop)

“We are so pleased to be an Age-friendly Business; it is so positive to be recognised for making the older generation feel welcome and comfortable” (Age-friendly Business Owner)

“We are a fairly new group, set up to assist the LGBTQ+ community in Skegness. Prior to our set up, every member of the LGBTQ+ community was on their own as there was not even a bar or café [in Skegness] aimed at them. We are now providing a weekly meeting, usually held in a Skegness pub. Having just found you online I was wondering if you could help us in any way, if only by letting folks know we exist.” (Key contact from the Skegness LGBTQ Meet-up Group)

These opening quotes illustrate core aspects of being able to work with rather than doing work for or in communities. This subtle turn of phrase can mean quite distinct differences in forms of engagement. Our learning on the relational nature of resilience and wider engagement has shown how activities can bring people together and create dialogue, and both provide platforms for ongoing collaboration, future co-design and coproduction of services. Ultimately, these factors contribute to the potential for sustainability and reinforce the legacy of ongoing services.

Accessible design can have ramifications both for the literal physical design of space and place, but also a deeper emotional resonance, whereby established groups and activities are seen as inviting (as captured in the idea of a ‘warm welcome’ by Ageing Better Camden). Lorraine (a pseudonym), a lead volunteer on one of TED’s coastal projects has highlighted how TED in East Lindsey has ‘reach’ via resource and networks:

“... but TED has the money to actually advertise and link up people. There are a lot of people out there that could access these groups and whether it is transport problems or health problems, they’ve got to realise that we are open for everybody. Obviously we can take on board what we can as long as we know what we’re dealing with and if LGBT people are coming to us then we need to be putting things in place to make sure we are being inclusive and they feel included.” (Lorraine, Volunteer)

Across learning, and as is covered in the earlier stages of this report, activities are crucial to supporting collaboration. They enable exploration of dialogue and prospects to test ideas that can be refined and potentially scaled up. The shift of learning about language and developing service offers which encourage shared communication also merges with age-friendly design of place and space. This features in the TED in East Lindsey learning report on the role housing plays in reducing social isolation. The Time Out Friendship Group at Barratt Court Central Café in Skegness is part of a wider complex of accommodation, designed with the perspectives of ageing people and 'community' in mind. Martha a lead TED volunteer describes this:

"... I thought well it's a nice place. I thought it would be nice to get some of the residents, some of them that I knew, down to this meeting. And I thought that would be good for them not just to stay in their room all the time. I think that spurred me on getting it [the Time Out Friendship Group] going and we do get a few of them come down now. It's nice to see them - it is. Yeah it's an ideal place to meet. I mean they have only got to come downstairs but there's a huge community around here lots of houses. And we do get people coming in from the community as well. It just seemed like the ideal place to have a friendship group. There's the café and there's things going on in the other rooms and it's ideally situated really." (Martha (pseudonym), TED Volunteer)

Designing groups and activities so they are emotionally as well as physically accessible creates two ways of enhancing participation in the programme. Some of this related to dementia friendly awareness and wider age-friendly design, including 'hubs' reachable by public transport. The combination of emotional and physical access considerations were overarched by references to 'safety'. This ranged from people feeling able to engage in an environment that minimizes risks to health, is aesthetically engaging and convenient, and at the same time, 'safe' in terms of having emotionally supportive and welcoming in-group dynamics. These provide foundations on which to build collaborative work and ongoing participation:

"You've got a cafeteria that sells gluten free for me, I am a coeliac. You've got tables and if you feel trapped or claustrophobic you can move about. It's just a nice place. It's much easier with my walking stick." (Grace, TED Service User)

"You can have a coffee and then when it's finished, as I am on my own, I stay and have my lunch here. It is nice and clean and the toilets, yes - nice place." (Mabel, TED Service User)

"You don't have to worry here, it's [the building] purposely made so that you can get around without causing any trouble, you know. It's something that you have to think about more when you get older, falling, tripping. You don't get any trouble here, it's nice, safe and the people are all good people and it's secure and you can do your exercise and learn about your cooking, all the different types [recipes], and it's all healthy. It's designed that way, to be good for the older people. You know some of us have health illnesses." (Peter, TED Service User)



“Here it is more open and people can just come in and join in and have a laugh and what have you, it’s lovely. I’ve had my life threatened a lot of times so I don’t like people sitting behind me. I can sit with my back towards the room and I don’t feel there is anybody near me because there is space. If I’m on the bus I have to sit with my back away from people because it just worries me. I mean I suffer with PTSD, low moods and anxiety. And it’s hard, it really is especially when I have been through what I have been through... People will join in. If you want to talk to somebody privately you can because you’ve got your group and it’s safe. I mean it’s lovely in here, look how the sun is shining through, it’s beautiful.” (Grace, TED Service User)

Accessible design also relates to participatory research methods employed as part of test and learn approaches which capture lived experience, promote feedback at different levels, and considers dissemination to community stakeholders. The role of a dedicated lead on social media, marketing and communications within the YMCA Lincolnshire TED team has been crucial to capturing and implementing different approaches. Management of formal project supports ‘informal’ ‘word of mouth’ that influences the recruitment and retention of TED members:

“People in [our market town] are very special, they know other people, have brought other people with them to the group” (TED Friendship Group lead volunteer)

These approaches have been useful foundations for ongoing motivation to share original aims and objectives. They promote ownership between dedicated TED resource and community members as part of sustainability and legacy prospects. This is reflected in the work of TED in East Lindsey on a rural and coastal theme for a national Ageing Better Coproduction Toolkit. The development of group belonging and activity was the inspiration for TED’s approach to coproduction. The creation of a Quality Mark with Friendship Group volunteers and chairs provides an indication of shared ownership for strategic aims, particularly increasing participation:

“We would love to be the first officially approved TED Friendship Group, it would make us extremely proud to have the official stamp of approval.” (Susan, TED volunteer, The Over 50s Youth Club)

Delivery partners, like Carer’s First, have been working with participants on looking at ways men can ‘take over’ the design and delivery of the project’s activities:

“The project has been great in helping isolated and lonely older men build or rebuild social relationships and networks. We have even had men want to come along to events that we have put on knowing that they may not be able to partake but simply wanting to be with the other guys. For me it is these intangible, personal and social benefits that are the real cornerstone of projects like this, and I am lucky to be able to give these men the opportunity to do things that they may have thought they were no longer able to do or access.” (Carer’s First, Men Do Facilitator)

“Carry on with the planning, I don’t get out very often, meeting friends, going to different places. I look forward to the next one...or two!” (TED Member, Men Do)

Men Do create co-design through ongoing opportunities. The dynamic service offer has included, air rifle shooting, snooker masterclasses, brewery trips, foot-golf and a trip to the International Bomber Command Centre.



Their project during the pandemic included receiving gift packs that contained a Ukulele and the opportunity to learn a song and play this as a group on social media, as well as men establishing a profile on a contact directory so they could call each other during social distancing. Men Do has gone on to hold COVID-19 compliant events, including activities at Cadwell Race Track. They have recently drawn up a proposal for plans commencing in the summer of 2021 and learning from Men Do has already been applied to wider networks in Carer's First, promoted via the organisation's website. Examples include the development of a 'chat' directory where men can call each other through having a profile which can feature interests, hobbies and occupational backgrounds.

COVID-19 presents real obstacles for collaborative work, but also showcased abilities to adapt and to progress, guided by the clarity and ongoing relevance of the original Ageing Better aims. As has been touched upon, clear strategic direction and programme management are fundamental components for programme 'success', but in the context of collaborating with communities examples of grassroots 'best practice' and the unification of these two strands has been, and continues to be, essential.

Enhancing Togetherness Through Establishing 'Grassroots Best Practice'

Key dimensions:

- Boots on the ground? The role of brokering relationships
- Capturing, developing and managing knowledge
- Principles for future engagement



In previous sections of this report we have given examples of commentary from people aged 50 and over, 'volunteers', delivery partners, TED team members at YMCA Lincolnshire, Age-friendly Businesses and wider stakeholders. Examples of work have been cited that can be considered 'grassroots best practice'. In the following discussion we explore this as part of another shift in the programmes approach, accompanied too by a changing lookout. In the early stages of project, the programme engaged with peer review, in the form of people age 50 and over volunteering to be part of a 'Scrutiny Group'. This group had strategic level oversight, monitoring programme developments and taking decisions on services to be commissioned.

As part of 'test and learn' the approach was reflected on. 'Changing the narrative' of ageing people, stereotypes and services coincided with a change in strategic focus. The language of 'scrutiny' proved problematic for framing constructive peer contributions and was limited in representing positive characteristics of ageing populations and community assets.

Co-design and coproduction continued to be a core part of the programme but emphasis was placed on doing 'ground work' which represented the interests of community members not recognised in the scrutiny panel and engaged with people who were sometimes stereotyped and portrayed as difficult to engage or, using good intentions, labelled as being 'marginalised'.

In this theme we explore the principles of this shift. It builds on ideas of activities as a key enabler of coproduction by looking at how, following initial engagement and dedicated resource, the programme has generated 'reach' through practices rather than strategic level driven initiatives.

This can be thought of simplistically as ‘bottom-up’ innovation in contrast to ‘top-down’. It is important to state that strategic level initiatives have clearly shaped the TED programme too and there has been a blend of activity across a ‘bottom-up’/‘top-down’ spectrum.

Experiencing ‘what works’ for some groups or communities has required dedicated time, networking with gatekeepers and existing resources prior to identifying and collaborating with people in different community settings (including via digital and ‘distanced’ means). Similarly the reverse of this process is also possible: that direct engagement with a ‘target population’ leads to additional networks, partnership work and forming of ‘person-centred’ approaches. This blend was alluded to in evidence to the All Party Parliamentary Group Inquiry into Loneliness in 2020:

“We also have established relationships with, and understand, other service providers in meeting the diverse needs of people in East Lindsey and Lincolnshire. These understandings provide scope for addressing unmet need and coordinating approaches... avoiding duplication of provision and ensuring funding is targeted and maximised. More recently our relationships have extended to include TED staff being involved in the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum. This has been particularly valuable, and has enabled us to contribute TED insight and learning whilst representing the perspectives of people aged 50 and over in our communities.” (Director of Communities, YMCA Lincolnshire, July 2020)



‘Boots on the ground’ therefore is at the core of how to develop understandings of people, places and wider communities. This can be seen in pre-COVID-19 services, but also during the pandemic when the team created telephone befriending services. One of the befrienders remarked about a process of ‘ways of knowing’ that was present in all services:

“You get to know personalities, some have medical issues, you become aware, you are upbeat with people to try and shape conversations” (ConnectED befriender)

Examples were provided by delivery partners, particularly in relation to group activity:

“With the (Sporting Memories) telephone quiz groups I try to keep numbers at about three or four as I think it improves participation and makes it easier for the running of the session. In one of the groups I hadn’t realised that all the individuals had a memory problem... One of them does have a form of dementia so he takes part on speaker phone with his wife with him, the next chap told me his memory wasn’t very good due to a medication he’d taken years ago and the third chap was a bit nervous saying his memory wasn’t very good and maybe the group wasn’t for him.

So, as I explained to him about everyone else in the group had a memory issue it really encouraged him that he was in a safe environment and he was then happy to take part” (Magna Vitae, CHAPS project good news story)

Age-friendly Businesses (AfB’s) were another example of this programme-wide trend and this was key to businesses maintaining trade and resilience. Our research partners Rose Regeneration found that AfB’s were generally extremely resilient during the early stages of the pandemic, somewhat countering national research by the Centre for Towns (2020).

It might be said that businesses and communities in East Lindsey have prior experience of austerity and independence that comes from knowing their client-bases (and communities) so services and products could be adapted. This continues to be recognised in the Award's appeal to community spirit.

'Ways of knowing' has strategic resonance. Capturing this knowledge of groups and individuals, in-part, forms fast changing (and 'unfinished') evidence-bases on ageing populations. Comments from a senior leadership figure at a PMG meeting mirrored this:

"Over time you build up that knowledge, it just feels like there's an opportunity now not to lose some of that work that's happened as the funding changes but the demand is still there" (PMG member, October 2020).

The shift has also included best practice in working with ageing people in 'person-centred' ways, linking up aspects of TED in East Lindsey's service offers. Hence, knowledge developments were symbolic of a wider transition of working with ageing populations that included multiple delivery partners and programme stakeholders (and, indeed, agencies and individuals who were not formally identified as these, but came to engage with TED in East Lindsey over the life-course of Ageing Better). These 'informal', 'natural' relationships were a core feature:

"Whilst I was phoning one of the participants from the Fitness Food and Friends group she asked if I would give a call to an older man she knew from her church. He had recently lost his wife and was depressed, didn't have any family and no one was calling him. So, I gave him a ring which he was very pleased about and gave him the bereavement number and the number for the Wellbeing team. I asked he if would like me to phone him again and he said he would really like that. I've therefore added him to our Fitness Food and Friends list so that we can encourage and support him" (Magna Vitae, project feedback)

"I was able to have a chat with the media officer for (a social landlord) this week with regards to what our project is doing and how it could be of benefit to (their) tenants. This was really positive and has led sharing items from our community Facebook page and the live quiz Magna Vitae (MV) are doing this week. The new MV webpage on 'looking after ourselves and others' during the lock down period has also been sent out to all participants on email which has been met really positively. I've had encouraging comments that it's great to have all the information in one place." (Magna Vitae, monitoring data)

"you need to know your people, we know them quite intimately, if they are not very well we keep an eye on them... more friends than people... just get to know your people... the best thing is to go and see them, it's difficult not to see them (during the first lockdown)" (Friendship Group Chair, Inland market town)

Collectively the dimensions of this theme identify principles that can inform future planning and aspects of sustainability beyond the current lifetime of Ageing Better funding. Capturing the impact of 'grassroots' activity is challenging and reiterates the complexities of engagement with communities broadly. In these settings maximising resource and harnessing ongoing participation are two interrelating factors that chime with other thematic areas in this report.



Shifting to Sustainability? Maximising Resource and Harnessing Participation

In this final part of reflecting on the last 6 years of learning reports and case studies from TED in East Lindsey this theme highlights content which has been implicit in the other themes from this full report. A key Ageing Better aim (nationally and locally) is to create sustainable impact following the end of the current funding stream (a final end date is March 2022, but for some projects and partners this is sooner). In the setting of this theme shifting to sustainability has two core sub-themes. The first concerns highlighting the abilities of the programme to use resource to generate 'impact' that can be mainly conceived of in relation to all Ageing Better aims and objectives, and specifically in the sense that services are able to continue and move to self-sustaining status from initial investment. The second, which is closely related to the first, is the ability to evidence ways in which participation in the 'TED offer', or future evolutions of the programme, have the potential to keep engaging stakeholders (crucially people aged 50 and over) in relation to their needs and wants. A key element of this is volunteering:

"We know that the role of volunteers has been instrumental in service design, delivery and sustainability and to the overall success of our programme, but we also recognise that this success has required dedicated resource in the form of the TED staff team and associated commissioned VCS partners. This investment has created capacity in communities, volunteers and beneficiaries through sharing specialist knowledge and expertise, experience and training.

Community members, groups and volunteers have been supported by our team to build on this investment in order to transition to self-sustaining status." (Director of Communities YMCA Lincolnshire, July 2020)

Key Dimensions

- Building confidence: Designated resource, employed team members and design
- Relationships, listening and longevity
- Flexibility during pressure

A key asset of Ageing Better nationally and TED in East Lindsey has been the ability of areas to invest resource in designated roles that are not necessarily fixed in terms of person specification and role development. The programme in East Lindsey has staff employed via YMCA Lincolnshire.

These include:

- A TED Programme Manager
- An Age-friendly Principal Officer (jointly funded by TED in East Lindsey and East Lindsey District Council)
- Age-friendly Business Officer
- A Friendship/Communities Officer
- A dedicated Communications and Marketing Project Support lead
- Designated Administrative Support, data inputting and lead telephone befriender
- A TED Learning and Evaluation Officer (contracted through the Health Advancement Research Team at the University of Lincoln to YMCA Lincolnshire)



All roles had a strong relationship with communities: designing, promoting and delivering the programme in varied ways. These included working with community stakeholders that ranged from Council representatives, VCS organisations, statutory services, businesses, people aged 50 and over in the community, and existing volunteers. Communication methods varied, and intersected with the programme's wider strategic dialogue and focus. Administrative support were also proactive, promoting the Common Measurement Framework during group/place-based events and liaising with wider stakeholders to secure data returns in addition to inputting data into the Ecorys central database and bespoke spreadsheets.

COVID-19 and the accompanying changes in delivery built on these existing roles and approaches to community development and stakeholders roles diversified to ensure the embedded aims and objectives of Ageing Better maintained relevance. Employed programme staff went beyond their original person specifications and job descriptions. This was especially the case for the telephone befriending service set up by the first lockdown. For one staff member, whose main pre-COVID-19 tasks involved CMF data inputting and administrative support this represented a change in capacity and developing and applying varied skills. As the service became established their passion for their changing role and supporting people developed greatly.

Building confidence in community members was not just the remit of the YMCA Lincolnshire team members. Delivery partners, AfB's and Friendship Groups were all key participants, but the investment of dedicated time and employed staff were important triggers in building relationships, confidence and sustainability.

A more general pattern that the TED Community Officer and lead Friendship Group volunteer described:

“New Friendship Groups will begin to widen their scope by including pet friendly groups and to work with other agencies such as the fire service, local businesses and the waste collection crews within East Lindsey who are in regular contact with the vulnerable in the local community. All friendship groups will have a full sustainability plan put in place to ensure the groups can continue beyond March 2020 and still provide the vital support needed in rural communities.” (TED Community Officer (pre-year 7))

“We need to go back to the drawing board and look at what a friendship group should be. What expectations we should and need to engender. We need to respect each other so individual contributions aren't lost and we need to get to a point where people feel encouraged to come forward with their own ideas. So it is about engendering trust. We need to make people feel safe. Think about how we get people there and focus on promoting and recruiting. For the next two years we need to focus on getting it right. Whenever activities are planned we need structure. We need structure or the group will be lost. We need to leave a legacy!” (TED Volunteer, prior to pandemic)



Ongoing design of dynamic services as 'age-friendly' is an important trait in engaging people aged 50 and over. Building confidence to move to sustainability and leave a legacy are also intrinsically linked to developing relationships, as covered in the content of this theme so far and underpins wider programme learning:

"Ro (Community Officer) is brilliant, she's there, she phones me, comes along... they (the group members) relate to her she tells us things and we tell her things, can phone her if you've got a problem" (Coastal Friendship Group lead)

"Good to see that some of the CHAPS are now phoning me during the week and not always waiting for my weekly call. It indicates that they feel relaxed enough to do this and that they don't have to phone me for anything but just to have a chat. One of the CHAPS had completed the Grand National quiz we posted on the website and then rang me to reminisce about the event" (Magna Vitae, CHAPS)

TED in East Lindsey learning reports during COVID-19 referred to the idea of 'community sensitivity'. This was incorporated in understanding processes of adaptation, yet can also be applied to building confidence and relationships. This involves appreciating peoples' needs and preferences in an ongoing nature (the 'demand aspect'), and adapting relationships and service delivery. This includes during reductions in place-based and face-to-face/ group activities as well as working with short-term, uncertain, contexts. Hence part of these relationships involves listening, doing so 'in the moment' but at the same time being mindful of longer term issues and planning. Citizen's Advice Lindsey, a TED in East Lindsey delivery partner, gave an example:

"The client was at a loss when I first met him; he was having financial difficulties and also struggling with his health issues due to recently losing his partner. I helped him sort out his finances, apply for additional benefits and helped him to manage his budgeting. This was only part of his problem as he was also feeling lost and lonely due to his recent bereavement. He started calling into the drop in centre on a weekly basis just to have a chat with people at the drop in sessions. This was his only point of contact with others but it was slowly bringing him out of himself.

The first day he attended he had his head down and wanted to get out of the place as soon as possible, but now he comes into the centre of his own accord. He has also started to attend a local cafe with some of the other groups he has met at the centre. He has started volunteering on a weekly basis and feels his life is starting to get better and feels as if he is useful once again." (TED Delivery Partner, Citizens Advice Lindsey)

Resource and building confidence were instrumental in developing relationships and contributing to longevity. In the above case all of these strands came together with a 'ripple effect':

"During the lockdown this year... you have been unceasingly kind and thoughtful with your phone calls, and, as well as hearing your friendly voice it has helped me just knowing that you were someone I could contact if I needed your help in some way, so thank you. If we ever come out of this pandemic it would be really great if you were to arrange another course like the first one (before the pandemic)" (Magna Vitae, Good News Story)



“... our service crosses over many services already there and we can, with our experience and expertise, cover many services while offering a one stop shop to the person. This will benefit the person and the funder, as our service level is extremely cost effective as there doesn't need to be a variety of organisations involved with the person. Feedback from our learners is they trust and have confidence... we can resolve and support their issues. They are asking for these services to continue within a face to face drop in centre. We are currently working on a new extended offer for a full funding bid. We now have a new working plan we are developing for a new service for future delivery” (Lincs Digital, project case study)

Even prior to the pandemic initial signs of sustainability were evident. An example of this is the “take over” of gym sessions for men only:

“Okay so it's the last session today and fortunately the guys at the gym are going to keep the session on. So it's gonna be from the same time, so 2:00pm to 4:00pm on a Thursday afternoon. And it has been free for the last 12 weeks as part of the TED project. However there will be a small charge of £4.10 for two hours which is the same price usually for one hour so they can use the gym, sauna and steam room and the lifestyle consultants will be able to show them the equipment and things like that. So it's great that it has stayed sustainable. And we've been having six [regulars], but we have had up to 12 people at once and I think there's been about 21 [men aged 50 and over] through the project in total, so 21 different individuals. It's definitely been worth it - absolutely.” (TED Delivery Partner, Magna Vitae)

It is important to also acknowledge that this does not necessarily imply that a short(er) duration or single activity cannot have meaningful, long term impact:

“I was ready to pack it all in, I really was. I used to lie in bed and think how am I going to fill all the hours in the day? Now I'm up and out and there is no better feeling than being able to help somebody else who needs help.” (TED Volunteer, Friendship Group)

This observation also was part of our learning about establishing relationships through telephone befriending. Flexibility is another characteristic which contributes to sustainability and TED in East Lindsey's legacy. When there are significant pressures, especially concentrated during COVID-19, there are examples of how working in these contexts can produce key gains in learning opportunities and programme 'reach'. Additionally, services can be, and have been, adapted to continue to provide 'person-centred' approaches, including interagency work and matching multiple programme strands to individual TED members and sections of ageing communities – informing services in the here and now as well as the future.

Shifted Sands and New Lookouts?

This paper has reflected on a number of shifts in how we think about and engage with ageing populations in East Lindsey. To recap the five shifts are:

- Embedding the Aims and Objectives of Ageing Better
- Challenging Stereotypes and Changing the Narrative
- Working With Communities Collaboratively
- Enhancing Togetherness Through 'Grassroots Best Practice'
- Shifting to Sustainability? Maximising Resource and Harnessing Participation



This journey of change for the TED in East Lindsey programme has already led to aspects of sustainability and legacy. Friendship groups have commenced their own applications for further funding bids, delivery partners are too exploring funding opportunities to keep running projects. CHAPS, ran by Magna Vitae, a delivery partner, have sought to continue their features despite not being funded past March 2021 by TED in East Lindsey Ageing Better monies. Delivery partner and PMG meetings have been arenas in which maintaining 'person-centred' services for people in East Lindsey going forwards have been (and remain) the subject of discussion. The Age-friendly Principal Officer and Communities Officer (with the wider team) have been working with a person with lived experience of ageing without children, drawing on Friendship Groups alongside commissioned projects to raise awareness of these experiences and establish an interest group. This includes working with the Healthy Ageing Research Group at the University of Lincoln to establish a small-scale research project.

The AfB award has been piloting self-assessment during the pandemic and membership continues to grow. Award holders continue to grow and these businesses have been a feature of two projects. Age-friendly Futures, an EU European Social Fund and The Education & Skills Funding Agency funded project specifically focusses on employability for people aged 50 and over. AfB's are a core element of this project, providing work experience opportunities and CV development. Age-friendly training is also in the early stages of being established and business stakeholders are a key avenue of interest to test and learn from this initiative. These indicators of legacy reaffirm that there are already opportunities to consider further future shifts in how we think about ageing in the district and the different positions from which these perspectives are formed and understood.

Based on the learning accumulated to date there are opportunities for future learning. They are:

- Age-friendly Businesses. As the Award continues to grow we will be reporting on progress made and next steps in terms of how the Award can continue and diversify
- A report on Friendship Groups and volunteering – the successes, challenges and ability to secure the spirit of friendship(s) into the future- harnessing volunteer and attendees ongoing participation
- A summary learning report on incorporating Age-friendly training in AfB's as a pilot/feasibility study
- A summary learning report on the experiences of ageing without children to include ageing diversities with rural and coastal complexions
- A learning report on aspects of legacy which will include looking at the aforementioned activities to consider opportunities in East Lindsey, the wider county and beyond. This includes the strategic relevance of the programme to ongoing and planned community development projects in local, county and national contexts



There are specific implications from this report for practices going forward. They include:

- Opportunities to consider intergenerational projects in YMCA Lincolnshire and/or with delivery partners that build on TED in East Lindsey – its programme learning, networks and existing practices. Delivery partner insight (from Magna Vitae) has highlighted that this does not necessarily mean working solely with people at polar opposites of the ageing spectrum. Some of the networks TED in East Lindsey has developed could provide opportunities for projects that have mutual mentoring components. The programme provides examples of how these relationships could be convened, promoted and established through utilising participatory approaches to design (with particular implications for specific identities that include LGBTQ+ and male populations). TED in East Lindsey have learning and experience as a ‘whole programme’ and through the particular skills and profiles of individuals that can enhance these processes and organisational capacity
- Linking Age-friendly Communities work in ways which are inclusive, focussing on citizenship, strategic development and designing of services which are appealing across age groups. Internationally there are models of shared accommodation that can be drawn on as well as projects like Men’s Sheds to promote shared positive experiences of ageing that have a ‘doing together’ ethos
- Consideration of joint bids and searching out of further ‘seed corn’ grants to continue ‘testing and learning’ about ageing populations, particularly in ‘emerging’ situations. This would require contractual and logistical considerations if partnering to submit and manage bids, commissions and also establishing responsibilities. Ongoing sharing of aims, objectives and outcomes alongside engaging a range of stakeholders remain important ways to clarify and secure ‘buy in’ to the approach
- Building the evidence base (or bases) requires a ‘grassroots interface’. There is potential to continue maintaining this through the established mechanisms resulting from TED in East Lindsey – these include the PMG and delivery partner meetings. Though these include sometimes informal discussions they do provide established, tested, forums where sharing knowledge, joint work and best practice (as well as exploring solutions) takes place



About East Lindsey



T.E.D.

Ageing Better
in East Lindsey

East Lindsey is a large, sparsely populated district within the county of Lincolnshire, which includes the popular coastal seaside towns of Skegness and Mablethorpe.

East Lindsey has a higher than average ageing population with 29% of people aged 65 and over. High numbers of older people move to East Lindsey in their retirement years and many have multiple chronic health conditions and few social and familial connections in the region. Public transport across East Lindsey is poor and therefore accessing services can be challenging, especially for older adults.

The overarching aims of the TED Programme are to:

- Reduce social isolation and loneliness
- Help older people to become better connected with volunteering, social, leisure and health improving activities
- Provide opportunities for older people to influence the design, delivery and evaluation of both the services and businesses available to them

We currently have over 1800 registered TED members, and over 100 businesses across East Lindsey hold an Age-friendly Business Award.

Further information...

To find out more about TED or to get involved visit our website www.tedineastlindsey.co.uk or start a conversation and share your views online: Twitter: [@ted_EastLindsey](https://twitter.com/ted_EastLindsey)



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