

# Together We Can!

## Evaluation Report – Year 2 (2018)

*compiled by*

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## 1 Introducing *Together We Can!*

Welcome to the second annual evaluation report for *TogetherWeCan!*. As in our first report last year, you will find here an introduction to the project, and the Firs and Bromford neighbourhood in which we live and work. Much has changed and developed within our neighbourhood in Year 2 though, and in this report we will take you on a journey through the second year of *TWC!*, outlining significant changes within the project itself, as well as what we have done this year, and what our neighbours are saying about the difference it is making: You will find here stories of a neighbourhood that has more places where people can feel like they belong, and of neighbours who feel more connected to each other, more able to overcome obstacles to living flourishing lives, and more able to share their passions and skills with each other.

A core commitment of *TogetherWeCan!* is to open up a space to experiment – to try out ideas and approaches that are ‘locally-grown’, innovative, and sometimes even a bit risky – and to *learn* from those experiments, both from what has gone well and from what has proved more difficult. Here, then, we will also share some of what, alongside our neighbours, we are continuing to learn – and what we’re planning and hoping to do in this final year of the project – and beyond.

Come with us as the journey continues!

### 1.1 *Setting the Scene*

*Together We Can!* is a 3-year intergenerational, community-building project within the Firs & Bromford neighbourhood (east Birmingham), undertaken as a partnership between Worth Unlimited, Open Door Community Foundation, and Firs & Bromford Neighbours Together.

Across the two ‘age bands’ (young people and adults), *TWC!* pursues three parallel ‘strands’ of work:

- **‘street connecting’** - making connections with, and between, local people, and growing new forms of associational life from those connections;
- **‘doing stuff together’** - facilitating places and groups which local people feel they belong and can contribute to;
- **‘support and development’** - supporting local people to grow in the confidence, skills and connections needed to be able to participate in and contribute to the life of their neighbourhood, and wider world.

Through a range of focused activity, *TWC!* brings together youth work and adult-focused community work to maximise the opportunities for intergenerational (as well as cross-cultural) interaction and relationship-building. Our overall aim is to contribute to “*a flourishing community, with flourishing connections between flourishing people*”. We seek to help and support our local people to establish sustainable livelihoods, understood as encompassing and developing a holistic range of assets including personal skills and strong social networks, as well as financial security.

#### ***Money and People***

*TogetherWeCan!* represents a significant financial investment in the Firs & Bromford estate, with funding from the Big Lottery Fund (BLF) ‘Reaching Communities’ programme and from BLF’s ‘Big Local’ programme, led by the local residents group Firs & Bromford Neighbours Together. With this funding, *TWC!* employs 4 full-time workers:

- An adult-focused **Street Connector Mentor** (Paul Wright, ODCF), who finds, supports and works alongside local ‘connectors’ and people with ideas for local groups and activities
- An adult-focused **Support & Development Worker** (Lucy Poulson, ODCF), who facilitates regular ‘places of welcome’ and supports people to grow in confidence to identify and share their gifts, skills and passions, be active participants in their community, and overcome obstacles to living flourishing lives
- A **Street Connector for Young People** (Dan Sandford-Smith, Worth Unlimited) who leads on our street-based engagement (‘detached work’) with local young people, and our intergenerational social action work
- A **Support & Development Worker for Young People** (Flo Berrow, Worth Unlimited), who supports young people to grow in confidence to identify and share their gifts, skills and passions, be active participants in their community, and overcome obstacles to living flourishing lives, and also assists with the detached youth work

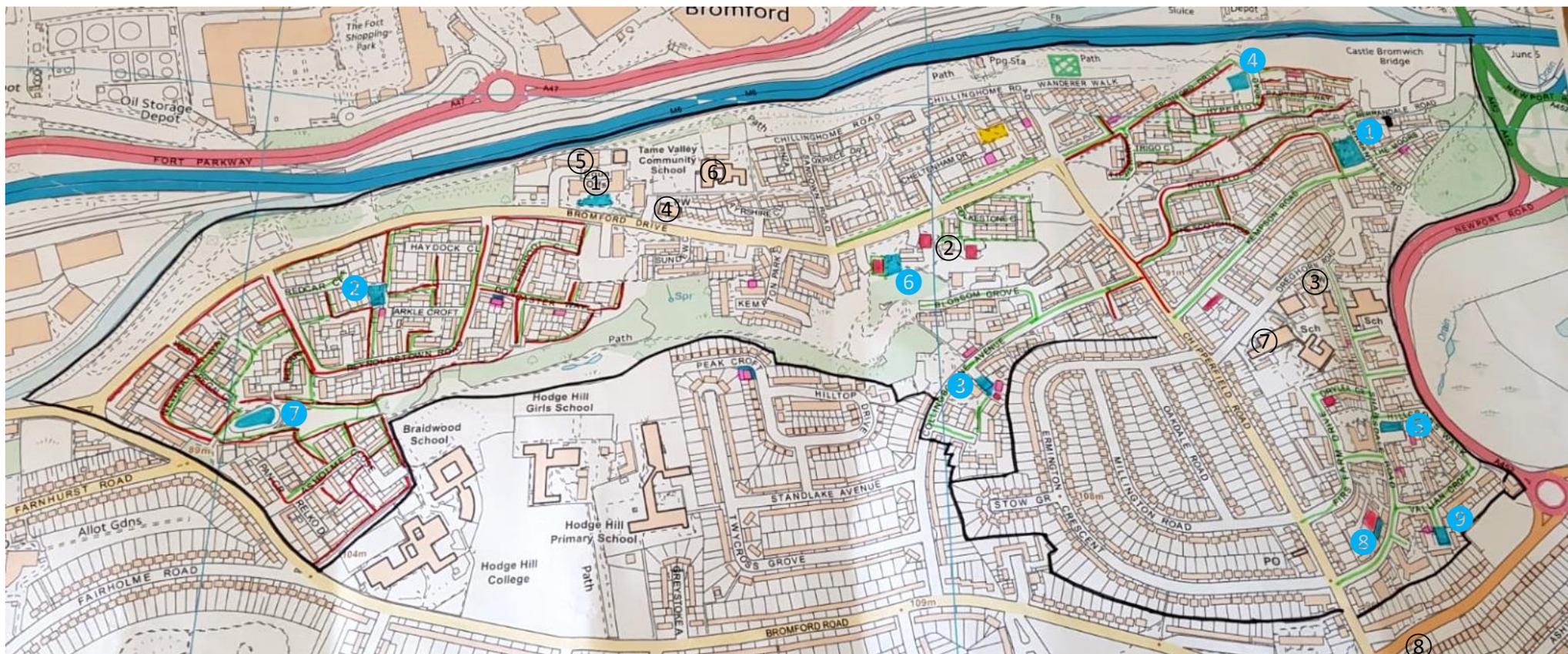
*TogetherWeCan!* is also supported with additional time and resource from Worth Unlimited - the Hub is the *TWC!*'s workers' full-time office base, and Worth's CEO chairs the project steering group and attends team meetings - and Hodge Hill Church, with Revd Al Barrett giving significant time to leading team meetings, project management, and co-ordinating the evaluation process. Thrive Together Birmingham continue to offer significant support the project, particularly through a consultative role on the Board of Open Door Community Foundation.

### ***Our neighbourhood***

‘Firs & Bromford’ is a neighbourhood built in the 1950s (Firs) and 1960s (Bromford), on the eastern edge of the city of Birmingham. Like many other ‘outer estates’ built at a similar time, it has clear edges (including the M6 motorway to the north), and only a few access roads on and off the estate. There are three primary schools on the estate (and a cluster of primary and secondary schools just to the south of the neighbourhood, although these tend to serve the central Hodge Hill area more than Firs & Bromford). There are also two church buildings (one Roman Catholic, one Pentecostal), two Birmingham City Council-run community buildings, and a Children’s Centre. While some of these buildings are well-used by the community, some of the others are not. A vital ‘base’ (staff offices and one venue for groups and activities) for the *TogetherWeCan!* project is The Hub, run by Worth Unlimited as a youth centre since 2010.

When the estate was built, the first residents were almost entirely of White British or Irish heritage. In the last decade, this has begun to change quite dramatically, and now close to half the residents of Firs & Bromford are from African, African-Caribbean, Asian and Eastern European backgrounds. One of the foundation stones of *TogetherWeCan!* is the vision statement of Firs & Bromford Neighbours Together (FBNT Big Local Plan 2012):

*“We wish to develop our community into a place where all feel welcome, all feel that they belong and all feel that they can flourish, whatever path has brought us to live together”*



---- Firs & Bromford neighbourhood

--- Weekly door-knocking (2018)

--- Street event door-knocking (2018)

● Connectors' homes

**Main venues for groups & activities:**

- ① the Hub (Worth Unlimited)
- ② Ambridge House (Birmingham City Council)
- ③ St Wilfrid's Community Centre
- ④ Bromford Bridge Christian Church
- ⑤ Bromford Community Centre (formerly Wellbeing Hub)
- ⑥ Tame Valley (Primary) Academy & Children's Centre
- ⑦ Firs Primary School
- ⑧ Hodge Hill Church

**2018 Street events in other locations:**

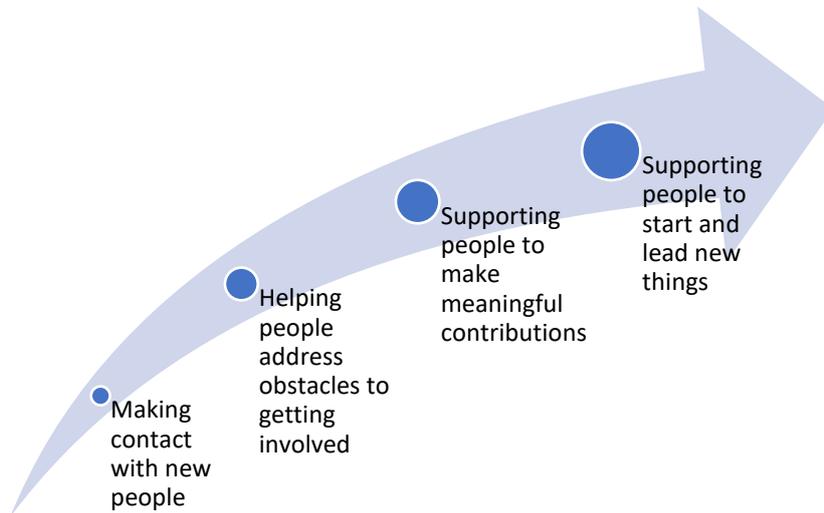
- ① Berrandale / The Moors
- ② Arkle Croft
- ③ Collingbourne Avenue
- ④ Hyperion Way
- ⑤ Hillcross Walk / Shawsdale Road
- ⑥ Hollowmeadow House
- ⑦ The Paddock
- ⑧ Bromford Fish Bar
- ⑨ Tom's Lights

Figure 1

### **The project 'pathway'**

*TogetherWeCan!* activities seek to support both young people and adults on a developmental journey from 'first contact', through 'clearing obstacles' and 'pathways in to participation', towards being able to 'make meaningful contributions' (within the neighbourhood and beyond), and to develop skills, confidence and connections to initiate and lead their own groups and activities.

Figure 2 *TWC! Project Pathway*



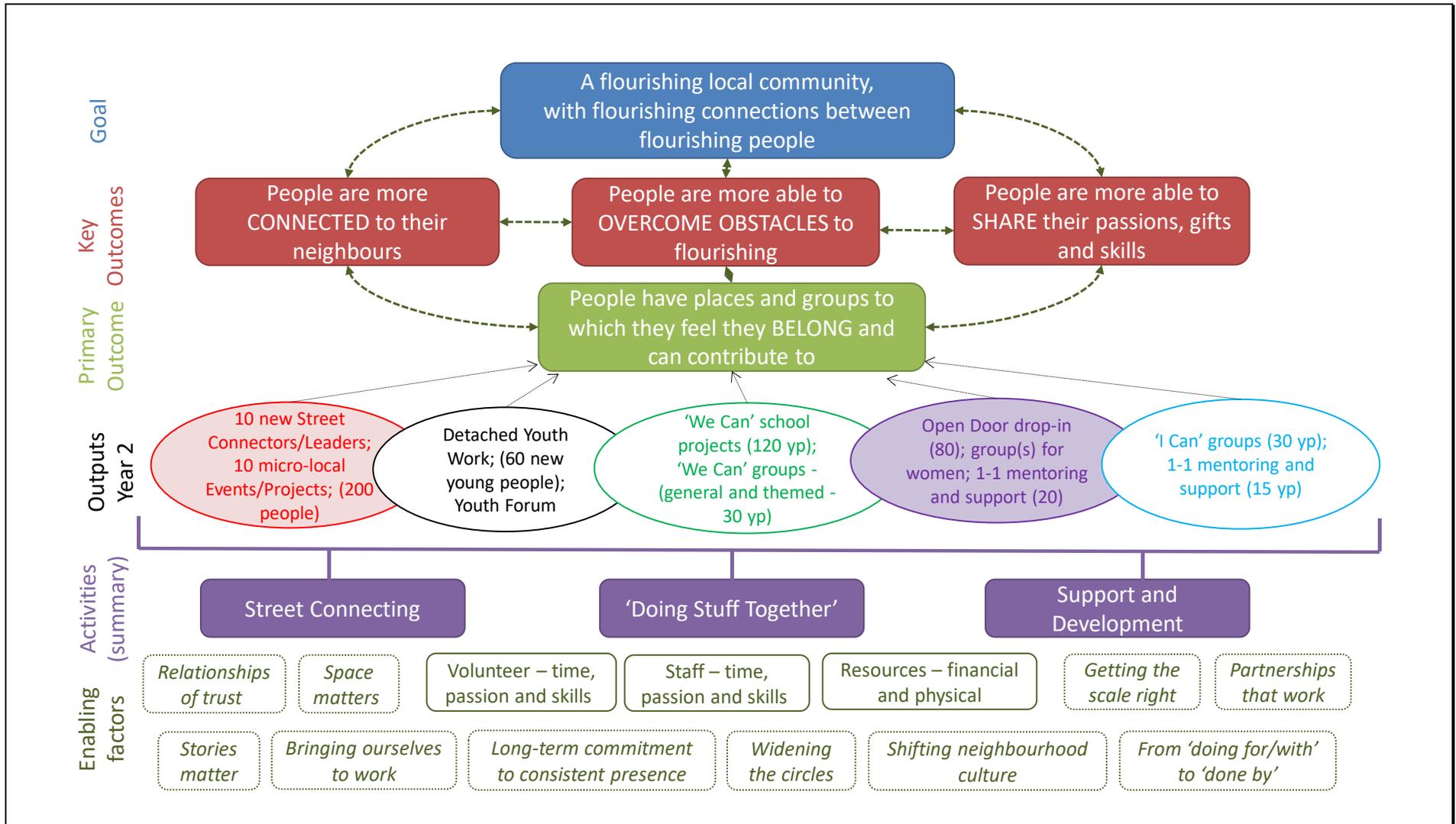
We call this our project 'pathway' – but we recognise that people will join the journey at different stages, that the journey is not necessarily a straight line, and that not everyone will want to become a group or activity leader. If local residents feel **more connected to their neighbours**, if they're **better able to overcome obstacles** to living flourishing lives, and if they're **more able to share their passions, gifts and skills** with their neighbours, then *TogetherWeCan!* is achieving its key outcomes.

### **1.2 How It Works - Our 'Theory of Change'**

Growing a flourishing local community is not like operating a machine. It's not as simple as putting something in at one end, pulling a few levers, pressing a few buttons, and seeing the finished product pop out at the other end. We think of it more as an 'ecology' – a complex system of living organisms, connected together in relationships of interdependence. If one part of the ecology changes, it affects all the other parts, often in ways that are unpredictable.

*TogetherWeCan!* is part of the 'ecology' of the Firs & Bromford neighbourhood – but it is only a *part*. What we do through *TWC!* we hope makes a positive difference locally, but when change happens in our neighbourhood it is never just down to what we have done. Nevertheless, we hope that through the main activities of *TogetherWeCan!* (Street Connecting, Support and Development, and 'Doing Stuff Together'), we can make a significant and unique contribution towards realising Firs & Bromford Neighbours Together's vision of a flourishing local community and achieving *TWC!*'s key outcomes.

Figure 3 Our Theory of Change (updated for Year 2)



In Year 1, we developed our ‘Theory of Change’ (Figure 3) to include a fourth key outcome, acknowledging the vital importance of **places and groups where people can feel they belong, and where they feel they can make a contribution**. Connecting neighbours together can sometimes happen by chance in the street – but much more often it happens when people have the opportunity to gather together and spend time in each other’s company getting to know each other better. Supporting people to grow in confidence often needs generous amounts of time spent 1-2-1 with someone, where they can be the sole centre of attention. But for each of us to begin to make a contribution of our own passions, gifts and skills, we need spaces where we can deepen our friendships with others and feel like we share in the ownership of what happens.

For the staff and volunteers involved in *TogetherWeCan!*, the way we approach our neighbours and relate them, the feel of the spaces we are involved in facilitating, and the part we play in the wider stories of the neighbourhood, are perhaps more crucial than the detail of the activities we undertake from day to day. Our Year 1 report outlined a number of ‘golden threads’ for our work that highlight that **how we do things is as important as what we do** (Year 1 report, 5.1):

- Relationships have to ‘go deep enough’ for trust to grow
- Spaces (both physical spaces and particular gatherings) need to feel welcoming, generous and safe enough for relationships to deepen
- Hearing, sharing and celebrating local stories deepens our relationships and generates energy for new things to emerge
- As paid practitioners, we seek to ‘bring ourselves to work’, seeking friendship with our neighbours and receiving the gifts and support that others bring to us
- A long-term commitment to consistent presence, looking for change over generations – not short-term funding cycles
- Consistently ‘widening the circles’, ‘hunting the edges’, so that we are always drawing in new people as connectors, contributors and community leaders
- Constantly shifting, in our work, from paid practitioners doing things ‘for’ or ‘with’ our neighbours, to activity that is ‘done by’ our neighbours, working together
- Getting the scale right: working within a neighbourhood big enough to hold a lot of diversity, but small enough to have a sense of coherence; and recognising that many neighbours will only get to know each other in meaningful ways on a ‘micro-local’ (i.e. street-level) scale
- Investing time and effort in partnerships where there is a trusted point of contact who understands and supports our approach

### **1.3 What’s Changed in 2018?**

Our primary objectives for Year 2 of this 3-year project were to build on the achievements of Year 1, to be more intentional in sticking to the ‘golden threads’ we identified last year, and to respond to the challenges identified in the Year 1 report. If there was a subtle shift of focus across the project in Year 2, it was from an emphasis on ‘enabling the new’ towards deepening and strengthening the things that are now beginning to develop – relationships, groups, and individuals – while not losing that ongoing commitment to ‘hunting the edges’ and ‘widening the circles’, to engage more and more of our neighbours in the Firs & Bromford.

## **Staff changes**

Two significant additional changes have happened in the past year:

- One of our core staff members – our Community Support Worker, Sarah Maxfield – moved on to a new job in March. This represented a major loss of skills, experience and locally-trusted relationships (Sarah had been working in Firs & Bromford since 2012). It also, however, offered an opportunity to review and slightly re-focus the job description for her post (Section 2.2 ), before the recruitment of her replacement, Lucy Poulson, in April.
- Through partnerships with other local organisations, two further paid workers have joined the TWC! team in addition to our four ‘core’ workers:
- A half-time ‘Green Connector’ (Cath Fletcher), employed by Open Door Community Foundation and fully-funded by Firs & Bromford Neighbours Together (for 18 months initially, with the possibility of extension). Cath’s role sits alongside our Street Connector Mentor – seeking to engage new residents and support people with passions and ideas to develop new groups and activities – with a particular focus in and around five key ‘green spaces’ around the neighbourhood. Central to her work is the building of a ‘Green Team’ of local residents, passionate about gardening, growing things and/or environmental development.
- A full-time ‘Families Connector’ (Ria Evans), employed and fully-funded by Spurgeons, and part of the Tame Valley Children’s Centre staff team. Ria’s role is a new one for Spurgeons nationally: a development of their ‘Together for Families’ programme (usually partnerships between Spurgeons and local churches), she sits within the TWC! team with a particular focus on connecting with, and supporting local people to develop activities with, parents with children under 5 years old. While Ria brings additional, focused capacity to TWC!’s work, Spurgeons’ national leadership are also keen to learn from TWC!’s innovative approach, both locally and wider within their organisation.

## **Enterprise support**

In Years 2 and 3 of *TWC!*, our budget has included an additional £5,000 to support local groups and individuals who are wanting to develop their capacity for income-generation, as small businesses or social enterprises. Much of the year has been spent engaging with possible groups and individuals, exploring with them the best ways of offering this additional support – whether through tailor-made specific support, or some kind of ‘one-size-fits-all’ support offer. Towards the end of the year, we drew in two people to lead on this work, particularly in Year 3 of the project:

- Jane Barrett, who has been a youth worker for Worth Unlimited locally for 8 years, and was instrumental in supporting the development of the young-women-led social enterprise Listen Threads (case study on p.31) – who gives ‘on-the-ground’ time to come alongside local residents to determine what kind of additional support they want or need.
- Pete Twilley, a visiting fellow of Staffordshire University and a staff member of its Creative Communities Unit – who is offering 1-2-1 mentoring time, developing training resources and leading a weekly ‘developing enterprise’ course for local residents.

## 1.4 Evaluation and reflection

In keeping with the ethos of the project, the *TWC!* reflection and evaluation takes an intentionally participatory and self-evaluative approach. Supported by external evaluation partner Jane Perry, the staff team have continued to use the approach developed in Year 1, which creates quantitative and qualitative information regarding *TWC!* activities/outputs (process) and outcomes (impact) – see Appendix A for full details. Jane has continued to work closely with the team throughout the year, assisting with the ongoing development and implementation of monitoring/evaluation. This provided additional technical skills and expertise, together with a degree of external oversight.

Information captured through monitoring and evaluation has been integrated with an ongoing programme of reflection – both as a staff team, and with neighbours locally – facilitated partly by Cormac Russell of Nurture Development (an international leader in community-building thinking and practice), and partly by local leaders. This two-way conversation allows real-time learning to be captured and assessed against wider evidence, in turn shaping future monitoring, evaluation and reflection activity. This report presents a summary of that learning for Year 2.



*'Learning circle' gathering with Cormac Russell*

## 2 What have we done this year?

This section outlines what we have *done* in Year 2 (January to December 2018) through the various strands of work of the *TogetherWeCan!* project, and some facts and figures about *how many local residents* we have engaged with and supported so far. We'll also share some of our current reflections on how things are working *in practice* (compared with the *theory* we outlined in Section 1.2, above) – what's happened as we expected, and some of the surprises we've encountered in the past year.

A summary of the figures in this section is provided in Appendix C.

### 2.1 Street Connecting

#### Adults

Paul Wright, our Street Connector Mentor has continued to engage in four main strands of work this year:

- Regularly engaging neighbours through door-step conversations with the Street Connectors Team (case study on p.10), 'Hodge Hill Cuppa' / 'Pop-Up Place of Welcome' ('PUPOW') sessions - engaging parents at the end of the school day, over a cuppa in the school playground, and other local events
- Supporting neighbours to plan and run 'micro-local' street events - focused in on just one street, a green space, or a small cluster of neighbouring streets
- Supporting resident-led groups, activities and projects to start, grow and develop - including coordinating 'PIE' events for people with ideas to present them to other neighbours, and to bid for small grants to help make their ideas happen
- Supporting and mentoring a growing number of active residents, as regular street connectors, street event organisers, project leaders and project volunteers

During 2018, Paul has grown the regular Street Connector team to 7, with 4 additional residents supporting the connecting work around particular street events. The team supported 10 street events this year (up from 7 in year 1), and a further 11 people have been supported to set up and/or lead local groups, activities and projects – with a further 54 local residents engaging within those projects as active volunteers. Of those projects, 7 have been brand new developments in 2018, on top of the 4 we supported in Year 1 (Section 3.1).

As a result, we've found ourselves engaging with 119 people in door-step conversations (similar to last year's figure of 124), and a massive 388 people (160 adults and 228 children) through 'micro-level' street events. This builds on the proven success last year of the 'street event' model – and has exceeded not only our target for Year 2, but also that for Year 3.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Year 2 targets: to recruit 10 local residents (as 'connectors' and/or group leaders) to lead on 10 events or projects, engaging 200 residents.

## Case study: The Street Connectors team

A crucial component of *TogetherWeCan!* is the all-year-round door-knocking work of the 'street connectors' team, including the more seasonal, 'micro-local' door-knocking for street events. Since we began this particular way of working in summer 2016, the approach and its impact have become increasingly clear.

The team aims to go out door-knocking once a week, every week, for around two hours at a time. Conversations on the door-step are not rigidly scripted, but are intentionally focused around: an **interest** in the person themselves (their story, their passions and gifts, their hopes and possibilities for local involvement); sharing **information** about groups, activities and events going on locally; and an **invitation** to a street event, or a regular place of welcome, or to other ways of enabling the neighbour to share their passions and gifts with others.

Street Connectors have met a parent of a struggling teenager, who was subsequently connected in to youth work run from the Hub, and is now receiving mentoring to help with her Maths and participating in the Listen Threads social enterprise group (case study on p.31, below). They have called at the door of the regional community engagement officer for Greggs, who was able to offer a long-term partnership supporting our weekly community lunch with unsold food. They have frequently offered a listening ear and comfort in the midst of bereavements and other life struggles. And they have been instrumental in drawing in to community life some neighbours who have grown into active community leadership – among them Rachael and Keith who, with Saira, started up the community cooking group 'Flavours of Hodge Hill'.

*"Before the street event I was hosting, we knocked on a lady's door who had mental health issues and suffered from severe anxiety and bouts of depression, and she really struggled to go out - she came to her gate, and she was very keen to come along to the event - we said "if you want, we can come and knock for you and walk over with you" - she did come, she only stayed for 10 minutes, but that 10 minutes made a real difference to her." (Louise)*

Street Connecting has also attracted interest from well beyond the local area, from other neighbourhoods and organisations wanting to learn from our experience here. In October 2018, two members of the team gave the keynote address, and led practical workshops, at the Church of Scotland Priority Areas conference in Glasgow.

### **'Connectors', not 'leaders'**

Gifts of the community connector are quite distinct from those we associate with 'group leaders', or those who institutions (like the City Council) have traditionally engaged with as 'community leaders'. Connectors far more often 'fly under the radar', rather than taking visible, 'up-front' positions – but are often well-known and well-trusted, by many of their neighbours. They are excellent listeners, but also have what they themselves have called 'the gift of the gab' – an ability to talk to anybody and everybody. And they are interested in people for their own sake – resisting labelling and on the hunt for passions and gifts – with no agenda other than drawing those gifts into deeper involvement in local community life.

Many of our Street Connector team live with significant pressures, struggles and fragilities in their own lives, but are unafraid of sharing those aspects of themselves in doorstep conversations. The team members are people who have discovered the power of mutual support themselves, and are passionate about inviting neighbours into a similar experience.

*“I realised that actually in people's lives we all have weaknesses and it made me realise that you think you're weak but actually those weaknesses can be used as strengths because you may come across people who may have similar issues or difficulties, and through your story, or when they see you getting out and actively involved, that can be encouraging to them” (Jo)*

### **What's making it work?**

Team members value the “relaxed” expectations and flexibility of the door-knocking work: “it’s just a couple of hours [a week], and no pressure to cover the whole estate in a certain amount of weeks”. It’s important to the team that they go in pairs, for their own safety, and to increase the possibilities for connection with the person on the other side of the door. They acknowledge, however, that it can often be emotionally draining, especially if they receive hostile or persistently indifferent responses on the door-step: “if the first person you speak to and it's quite difficult, that can set the tone for the afternoon”.

Fundamentally, the team aspect is vital to the street connectors. “Together, Everyone Achieves More!”, as Jo often reminds her fellow team members: “it’s being understanding, and being able to share that that day that you're struggling, and somebody else would take the lead... so instead of thinking I can’t do it, you work together”.

### **Hopes for the future**

The team see Paul, the (paid) Street Connector Mentor, as critical to their work at the moment – “the helmsman”, “a big support” – but they also share an expectation that together they will grow in confidence, “so that if Paul can’t come, [we’ll still be able] to go out [and] do this ourselves”. There’s also a shared hope that the team will grow, draw in “fresh blood, the younger generation”, and become more ethnically diverse – especially to better enable connection with some local residents for whom a conversation in English on the doorstep is too difficult.



## Young people

Our youth-focused team (Dan Sandford-Smith and Flo Berrow) have been connecting with local young people, and connecting them together with other young people and their adult neighbours, through three main strands of work:

- Detached youth work sessions, in parks and other green spaces, outside shops and other places where young people gather locally, and in spaces like The Real Junk Food Kitchen
- Short-term 'We Can' social action projects with young people from local primary (Tame Valley Academy and Heathlands) and secondary (Park Hall Academy) schools, working with classes of young people to plan, deliver and evaluate a project, based in the Firs and Bromford neighbourhood, that helps make the neighbourhood a better place to live
- Locally based 'We Can' groups, meeting together after school and in the school holidays, engaging in short-term and longer-term intergenerational social action projects in the neighbourhood

We have exceeded our Year 2 targets for detached work (engaging 85 young people) and 'We Can' school projects (151 young people).<sup>2</sup> Twenty seven young people participated in our locally-based 'We Can' groups during 2018 - a little short of our target. One of the challenges we have been grappling with this year is how most effectively to 'feed' new young people from school projects into *existing* 'We Can' groups, which often have established peer relationships and group dynamics. An alternative would be to develop *new* 'We Can' groups for each year's new cohort, we are considering whether we have capacity to do this.

This year has also seen the beginning of new open-access youth clubs, including a neighbour-led Girls Group – see Listen Threads case study. and more local adults wanting to get involved, and develop skills and experience) in youth work locally. This has raised the questions both of *capacity to lead and support groups* (and detached youth work), and of *capacity and resources to develop volunteers* to engage in youth work - Section 4.



<sup>2</sup> Year 2 targets: to engage 60 young people through street-based detached work, 120 young people through school 'We Can' projects, and 30 young people through the ongoing locally-based 'We Can' groups.

## Case study: building relationships across generations

One of the 'We Can' youth social action projects in 2017 involved clearing leaves and rubbish from the path and garden of an elderly lady on the estate. In last year's report one of our young people, Skye, told a little of the story:

*"[She] asked if we could clear leaves from by her gate as there was loads and couldn't do it by herself so we stepped in and did it for her. Barbara then told us that she was an evacuee [in] World War 2. We were all shocked. She then began to tell us her journey throughout the war... It was ... a great and an amazing experience for us. We all loved it and ... [this] is why we love doing what we do. It's amazing, as we give back we get a lot from it too."*

Sadly, in 2018 Barbara died, but her family were so grateful for the help the young people had given her that they decided they wanted to donate the collection from her funeral to a trip to Uganda that the We Can group are currently planning and fundraising for. Barbara's son Kevin shared something of what the connection with the young people meant to his mum:

*"Mum was so appreciative of what the young people did, and more so the way the children engaged with Mum, and the way she was able to engage with them and found this very natural and easy. For Mum there was a real connection there! It meant a lot for Mum to be able to give back to the young people by sharing her story about what she did [in the war]."*

*"Sadly in this day and age it is too easy to write off things and people. But to see how you are engaging with the young people and bringing them together – not just as young people but the wider community especially adults – is great and makes them better people and more rounded individuals."*

*"With Mum it was her story that grabbed young people's attention, and a true connection happened, and I would love to see more opportunities for others to experience that. Long may it continue."*



## Case study: Firs & Bromford summer programme

The summer programme of activities and events for children, young people and adults is funded and prompted by Firs & Bromford Neighbours Together. Not named in the original *TogetherWeCan!* funding bid, *TWC!* involvement in the Summer Programme began as 'accidental', as Paul, *TWC!*'s Street Connector Mentor had been coordinating the programme for several years before moving into his current role. However, it has become a very intentional investment of *TWC!* time - proving to be a major annual opportunity for intergenerational activities, engaging new people and growing new leaders. All four workers are heavily involved in planning, coordination, leading and support. Some regular *TWC!* activities continue during these 2-3 weeks, but much of *TWC!*'s 'business as usual' is put on hold over this period and the lead-up to it.

Much of the programme is now 'resident-led, staff-supported', rather than vice versa, and it has become a place where both established and developing groups are able to make a contribution, or take the lead on one or more activities (e.g. catering provided by Flavours of Hodge Hill, craft activities led by the Arts & Crafts group, etc).

Jessica is one local young person for whom the summer programme was a critical moment on her journey of getting more involved, connecting with neighbours, and growing into a leadership role in her neighbourhood:

*"The summer helped me meet new people like Nicola who was also helping. We got on really well, spent the day in Blackpool, Dovedale together and became really good friends. Being involved helped me meet people who are similar to me and that I have things in common with. I had met her before but working together on the activities helped us to get to know each other much better. Becoming a junior leader has made me feel more confident, helped me to experience new things, learning what it's like to be a leader, and helping others out." (Jessica)*

The coordination of 2019's summer programme is shifting from Paul (Street Connector Mentor) to Dan (Street Connector – Young People), with the aim of continuing to increase local resident leadership and intergenerational activity. The *TWC!* team is also wanting to be more intentional about developing and enabling resident-led programmes of activity in some of the other school holiday periods in the year.



## **2.2 Support and Development**

### **Adults**

Until March 2018, our Community Support & Development Worker (Sarah Maxfield) focused specifically on three main strands of work with local adults:

- Leading the team (staff and volunteers) that hosts the weekly Open Door drop-in session at The Hub, offering a 'place of welcome' and hospitality, a listening ear, and multiple forms of practical support, from using computers and accessing the internet, to help writing CVs and applying for jobs, to support and advice (through our partnerships with Birmingham Community Law Centre and St Martin's Centre for Health and Healing) about benefits entitlements and challenging unfair decisions. Open Door also leads in to a weekly Community Lunch which both encourages people to bring and share together and provides food for people to be able to take away with them to use during the week.
- Leading the facilitation of weekly Women's Group sessions, at Ambridge House, that bring together women from many different nationalities to plan, lead and share activities together (many centred around cooking and eating).
- Working with people on a 1-2-1 basis, through both referrals (from local primary schools) and self-referrals (dropping in to Open Door or other regular groups), to support people through crisis situations (e.g. eviction), to navigate systems (e.g. applying for benefits and challenging unfair decisions), and to grow in confidence to be able to participate in local groups and activities (e.g. through emotional support, making introductions, and accompanying to groups).

With Sarah's departure in March, the *TWC!* steering group and the board of Open Door Community Foundation re-focused this post's job description around the following themes:

- Supporting places of welcome and encounter (including Open Door, Community Lunch, Women's Group, The Real Junk Food Kitchen and Hodge Hill Cuppa / Pop-Up Places of Welcome) and engaging women
- Supporting and mentoring individuals towards greater participation and contribution – alongside more 'crisis'-focused support
- Volunteer recruitment and development (across *TWC!*'s projects)

In the latter part of 2018, with Lucy Poulson's support, Community Lunch has been followed often by opportunities for participants to share some of their gifts and skills (e.g. singing), or to engage in some learning and training opportunities (e.g. stress management). Women's Group has also been 're-launched' as a women-specific 'Place of Welcome', understood as a welcoming 'entry point' for local women, that can also be an 'incubator' both for local leaders and for new experiences and ideas that can be 'tried out' here, and then developed further in other spaces and times of the week. Lucy has also been involved in developing a Volunteer Recruitment Pack which has included giving some careful thought to the 'tipping points' across *TWC!*'s work where local residents shift from being 'participants' in groups, activities and events, to taking on particular responsibilities as 'volunteers', requiring more focused attention and support.

Over Year 2, we have engaged with and supported 114 local people through Open Door (66 of them new this year), 83 people (50 new) through Community Lunch, and 64 women (29 new) through Women's Group. We have also supported at least 33 people (19 new) through Sarah and Lucy's 1-2-1 work. Again, these figures significantly exceed the targets for the year.<sup>3</sup>



### **Young people**

Flo Berrow's role parallels and supports *TWC's* work with adults: Flo contributes to the weekly Open Door drop-in and The Real Junk Food Kitchen sessions, as well as working with colleagues to support both adults and young people in family contexts. As well as supporting Dan in the youth-focused connecting work (p.12), Flo also leads on three distinct strands of work:

- Facilitating weekly 'I Can' groups – a drop-in environment tailored specifically for young people, along similar lines to the all-age Open Door drop-ins (i.e. including an element of personal support and development)
- Supporting young people 1-2-1, on both an appointment and drop-in basis
- Supporting new and more well-established youth drop-ins, youth clubs and girls groups

Over this second year of this work, we have supported 24 young people through 'I Can' drop-ins, including 11 new attendees, and 28 young people through 1-2-1 work (19 new in Year 2). This represents a subtle but significant shift in focus from more organised I-Can groups to a combination of less formal youth drop-ins and 1-2-1 support<sup>4</sup>. We have incorporated this into our plans for Year 3, but also begun to explore alternative ways of offering more structured opportunities for young people to learn, grow and develop in confidence, skills and other personal capacities (Section 4).

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<sup>3</sup> Year 2 targets: to engage and support 80 people through twice-weekly Open Door drop-in sessions, and support 20 people through 1-2-1 work.

<sup>4</sup> Compared to Year 2 targets, 2018 figures for I-Can are slightly below target (20/30) but almost double for 1-2-1's (28/15)

## Case study: Open Door – helping neighbours support neighbours

From its inception in 2012, the Open Door drop-in at the Hub (first on Saturday mornings, and then on Tuesday mornings) has always been intended as primarily a warm and friendly, volunteer-led 'place of welcome', with practical support on offer, rather than an 'advice centre' staffed by skilled workers and/or volunteers. In fact, Open Door was involved in the very earliest conversations developing a now-nationwide 'Places of Welcome' network ([www.placesofwelcome.org.uk](http://www.placesofwelcome.org.uk)), and contributed to the '5 Ps' which shape the network's ethos – the last of which is the emphasis on seeking to draw neighbours into forms of active *participation*. In 2018 Open Door has been a space for more neighbours to contribute their gifts and skills – including post-Community Lunch singing sessions led by local musicians – and also occasional externally-led workshops (from opera singing to stress management)

Nevertheless, with severe cuts in funding for advice services under the current government, the need for locally-accessible, skilled support – particularly around benefits, housing and immigration issues – has continued, and intensified, as a strand of Open Door's provision. Much of this has been delivered by our own skilled and experienced workers (Flo, Sarah and most recently Lucy) and through our well-established partnership with Birmingham Community Law Centre – but we have also increasingly been able to support local people to develop as volunteers, encouraging and resourcing neighbour-to-neighbour support. A vital piece of work in 2018 was the development of our Volunteer Recruitment Pack, paying particular attention to the 'tipping points' that shift people from being a 'participant' contributing their gifts and skills, into a more formal 'volunteer' role, with the necessary training, support and accountability required for such roles.

*"I've got more involved on a Tuesday – I was coming for a while, but now I'm volunteering and helping out... I just came down every week, and Lucy spoke to me and said 'you're down all the time, I trust you'... I say hello to people, make them feel at home" (JoJo)*

*"I came in here quite a few times before I actually said anything – I had a bad speech impediment and couldn't get my words out properly... and I just sat back and listened to what was going on here, to what you were all doing... the stages of what you do and how you treat people – you treat people all exactly the same, with respect, decency, you're honest with people – and I think that's a massive thing – it's the way to build community..."*

*"So I just wanted to get more involved, and I've basically done that... it's made a massive difference to my life - I look at people in a totally different light - I can empathise with people, I can feel what they're going through, whereas before I would have ignored it... you've shown me a different way of dealing with people - how to listen - listening I think is a massive part of what you do - you listen to people's problems and then you build from there. I've watched the way you people deal with other people... and I've tried to put that into my life, and the way I deal with other people." (Mick)*

### **2.3 Responding to the Challenges**

During Year 1 we identified 9 significant challenges we found ourselves facing in our work: hurdles to be overcome, dilemmas to be wrestled with, or costs that just had to be borne. Here we return to those challenges, and review our progress in dealing with them.

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#### **Challenge 1. *The crises and strains on local residents caused by systemic pressures***

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Last year we highlighted the “significant element of fragility built into our work precisely because it is grounded on the agency and leadership of local residents who are often battling with some of the toughest challenges of life: poor health, precarious employment, low incomes, and family tensions, to name but a few.” We also noted that “when these are combined with systemic pressures (e.g. unfair benefits decisions, incompetent, if not hostile, benefits and immigration systems, the rise of zero-hours contracts, inadequate social housing provision, cuts to advice services and legal aid, under-resourcing of health care, schools, social care, etc.), ‘fragility’ can often slip into ‘crisis’.”

The introduction of Universal Credit over the past year has, as we anticipated, compounded many of these pressures for local people here – most notably because of benefits payment freezes and/or delays, often pushing people into debt, food shortages, rent arrears and, in some cases, the threat or reality of eviction from their homes. Through our local MP, and with campaigning group Church Action on Poverty, we have contributed to wider campaigns to get the roll-out of Universal Credit reviewed. Our primary local focus has remained direct, and increasingly neighbour-neighbour, support of local people through times of crisis and beyond (Open Door case study on p.17), and the development of local networks and ‘places’ of belonging, friendship and mutual support which stretch well beyond our own direct work.

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#### **Challenge 2. *The time and energy required to support a growing community***

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At the end of Year 1, we celebrated “the sheer number of active local residents and new groups that have emerged over the past year” but acknowledged that this presented its own challenges to support, even in a “light-touch” way. We committed in Year 2 to “invest more time into developing peer-to-peer support (e.g. gatherings for connectors & group leaders), slowly reducing dependency on staff support”.

This year our Street Connector Mentor especially has wrestled extensively with this challenge. We have convened three well-attended ‘reflection sessions’ (to which we have invited group leaders, connectors, and other highly-involved local people), but invitations to additional gatherings specifically for ‘group leaders’ have been responded to with little enthusiasm. Reasons have included: a lack of clear ‘common interest’ across groups with very different focuses; a lack of enthusiasm for ‘gathering for gathering’s sake’, without a clear objective; and a deeper sense, for some groups more than others, of not seeing themselves as part of the ‘bigger picture’ – what we are calling, in this report, the wider ‘community ecology’ of the Firs & Bromford.

On the other hand, what has shown itself to be immensely significant for mutual support is the development of *teams*: most clearly seen among the Street Connectors and The Real Junk Food Kitchen. This learning (explored further in 4.2 on p.35, below) has influenced our plans for the future – Section 6.



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**Challenge 3. Deepening connections between different generations and ethnic backgrounds**

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We acknowledged last year that “there is still plenty more work to do” to continue to deepen and broaden connections between different generations and ethnic backgrounds locally, including becoming more active “in finding and nurturing active connectors and group leaders from the black and minority ethnic backgrounds represented locally” and “drawing other local adults into the ‘We Can’ social action projects at an early stage in the process”. A year on, there are encouraging signs of progress, but there remains a long way to go. Both of the priorities identified above remain central in our ongoing work.

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**Challenge 4. Engaging with local men, and drawing them into participation**

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Our weekly Open Door drop-in remains the place that has most men represented among its regular participants (noting that these tend to be either retired, seeking work, or out of work for health reasons). Although last year’s report recommended that the Street Connecting team “extend door-knocking to evenings and weekends, when some working men may be at home”, the team (all volunteers other than the Street Connector Mentor) have not had a particular enthusiasm or capacity for extending their work beyond their regular weekly afternoon round. This is something the team plan to re-visit this year. We are also exploring a renewed relationship with one of the major sheltered housing complexes in the neighbourhood, to seek to connect with men in the older, post-retirement age group.

Out of the Open Door drop-in, however, there has begun to emerge some energy and passion for a Men’s Group (part shared activity, part peer-support). Lucy has been working with a small handful of men to explore the possibilities further, with the hope of a group beginning during 2019. In this, we are particularly mindful of the ongoing support which might be required for the group and its attendees, particularly if it begins to address some of the deeper issues and fragilities for some

participants. We are engaging with organisations in other parts of the UK, with a similar ethos to our own, who support similar groups, to learn lessons from their experience. We are also conscious that, there is potentially a significant gap in our provision for ‘barrier-removing’ support (which is currently led by two female workers) where a male worker is felt to be needed or most appropriate.

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**Challenge 5. Finding support from organisations with shared values**

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Learning lessons from our own experience in Year 1 engaging with other agencies and organisations locally, in Year 2 we have been more discerning in the amount of time and energy we have invested in engaging in potential partnerships. These have included:

- Birmingham Community Law Centre – established & ongoing
- Spurgeons – working together to develop job description for, recruit and work with the new ‘Families Connector’, as an extension of the *TWC!* core team
- Firs & Tame Valley primary schools – exploring potential for developing community venues on school sites
- Environmental groups – through the new Green Connector’s work

Partnership working remains key, but requires care and investment. Our learning around this includes: invited potential partners to ‘come and see’, and get involved with, our existing work, to enable them to get the best sense of our approach in practice; ensuring the overlap of our values has been as ‘thick’ as possible; identifying and maintaining a clear and consistent point of contact in the potential partner organisation.

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**Challenge 6. Moving from ‘doing for’ to ‘done by’ when people (residents and staff) are under multiple pressures**

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During Year 1 we reflected that most relationships are made up of varying proportions of ‘doing for’, ‘doing with’ and ‘done by’. Our goal is to help people move towards *interdependence* within community (‘done by or ‘doing with’), rather than dependence on service provision (‘doing for/to’ or total *independence* as individuals. We committed ourselves, in Year 2, to “continue to enlarge the space where neighbours are helping each other”. For example, specifically within the Open Door drop-in, “to be more intentional in inviting people into active roles (e.g. welcoming, making tea, listening to others, helping use computers, etc.)”, “to be more alert to discerning when people can do things by themselves from the beginning”, and “to introduce post-community-lunch space for people to share their talents with others (e.g. baking ‘class’, singing session)”. These commitments are beginning to bear fruit, as borne out in the case study on Open Door (p.17).

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**Challenge 7. Helping groups, in their development, discover their vision, values and connectedness to the bigger picture**

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Last year we wrestled with the dilemma of how we help groups towards a sense of “being part of the wider ‘ecology’ of the neighbourhood”, and “the importance of inclusivity”, “without coming across as ‘telling them what to do’, or ‘taking over’”. This has remained a significant challenge in our work

with fledgling and developing groups, although the *TogetherWeCan!* team has become much more confident and unapologetic, over the past year, in articulating the vision and values, and sense of 'ecology', underpinning our work. One of the most significant shifts in our thinking, as we enter Year 3 of *TWC!*, is to further develop explicit 'learning opportunities' within our offer of support (to individuals, groups and teams), within which questions of vision, values and connectedness can be explicitly explored.




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**Challenge 8. Maintaining a level of coordination across a complex project**

**Challenge 9. Meeting organizational running costs beyond project delivery**

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The final two challenges are related, and have been addressed in relatively straightforward, practical ways. The *TWC!* steering group agreed to re-allocate some budget (from underspent budget lines) to cover both an element of 'project management' costs (currently paid to Hodge Hill Church, to recognise the time given to the project by Revd Al Barrett, the local vicar) and the critical organisational running costs of Open Door Community Foundation. The challenges of coordinating a growing and *increasingly* complex project remain – but two of the key organisations supporting the work have benefited from a little more financial security in return for the investment of a substantial gift of time from both paid workers and volunteers (ODCF board members especially).

### 3 What difference are we making?

In this section we will highlight some of the significant differences *TogetherWeCan!* is making to our neighbourhood, as we map out the multiplication and development of ‘places to belong’, and share some of what we’ve heard from participants (through questionnaires and more in-depth case studies<sup>5</sup>) about their sense of growth in connectedness, confidence, and opportunities to share their passions and skills with their neighbours.

#### 3.1 *More places to belong*

Growth in number, and sustainability, of places, spaces and groups where people can come and meet other neighbours, make friends, and feel they belong and can make a meaningful contribution is foundational to the kind of neighbourhood-level change we are aiming for.

Year 1 saw an ‘explosion’ of new groups and activities, illustrated on our ‘Activities Map’ captured in Jan 2018 (Figure 4). In Year 2, we were anticipating a significant slow-down in that growth, with a re-focusing of the time and energy of our Street Connector Mentor on supporting existing groups to become stronger and more sustainable. In fact, support for existing groups has had to co-exist with the support and development of yet more new groups and activities, as shown in the three-page ‘activity map’ for the end of Year 2 (Nov 2018).

These new developments have included six groups supported through and beyond ‘PIE’ (small grant) events:

- ‘Flavours of Hodge Hill’, offering cooking classes, regular breakfasts, and catering for events both local and in other parts of the city
- Beauty classes, ‘B36 Fitness’ classes, ‘Making Friends through Arts & Crafts’, ‘Showcasing Art’, and an after-school club at St Wilfrid’s Community Centre

In addition, TWC! has been involved in supporting the development of:

- Zumba classes and a ‘Walk & Talk’ group – both emerging within, and developing beyond, the regular Women’s Group sessions
- a Girls’ Group, led by women who have grown into leadership through *TWC!*’s work
- Heritage projects led by local young people, emerging from existing Youth Social Action work
- a regular litter-picking group, working across the estate, and in and around special events

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<sup>5</sup> We have this year gathered feedback from 185 participants (66 adults and 119 young people) through questionnaires, and a further 10 in depth interviews (2 of these with small groups). Appendix A gives more details of the *method* we’ve used to seek feedback from participants and *why* we’ve chosen to do it that way. Here we share something of the *content* of that feedback – both the *numbers* of people responding positively to our evaluation questions, and *what people said* when we asked them to share something of their experience of, and reflections on, our work.

Figure 4 Activities Map, end of Year 1 (Jan 2018)

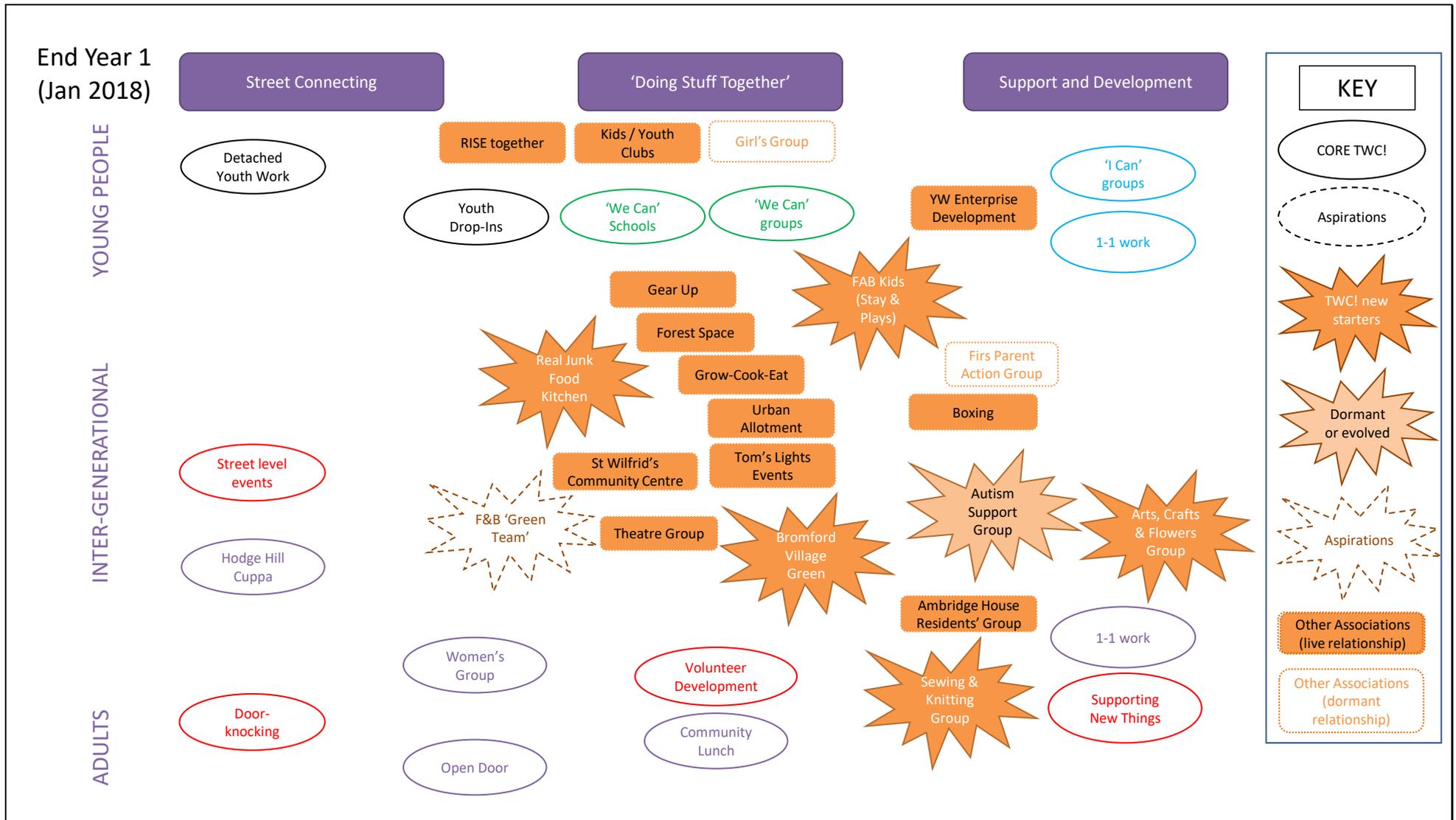
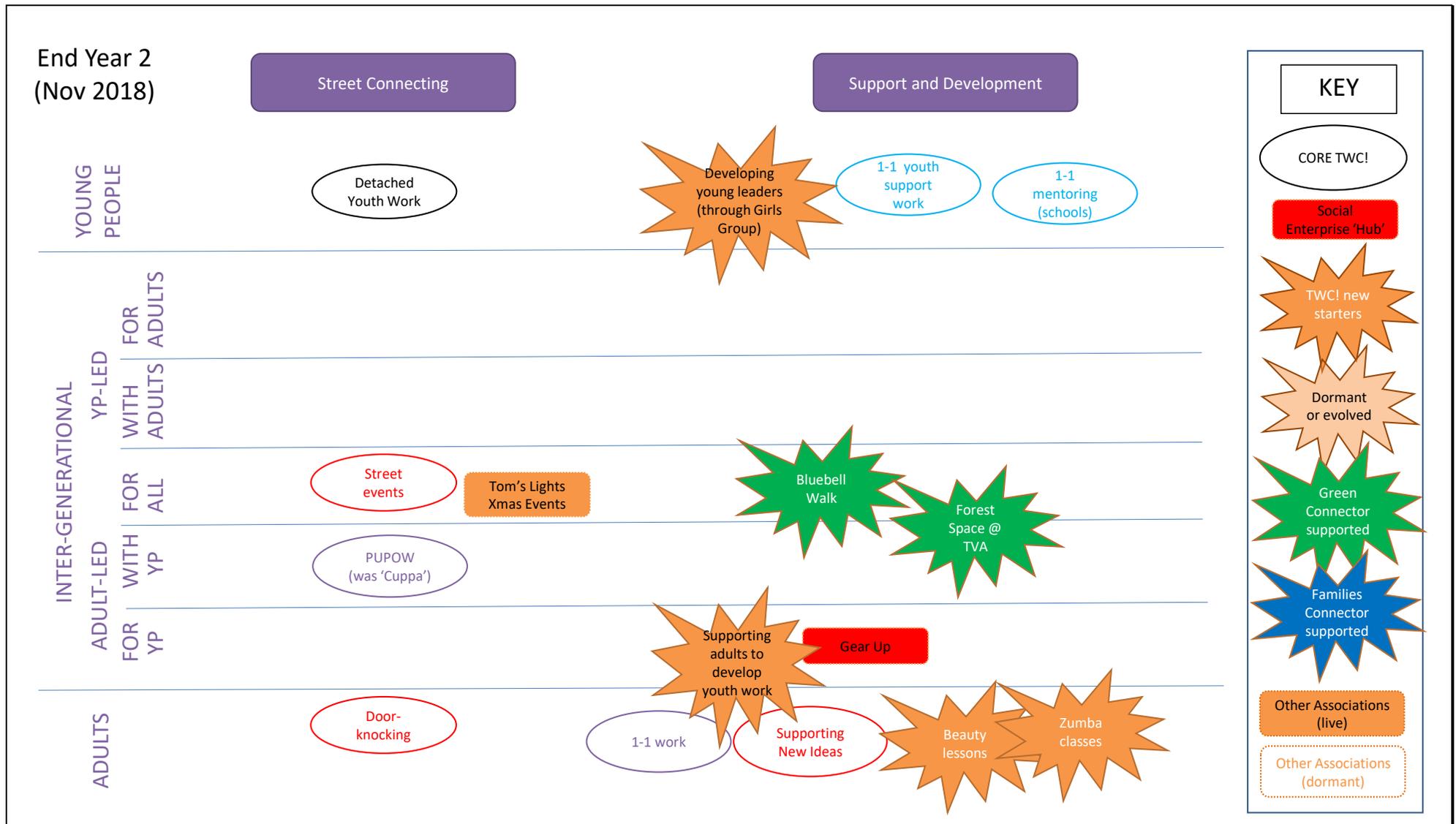
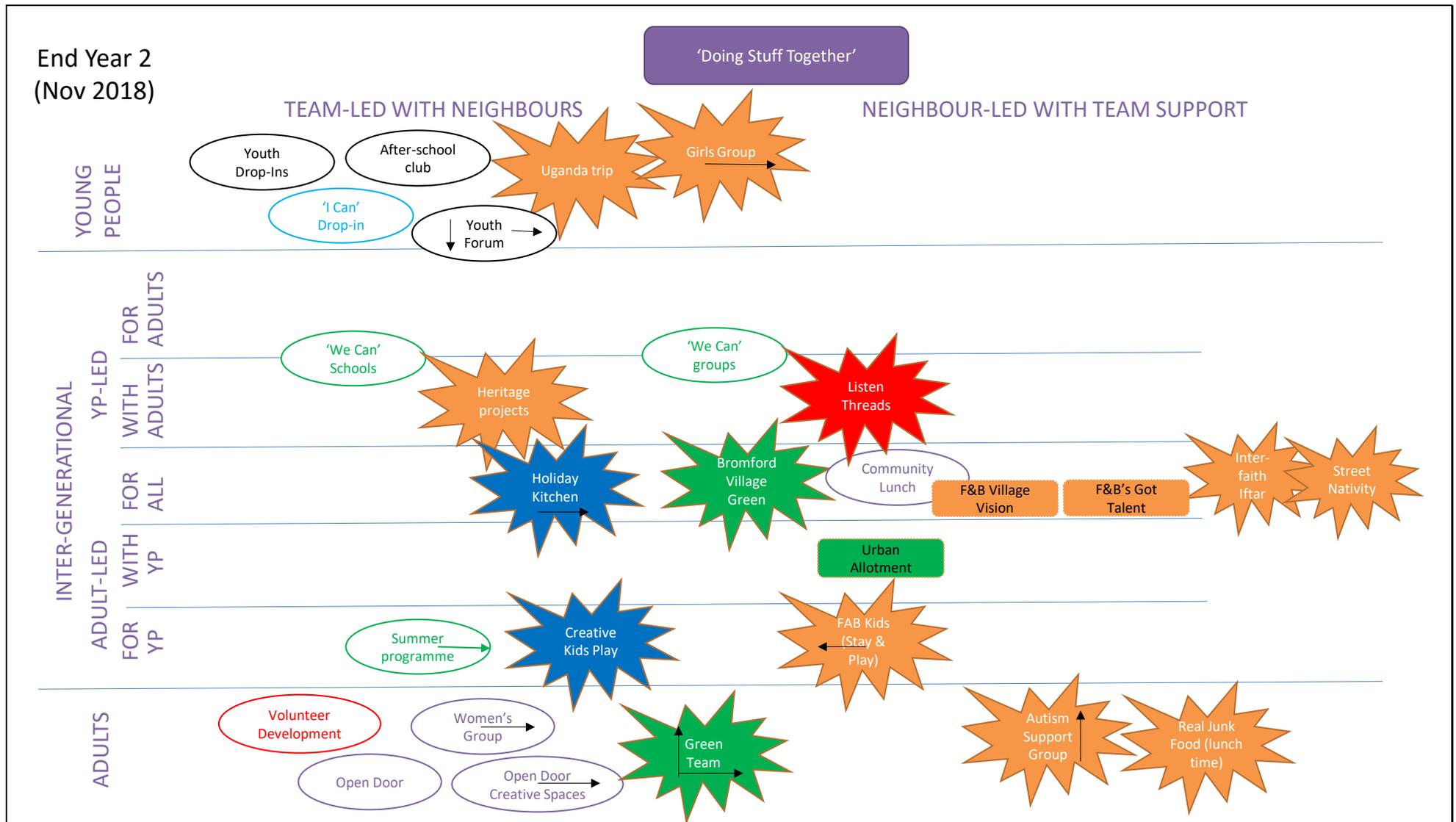


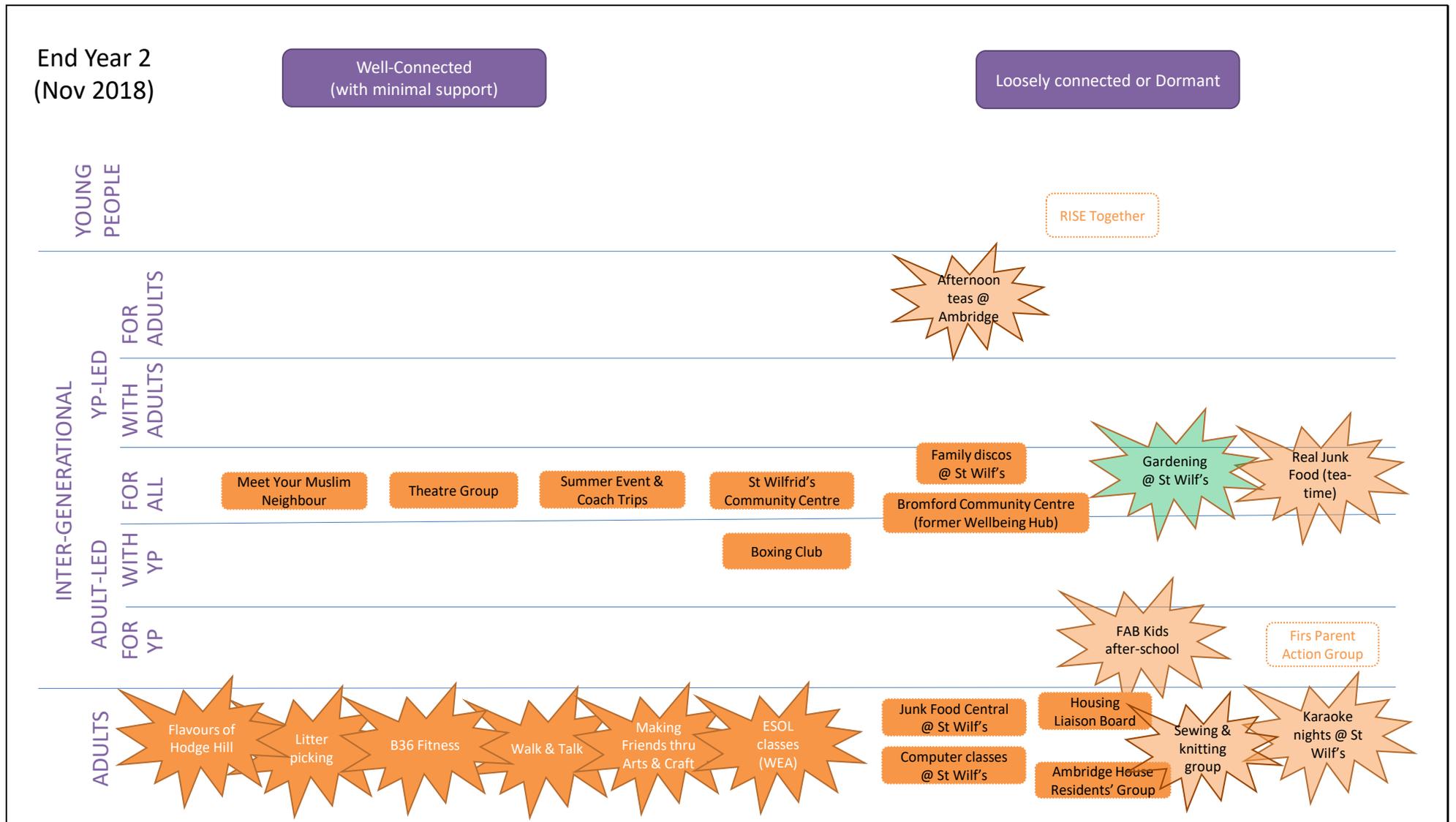
Figure 5 Activities Map, end of Year 2 (Nov 2018) [NB. continues on pages 25 & 26]



Activities Map, end of Year 2 (Nov 2018) (part 2)



Activities Map, end of Year 2 (Nov 2018) (part 3)



The addition of a half-time 'Green Connector', and the Spurgeon's 'Family Connector' post, to the *TWC!* core team have also enabled additional groups and activities to begin (highlighted in the activity maps above in green and blue respectively) – mostly at this point initiated by staff team members, working alongside neighbours, but with the aim of developing significant new streams of neighbour-led activity.

This wide range of new groups and activities has enabled further progress on two of our key outcomes:

- 60 neighbours (100% of adults asked, 76% of YP) reported having **more opportunities to do things with their neighbours**
- 11 neighbours were supported to set up new groups, activities and enterprises

## Case study: supporting groups to start, grow and change

The continued growth in new 'start-ups' (new local groups and activities), alongside the ongoing change and development of existing groups, has both been a wonderfully encouraging sign of life and flourishing within our neighbourhood, and also meant that *TWC!*'s contribution to supporting these groups has been demanding both in its scope and complexity. Groups require hugely varied levels and forms of support – some we just 'start up and let go', others want or need a much closer and ongoing relationship – and that changes even with a particular group, over its life-cycle. A vital piece of work done by Paul, our Street Connector Mentor, this year has been the development of a 'roadmap' to use with groups, activities and projects, tracing the journey from 'first idea'; through reflections on the people involved and the kind of venue needed; practical questions about policies, funding, training and publicity needs; patterns of ongoing support, review and reflection; and ways to address struggles and obstacles when they arise.

### 'Flavours of Hodge Hill'

'Flavours of Hodge Hill' was a new start-up in 2018, offering weekly 'bring-and-share' cooking classes covering cuisines from across the breadth of Firs & Bromford's cultures and nationalities. Flavours' roots can be traced back to an encounter at a street event, when Jo from the street connecting team had a first conversation with Rachael and Keith, who had relatively recently arrived in the area. "If it wasn't for one person just coming up and saying 'Hello, I'm Jo, I'm a street connector', we'd still be in our house, we wouldn't have got involved," Keith has said. A *TWC!*-organised trip to a community event in Winson Green provided inspiration – 'Flavours of Winson Green' was running 'taster' cooking workshops at the event – but also the necessary connection between Rachael and Saira, who now call each other both best friends and 'partners' in the venture. The Real Junk Food Kitchen, now one of our established 'Places of Welcome', acted as an incubator for both this developing friendship, and for the idea and practicalities behind 'Flavours', and Paul supported the three of them to develop a proposal for a PIE event, at which they received 'start-up' funding.

Flavours ran 15 cookery sessions in 2018, involving 20 different people, all of whom were able to both learn to cook new dishes and share some of their own favourites (6 participants have led a full session themselves). The Flavours team have also been called on to cater for a number of big community events (including FAB's Got Talent, the F&B summer programme and main Christmas event, and Hodge Hill Carnival), and for a few (paid) events beyond the neighbourhood, including a special Church of England event at Birmingham Cathedral.

Flavours has had its ups and downs – with attendance at cookery sessions sometimes dropping very low, so that even the cost of the ingredients aren't covered by the modest session charge. The team would dearly love to be able to offer sessions at both 'Firs' and 'Bromford' ends of the estate, but are currently unable to access an affordable venue in the Firs. Rachael has now found a job, which still allows her to do Flavours on a Monday, but cuts out other days of the week for her involvement in other community activities. At times they have questioned whether the group has a future, or whether it was just a good thing while it lasted.

But Flavours has kept going. Paul's support has been much valued – “when we're feeling low, 'cos people haven't come, he [Paul] just talks to us - when we need to go and talk to him, he's *there* for you, he builds up our confidence, he's *part* of Flavours really, he's like a guide to us”. The team have discovered an ability to adapt creatively, starting to offer breakfasts, as well as or instead of classes, to generate a bit of income as well as sustain the group's momentum. Crucially, like the Street Connectors (case study on p.10) they identify the importance of the team:

*“they're not afraid to jump in when you need them... [we're] a team... like a well-run watch - if a cog breaks, there's someone ready to jump in and help - you've got to have a backup plan... we've got to make sure we don't let Flavours down” (Keith)*

### **Other groups**

Other longer-established groups have had similar ups and downs in 2018, due to pressures and fragilities both internal to the group and from beyond. The Real Junk Food Kitchen reluctantly made the decision to re-locate from St Wilfrid's Community Centre to the Hub this year, and Paul worked intensely with the Junk Food team, helping them to remember their original vision, and working through the practical challenges of a different (and significantly smaller) venue. Although the team were worried about losing participants, to their surprise they discovered that almost everyone continued attending (even if some had to walk quite a bit further), highlighting the importance of relationships of trust and friendship built up over time.

FAB Kids has also seen changes this year, having to stop (at least temporarily) its after-school club, and re-locating its Stay & Play group twice (now based in the Children's Centre, with support from Ria, the Spurgeons-employed 'Family Connector'). Linda, one of the group's core leaders, reflects honestly on some of the struggles along the way:

*“I think to be fair we weren't open enough - we'd let it build up - we should have just been honest - the trouble with us is... all the moaning, and they were all pregnant at the time, and weren't sleeping and it was hard work... we had a couple of meetings - but by [that] time it was too late... but it's a lesson learnt for the future – [now] if I thought there was a problem, I'll talk to Ria, and we can work round it” (Linda)*



### 3.2 **More connected to our neighbours**

*TogetherWeCan!* wants to see more people connected to their neighbours, across age and ethnic differences, in relationships of trust, friendship and mutual support (Outcome 1, see Appendix D). This year 110 people (92% of adults asked, 54% of young people) reported **knowing more of their neighbours by name**, and 40 (98% of adults asked) reported **having more neighbours they could turn to for help**.<sup>6</sup>

### 3.3 **More able to overcome obstacles**

We also want to see people feeling more able to overcome obstacles to living flourishing lives. For *TogetherWeCan!*, that means that people are growing in confidence, skills and connections to build more sustainable livelihoods.

In a 'livelihood' we include people's financial resources (income, savings), physical resources (furniture, white goods, phone, etc), personal resources (physical and mental wellbeing), and social resources (connections to other people). By 'more sustainable', we mean more able to survive shocks (e.g. the washing machine breaking down, or losing a job), and moving from 'just about coping' towards thriving and living life to the full.

74 of our young participants this year (62% of young people asked) have said they have **grown in confidence and skills for employment-readiness** (our target was 30).<sup>7</sup> 100 people (86% of adults asked, 57% of young people) report feeling **more confident to cope when life is tough** (target 50). And 116 (92% of adults, 69% of young people) say that they feel **more confident to participate in local groups and activities** (target 50) as a result of their involvement in *TWC!*.

### 3.4 **More able to share passions and skills**

The third area where we have wanted to see *TogetherWeCan!* participants growing, is in feeling more able to share their passions, gifts and skills with their neighbours. 108 people (97% of adults asked, 61% of young people) said they felt **more confident to share** their passions, gifts and skills, and 92 (89% of adults, 51% of young people) said they had **more opportunities to share** them with their neighbours.<sup>8</sup> This shows significant growth from the responses received in Year 1's evaluation 'round' (66 and 52 respectively), and demonstrates that both *TWC!*'s ongoing direct support for participants, and the continuing growth of the local 'community ecology' itself, are enabling more and more people to grow in confidence to identify, and to share with others, their passions, gifts and skills.

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<sup>6</sup> Our targets were 100 and 35 respectively – and show increases from 108 and 28 in Year 1. The second of these questions was only asked of adults.

<sup>7</sup> This question was only asked of young people this year – although qualitative data among adult participants offers evidence that increased confidence to find employment is a recurring theme.

<sup>8</sup> Year 2 targets were 50 and 35, respectively.

## Case study: Listen Threads – growing young leaders through social enterprise

One of the most important themes that has emerged this year is how young leaders are ‘grown’ in our neighbourhood. Worth Unlimited (one of *TWC!*’s two delivery partner organisations) holds two, small, locally-rooted, holistic social enterprises under its organisational ‘umbrella’: **Gear-up**, a well-established bike shop, just next door to the Hub; and **Listen Threads**, a branded clothing line and customised clothing printing service, newly-established this year, and based at the Hub. While neither of these social enterprises is directly funded or supported by *TWC!* (both have time given to them by paid workers, Stewart and Janey, both of whom are dealing with more-or-less critical funding insecurities), their local rootedness and place within the Worth ‘extended family’ mean that there is a natural and extensive overlap with *TWC!*’s work and relationships. Their multiple contributions towards *TWC!*’s outcomes is what we explore further here.

### Chloe’s story

Chloe is 22, a single mum who has lived on Bromford for most of her life. She first got involved with Worth Unlimited’s youth work as a 13-year-old, attending youth drop-ins and, later on, a small supportive group for young women (late teens upwards). Out of that small ‘girls group’ emerged the possibility of developing a social enterprise, focused on fashion, their shared passion. Chloe worked alongside the youth worker Janey to co-found ‘Listen Threads’, a brand conceived by the young women themselves, with an explicit focus on listening to the voices of young women. Listen Threads now provides work experience and placements for young women, within an environment that offers both peer support and more intensive 1-to-1 support and mentoring from a youth worker. Recently, Chloe has worked alongside Flo to set up a *new* ‘girls group’ – for young teenaged girls similar to Chloe herself when she first got involved.

*“As a teenager I used to be cheeky, and at my worst I would smoke and drink outside the local shops and cause trouble. The staff at the Hub knew I was troubled and were always there for me. Lots of the activities we did were really fun.*

*“When I first had my daughter I barely left my house or did anything. The girls group was a lifeline. Having people to talk to and who listened to me helped me grow in confidence. When one day Janey asked us what we were serious about, something clicked. We realised we were all into fashion and wanted to make an enterprise – and Listen Threads was born. It’s helped me in so many ways. It’s given me so much confidence and hope and the belief I could do something with my life. I’ve done presentations I thought I could never do. I want to get some qualifications and maybe start a business course so I can learn how to run Listen Threads better. I’ve become passionate about the voices of other young women being heard in the same way that mine has. Listen Threads has become its own community, I’m able to encourage other young women to get involved, and we have support from local people who buy the clothes.*

*“Having youth workers (Janey and Flo) to support and encourage me, over a long period of time, has been really important. Having groups like Junk Food and meeting the friendly faces there has also helped me to be more confident about coming to the Hub and joining in other local projects. [Setting up] the Girls Group is important because I always looked forward to my girls group when I was younger and I want to give local young girls the same opportunity. I’m down here every day now – Monday is enterprise course and Girls Group, Tuesday is community lunch, Wednesday is Listen Threads, Thursday is Junk Food, and Friday I come to the Stay & Play! If it wasn’t for the support I’ve received from Worth and other local people I would never have been able to do any of this.” (Chloe)*



### **Tracey’s story**

Tracey is 21. Her first contact with *TWC!* was when the Street Connectors team met her Dad on his doorstep. He talked about his daughter and some of the struggles she was having, and they told him about the Hub and the support that Flo could offer there. With some extra encouragement from Tracey’s Occupational Therapist, she came down to the Hub to see Flo, to get some help and support with her self-confidence, and with Maths and English. After some mentoring sessions, Flo encouraged her to come along to a Listen Threads session. As well as everything it has done for Tracey’s connectedness to others, her confidence and self-esteem, getting involved in the practical tasks of Listen Threads (e.g. measuring garments, putting orders together) has enabled her Maths to improve dramatically. As one indication of her hugely-improved self-confidence, Tracey has also been on one of the summer programme trips to Blackpool with her whole family.

*“When I first started attending, my confidence was really low and I was scared of people. I’ve made new friends and with people who I never thought I’d have a relationship with, and this has given me a reason to visit the Hub regularly, which has made me feel better about myself. I’ve become much more connected to local people, a lot more confident around different and new people, and speak to a lot more people than I used to. I’ve been taking my nieces and nephews to the park which is something I wouldn’t do before and this makes me feel much more alive and free – I even stay calm and actually enjoy myself without feeling anxious.*

*“Listen Threads is helping young women in the community who may not have much going for them, but can now be part of a blossoming business. It’s bringing people together and building relationships that may not have been there before.” (Tracey)*

## 4 What are we learning?

The next two sections of this report summarise what we're learning on the *TogetherWeCan!* journey, and in particular what we think makes *TWC!* distinctive, and what seems to make it *work*.

At the end of Year 1, we committed to: ***“develop an intentional focus on building ‘resilience’ into the growing ecology of community groups and connections, as well as continuing to support the development of ‘new’ things”***<sup>9</sup>. This provided the focus for evaluation during Year 2<sup>10</sup> - including internal reflections as a staff team, but also individual interviews with neighbours and group interviews with two of the established and developing teams of local people – Flavours of Hodge Hill, and the Street Connectors team.

This section explores the following key themes:

- **How are people getting involved?** What are the routes in, for local people? What is working, for *TWC!*, in engaging new people, and how are we drawing them into deeper participation?
- How do we support **groups** to develop their resilience, ‘stickability’, inclusivity, and capacity to nurture their participants?
- What do **‘key people’** (adults and young people) in such a community look like? What are their stories? What do they contribute? What are the pressures on them? How might others locally (adults and young people) grow and develop into ‘key people’ within the local ecology?

To these, a further theme within the has emerged strongly this year as both a vital ‘golden thread’ and a critical challenge in our community-building efforts: the significance of **community buildings**.

Section 5 steps back to consider the wider picture regarding characteristics of a flourishing, resilient community and what *TWC!* might contribute to supporting it.

### 4.1 How are people getting involved?

Encouraging and enabling participation is key to the success of *TWC!*. We were therefore keen to understand what the routes into involvement are for local people, and what is working, for *TWC!*, in terms of engaging new people and drawing them into deeper participation. Reflection identified three areas in which distinctive features of the *TWC!* approach are key to our success:

#### ***Street Connecting / Street Events: intentional conversations building engagement***

Evidence from the Street Connectors team, and from some neighbours that we interviewed, has highlighted the vital importance of *intentional conversations*, initiated by neighbours or workers, either on the door-step or at a street event.

*“The first time I heard about what is going on was the party in The Paddock.  
That’s how I first got involved.” (Tony)*

*“We’d knocked for a street event, and we met a man who told us about his life,  
and he had trouble going out and wasn’t really eating much at all,  
and recently he appeared at the Hub and received food and help,  
and he’s started to get to know a few people, and see that people do actually care” (Jo)*

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<sup>9</sup> Year 1 report, Section 6.5

<sup>10</sup> See Appendix A

*"It's bringing people closer together, definitely - people feel more able to get involved and come to things if they know they'll see a face they recognise - sometimes I'll be walking down the street or in the shop, and somebody will say "Oh hello! How are you? How's the street connecting going?", and we'll end up having a conversation" (Louise)*

There is also emerging evidence that repeated *street events build micro-local engagement over time* – even if they are repeated just once a year (as most of our street events currently are). The biggest street event (by number of attendees) in 2018 was at Hillcross Walk – the third time that this one has happened now – attracting 90 people, 29% of them completely new to TWC!-led activities. The smallest of last summer's street events was at The Paddock – a new venue for 2018 – which had 36 attendees, but 92% of them were 'new' to us.

### ***'Places of Welcome': 'entry points' and spaces for belonging***

We have known for some time that, among adults, our 'Places of Welcome' (Open Door for some years, and now The Real Junk Food Kitchen too) are significant places both for deepening a sense of *belonging*, and as 'entry points' for many people to get their first taste of community involvement. These are both places where the TWC! team have been influential in 'shaping the atmosphere' – the arrangement of the space, the tone of the welcome, the ethos of inclusion and participation – and so play a significant part in 'holding the space' for others to grow into leadership roles (e.g. see Mick's quotes in the case study on Open Door on p.17). In the past year, an ongoing conversation about the focus of Women's Group (should it have a structured 'programme', or be more of a relaxed, unstructured space? should it include external 'input', or primarily a 'bring and share' feel?) have settled on the 'Place of Welcome' ethos, again. And in parallel, the delivery of our support work with young people has shifted from the very explicitly support-focused 'I Can' drop-in model, towards the more relaxed 'youth club' environment, with 1-2-1 support available as and when needed (Section 2.2 gives more detail of both of these developments).

### ***Personal Invitation: encouragement from 'key people'***

Beyond simply creating spaces and opportunities for connection and welcome and waiting for people to come, interviewees pointed to the importance of a *personal invitation*, or specific encouragement, from either a TWC! staff member or another 'key person' in our neighbourhood.

*"I'm so glad that I took the opportunity of going along to the Hub, meeting the staff members, finding out what it's all about - and he gave me the opportunity saying 'Baz, would you like to give it a go?'" (Barry)*

*"I asked Paul if there were any spaces available in the pantomime - Paul said there were some extra, and to come down the Hub for 6 o'clock - and I went down the Hub and I was speaking to Phil, and he said "yeah, we'd like you to join in", they said they wanted me to sing as well" (Gee)*

A recurring theme in 2018's reflection sessions has been people's passion and enthusiasm to tell stories of their experience of belonging – of being welcomed in to become 'part of the family' – and to share that experience with their neighbours, wanting others to get a taste for 'what we've got here'. Street Connecting offers some people one kind of opportunity to do such inviting – but there is clearly a more widespread thirst for, as one key resident put it, "preaching the gospel of community", and for finding ways of doing so, at big community events, and in the day-to-day rhythm of the regular Places of Welcome and other mundane neighbourly interaction.

## 4.2 Nurturing welcoming, resilient groups

Last year's report identified the importance of being "more attentive to 'what happens next' after new groups, activities and enterprises are set up. For some groups, initially enthusiastic participants would begin to drift off, leaving a small and sometimes fragile 'core'. Group leaders too found their first enthusiasm tested, as groups went through 'low patches' or faced their own fragility. For other groups, the challenges were less to do with small numbers than with rapid growth, and the need for added capacity – in physical space, or volunteer helpers (Year 1 report, p.18).

This year, through interviews and reflection groups, we have been able to dig further into the detail of some of these pressures on groups, and into the kind of qualities within the group, and support offered to the group, that have made a difference.

### Pressures on groups

Three factors from the wider environment create significant challenges in creating and maintaining momentum for groups:

- External factors depressing participation/motivation - numbers dropping off; people not knowing about it - *"we found out that people down here [around the Hub] don't even know we're there - we've got to make up flyers or something..."* (Keith, Flavours); bad weather puts people off coming out, or answering their door: *"the weather definitely has an impact - when it's cold people don't want to stand on the doorstep for long, when it's hot people are often out because it's nice weather not"* (Louise, Street Connectors)
- Financial issues - not making enough money to keep going, or people not being able to afford (even modest session charges): *"it could be with the new Universal Credit, they can't afford it, people (like ourselves) are only being paid monthly... you've got to pay for basic essentials first like water, gas, electric"* (Keith, Flavours)
- Language/communication difficulties: *"there's lots of times people want to talk to us but we don't have the language to communicate with each other, that makes me sad, because they're often people who want to get involved"* (Jenni, Street Connectors)

Internally, groups have faced a number of *difficulties with group dynamics*: dealing with other people's intense emotions – grief, anger, etc; negotiating relationships between existing group members and new people (e.g. with existing WeCan groups and new cohorts of school-based youth social action participants); emerging overlaps / competition between groups: *"and we'd get an idea to do something, and then someone else was doing it somewhere else"* (Linda)

Two further significant and recurring pressures on groups – the *personal fragilities* (physical and emotional) and *life pressures* (e.g. a new baby, or a bereavement) *of group leaders* themselves; and issues associated with the *buildings and venues* where groups are wanting / needing to meet – are explored in more depth in sections 4.3 & 4.4 (pp.37ff.) below.

### What helps a group keep going and thrive?

When we asked groups and group leaders what helped keep them going, most of them talked first about *internal* qualities (both as individuals and as groups) before they mentioned *external* sources of support.

Important qualities of TWC! groups, identified by leaders and participants, included:

- *Creating the right 'atmosphere'*: 'relaxed', 'welcoming', 'calm' and 'friendly' were mentioned, among other qualities:
- *Personal qualities* among group leaders, team members and other 'key people': confidence, patience, a passion for community, empathy, speaking and listening skills, a sense of humour, a non-judgmental open-mindedness, love and – among some of our interviewees – faith.
- *Working as a team – or 'family'*: Often we have found our most resilient groups rely less on one or two 'group leaders', and more on a strong sense of 'team' among those who see themselves as regular volunteers, holding a high level of shared responsibility for 'making it happen' together. The Street Connectors, Open Door, The Real Junk Food Kitchen, and Flavours of Hodge Hill were significant examples of this way of thinking.

The mutual care and support among team members, and the diverse, complementary gifts and experiences that different team members are able to bring, were seen as vital to a group's resilience and growth. While the language of 'team' was often used, so was the more intimate language of 'family' (both within groups, and of what we call the wider 'community ecology' as a whole) – with some insisting on 'family' language over that of 'team':

*"it's everyone pulling together – different people doing different things – when you don't come, you get phone calls... it's not a team, it's a family – it's more like, people look out for each other, and that's what everybody does" (JoJo)*

- *Always alert to the possibility of new contributions* - Alongside existing team members, some groups were articulate about the importance of being constantly on the look-out for the distinct contribution that a new participant / team member can bring, and also identifying previously untapped gifts of existing team members:

*"take Jo - she's got confidence to approach people, but she feels she's not doing it right – once when we were short-staffed and we asked her to do serving, she did a brilliant job... and with the language [challenges] we've got Saira who can speak a lot of different languages - Urdu, Punjabi [as well as] English" (Flavours)*

Other significant internal qualities related to the *practical operation* of successful groups, including:

- an ability to adapt to changing circumstances, or changing demand for the group's activity (e.g. Flavours developing breakfasts as an alternative source of income to the 'core' cooking classes)
- the importance of re-investing any income earned, into the development of the group
- making sessions as regular and consistent as possible
- keeping channels of communication among the team as good as possible (e.g. through regular team meetings)

Over and above internal qualities and practicalities, groups and group leaders also identified the importance of *consistent support, energy and enthusiasm from 'key people'*, complemented by group leaders / team members being open and honest when they are struggling, and willing to ask for help.

Contributions of key workers included:

- offering appreciation and thanks and, even more significantly, naming participants' specific contribution to the group and/or wider community
- helping participants to notice and remember "the fruits of your labour" (e.g. a street connector conversation materialising in a neighbour turning up to a Place of Welcome)
- helping groups understand the significance (and possibilities) of their contribution to the bigger picture of the neighbourhood – the wider 'community ecology' – and the possibility of also finding support from and collaboration in that wider ecology (as above)
- helping groups negotiate the tension between *bonding* as a group (developing close, trusting relationships between existing members) and *welcoming in* new members (e.g. the 'WeCan' dilemma outlined in section 2.1)
- helping groups understand, and remain resilient through, the inevitable ups and downs of a group's life cycle
- helping groups engage in ongoing reflection, and to identify, at appropriate points, what they want / need to learn – and to access that learning in ways appropriate to the group

Although these roles could be fulfilled by a team member or participant in the group – and staff are actively encouraging team members to make these contributions – in the majority of cases, currently, staff members have played this key role.

Finally, team members who 'give out' a lot in their own group identified being able to participate in other local groups and activities where they can relax and be themselves, and be fed and nurtured by others (e.g. having a meal at The Real Junk Food Kitchen or participation in the Theatre Group, or the local church's regular places of prayer) as key to their own personal well-being and ability to carry on. This points to the *importance of the flourishing of the wider community*, as an active feature contributing to the health of any one group.

### **4.3 Nurturing and supporting 'key people'**

Within our developing local groups, and the wider community ecology, the significance of 'key people' is becoming clearer. While our paid workers are, inevitably, counted by many neighbours as among those 'key people', at the heart of our approach is the belief that it is *local residents* growing into these significant roles that is a fundamental priority.

By 'key people' we do not just mean 'group leaders', or the more traditionally-understood 'community leaders'. As the Street Connectors case study (p.10, above) illustrates well, '**connectors**' have emerged as making a distinct and vital contribution to our 'community ecology', as have the diverse and complementary contributions of different members of teams.

#### **Pressures on key people**

The Street Connectors case study also highlights some of the fragilities and pressures on our 'key people' that often come hand-in-hand with the immense gifts, passions and skills that they bring to our community. These include:

- **Money struggles** (e.g. through the changes and extra pressures that have come with the introduction of Universal Credit)

- ***Paid work*** – while for many this is a necessity, or an aspiration, it also often recognised as a pressure on people’s capacity to give time to community activities
- ***Family / caring demands*** – particularly through childhood and end of life, illness, and mental health struggles

An increasingly significant theme in the past year has been ***the place of ‘trauma’ in people’s lives*** – both ‘historic’ but still ‘present’ (as understood in, but more widespread than, a diagnosis of PTSD), and new traumatic experiences for people (e.g. bereavement, separation, eviction) – and the extra pressures that such trauma brings to day-to-day coping, regular commitment to community groups and activities, and dealing with the harder stuff of community life, such as conflict in relationships and the ups and downs of groups. Dealing with high levels of social anxiety and low self-esteem, and often other struggles with mental wellbeing, are common and widespread experiences among our participants.

### ***What support do people need to keep going and thrive?***

The *TWC!* model, this far into the project, has understood support for individuals largely in terms of:

- (1) 1-2-1 support and mentoring focused on
  - a. ‘barrier removing’ – working with an individual to create space in their lives to allow them to participate in community life (usually in the form of support with benefits, housing or other administrative/financial issues)
  - b. Supporting individuals to start new things or take a more active role in leading groups
- (2) Informal support through local groups, activities and Places of Welcome.

Thus far, the majority of 1-2-1 support in *TWC!* has been provided by paid professional workers, but with an aspiration that local people will grow in these support and mentoring skills (Open Door case study, p.17). More recently, we have become more aware of the value of, and need for, more intense forms of ***peer support***. Good examples of this are seen particularly clearly in Gear-up and Listen Threads (case study, p. 31), highlighting the multi-faceted significance of holistic ‘social enterprise’ projects.

Peer support grows skills and confidence in neighbours, as well as forming and strengthening connections between them. However, rather than simply replacing input from paid workers, facilitating such ‘peer support’ places considerable demands on staff time and expertise. This significant re-focusing of, or extension beyond, our existing staff capacity is a direction that *TWC!* are committed to exploring further in the coming year, and with a view to beyond the 3 years of *TWC!*

There are clearly lessons here too for the ongoing development of the confidence, skills and experience of ‘key people’, both young people and adults. In Year 3 of *TWC!* we are committed to developing the beginnings of a ‘learning menu’ – offering short bite-sized chunks of input, workshop-style, on topics that have emerged as important to explore locally. However, the Listen Threads model of combining learning with both shared activity and long-term relationship-building is one from which we want to learn, and on which we are keen to build.

#### 4.4 Importance of community venues

In the past year, *TWC!*-supported groups and activities have faced multiple challenges related to the local venues they have either used or needed. The impact of these challenges has included:

- FAB Kids out-growing the Hub, moving to Bromford Bridge Christian Church, and then to Tame Valley Children’s Centre
- The Real Junk Food Kitchen moving from St Wilfrid’s Community Centre to the Hub
- Women’s Group’s 6-year base at Ambridge House being under threat, due to changes in Birmingham City Council’s lettings policy
- Flavours of Hodge Hill wanting to add a venue in the Firs end of the estate to their Bromford venue (at the Hub), to best enable participants to access what they are offering

#### **Positive contribution and/or challenge?**

These significant venue-related pressures on groups have prompted a lot of reflection on and *when does a venue becomes a challenge? And what makes a venue a positive contribution to the local ecology?*

In January 2018, *TWC!* members participated in a Firs and Bromford Neighbours Together Board discussion regarding the purpose and function of buildings. This identified a range of features which enabled different buildings and spaces to make a positive contribution to the local community. There are also a range of ways in which different buildings might be suited to different purposes – a social hub (somewhere for people to go, find out information, come in and have a coffee); space for meetings; a ‘base’ to go out from (e.g. Street Connectors, Youth Social Action or Green Team); offices for workers, and place for particular specialist things to happen – e.g. doctor’s surgery.

Reflecting on our subsequent experiences over the course of Year 2, *TWC!* staff and participants identify six areas where the nature or management of buildings can, at times, become a challenge to community activities:

	<b>Positive Contribution</b>	<b>Challenge</b>
<b>Location</b>	geographical proximity (something as close as possible to where people live) is important for encouraging participation, as is visibility, accessibility from different parts of the estate	not in the right place to best enable neighbours to access
<b>Cost</b>	free or low cost	not free or with hire charge prohibitively high for groups with low financial income
<b>Availability</b>	hospitable to (& reliable for) other groups and activities	inconsistent (i.e. regular groups get disrupted, and at short notice)
<b>Physical features/ resources</b>	diverse spaces within one venue: e.g. kitchen, stage, garden, etc. ; space for 1:1 conversations, small meetings, bigger gatherings	group outgrows the space, no permanent storage facilities or venue too open for some activities (e.g. those involving children or requiring private ‘break-out’ space for personal meetings)

	Positive Contribution	Challenge
<b>Ethos</b>	hospitable, welcoming; having a 'soul' or sense of 'place of sanctuary'; embodying a sense of purpose / values / identity; perceived as 'accessible', having an 'open door' – this was recognised as being not just about the building, but also the key people involved (presence, attitude, relationships etc.)	difficult relationship with 'hosts' regarding differences in vision or expectations (e.g. how 'welcome' is done in the space, physically or relationally; different attitudes to particular groups, e.g. children; difficulties in negotiating the sharing of space, or the 'control' of specific areas; overly formal / 'transactional' relationship)
<b>Legacy</b>	a place of continuity or of history ('because magic has happened here') – this may be symbolic or more practical – with every repeated usage of a place making further use 'easier'	the weight of a place's history may make it resistant to embracing new developments – or people may be resistant to using a place that has a particularly negative history

### ***How is TWC! responding?***

We have also reflected on the contribution made by TWC! and its partner organisation: the ongoing importance of ***the Hub as a vital community space*** providing many of the positive features outlined above, but representing significant demand on worker time and project/organisation running costs. We recognise the significance of TWC! funding as a substantial contribution towards the running costs of the Hub – enabling us to offer it as an affordable (and often free) community space for both new and established groups locally.

During Year 2 we have also demonstrated ***the value of 'pop-up' venues*** as a way of, at least temporarily, creating needed (albeit high-effort, short-term) spaces in areas of the neighbourhood where nothing else quite does the job (e.g. PUPOW, the 'Pop-Up Places of Welcome' – and pop-up Junk Food venues).



## 5 Contributing to the ‘community ecology’

As outlined in Section 1.2 (p.4, above), a flourishing local community can be thought of as an ‘ecology’ – a complex system of living organisms, connected together in relationships of interdependence. If one part of the ecology changes, it affects all the other parts, often in ways that are unpredictable.

*TWC!* groups and activities are all part of the wider ‘community ecology’ of the Firs and Bromford estate. We seek, not only for our groups to be successful in ourselves, but to make a contribution to the development, growth and flourishing of the wider community. This is expressed in the high-level aim for our project: “a flourishing local community, with flourishing connections between flourishing people”.

This section brings together the key findings from throughout this report to present an early exploration of what think we are learning in this area:

- What does a flourishing, resilient **community** look like? What are its characteristics? Does it have its own ‘golden threads’?
- How can ***TWC!* contribute** to supporting and developing this local ecology and its ‘key people’?

### ***Spaces for connection and support***

This year has underlined the vital importance of ‘bumping spaces’ – spaces where neighbours can connect with each other, gain a sense of belonging, and contribute their passions gifts and skills. The emphasis on invitation into *participation*, present in the ethos of our ‘Places of Welcome’, is essential to the significance of such spaces.

**Key question:** *how can TWC! support the growth and multiplication of such ‘bumping spaces’ – and in a way that increasingly moves towards ‘working with’ and/or ‘done by’ our neighbours?*

The *supportive* aspect to such spaces is also key, in turn ‘making space’ within individuals’ lives to increase their capacity to participate – where personal and/or financial pressures can often undermine that capacity.

**Key question:** *how can TWC! grow and disperse that support – so that as many neighbours as possible are able to access it?*

### ***A place where people want to live***

Our work this year has highlighted the inter-connection of the *physical environment*, neighbourhood *resources* (community buildings and services) and a wider ‘*sense of community*’ – which together contribute to making the neighbourhood somewhere where people want to live. Repeatedly in wider group reflections with our neighbours, local people have noted the shift in the *feel* of the area – from being a forgotten, “back of beyond” neighbourhood where taxis wouldn’t even venture, to a place where people positively want to live, or move back to.

**Key question:** *how can TWC! support neighbours to own and participate in this work of place-making?*

### ***Community ‘spirit’, ‘institutions’ and ‘traditions’***

Reflections this year, particularly in conversation with Firs & Bromford Neighbours Together, have pushed us to pay more attention to how this collective narrative – “the gospel of community”, as one

local resident has put it – is built, widely owned, and communicated. Many neighbours in our reflection sessions and evaluation interviews have talked passionately and enthusiastically about their experience of becoming part of a “family” locally – but have also been aware that such an experience is not, and perhaps never will be, shared by all who live locally.

Our reflections have highlighted the importance of finding, creating and sustaining **spaces where stories of the neighbourhood can be heard, shared and celebrated**. This ‘community spirit’ can also be nurtured – and in some sense, ‘held’, with the associated territorial risks that come with that responsibility – by significant ‘**community institutions**’ (among them Firs & Bromford Neighbours Together, ‘the Hub’ and its related organisations, and Hodge Hill Church). Also significant in this picture are Firs and Bromford’s emerging ‘**community traditions**’ – regular (often annual) gatherings and events that both offer spaces for story-sharing and celebrating, but also themselves *contribute* to the collective story. Key examples include the big neighbourhood summer event, the Bromford Theatre Group Christmas pantomime, the journeys of both Santa’s sleigh and the Community Nativity Play around the streets of the estate, a ‘Big Iftar’ every Ramadan, and a new addition over the summer of 2018, decorating stones that are then hidden, found, photographed and re-hidden around the neighbourhood.



*“From my window I have seen Santa’s sleigh, people dressing up celebrating Christmas, people helping people. I have never seen a community like this before...  
I am happy to settle in a community that helps.”*

*“The children loved following Santa down the drive tonight.  
Thank you to all who put in such great efforts to make this great tradition for our community.  
#LoveOurCommunity #FirsAndBromfordCommunityFamily”*

*(posts on FBNT Facebook group)*

**Key question:** *how can TWC! support local groups to contribute to, and work together in shaping and leading, some of these developing ‘community traditions’?*

### **Inter-connections between groups/associations**

While the whole focus of TWC!’s work is on connecting neighbours together and nurturing spaces of mutual support, not all the groups we work with are yet fully persuaded by our vision of a mutually-supporting community ecology. While our deepening partnership with the Spurgeons-run Tame Valley Children’s Centre is a positive example of a public sector organisation approaching us with a view to

increasing its learning, and deepening its connections within the local neighbourhood, some other groups have either wanted to remain relatively ‘tunnel-visioned’ on developing their own spaces locally, without relation to others, and other groups have shown signs of a ‘competitive’ or ‘territorial’ approach to community – competing for or defending *physical* territory, or seeing talk of a local ‘ecology’ or a ‘shared vision’ as competing for *discursive* territory locally.

**Key question:** *how can TWC! best work with other groups and agencies locally, respecting the position of others, whilst retaining our clear ethos and continuing to pursue ‘connectedness’ as a primary goal?*

### **‘Widening the circles’**

Our ongoing commitment to ‘widening the circles’ of local participation (one of our fundamental ‘golden threads’ named on p.6, above) is, almost by definition, one of the vital characteristics of a flourishing, resilient – and welcoming – community. Nurturing this commitment both at the level of the *groups* we support, and at the level of the “*community family*” that many of our neighbours talk about, is a task that we are continuing to work out how to do in practice. We recognise that *TWC!* makes a significant contribution to encouraging local people (and teams and group leaders) to *reflect* on what they do and why – and also the significance of trying to *model* an approach which can positively influence others (see e.g. Mick’s comments in the Open Door case study on p.17, above).

**Key question:** *how can TWC! continue to work with and support our neighbours – and the local groups they are involved in – to ‘widen the circles’ of community participation here?*

A second aspect of this ‘widening’ has also emerged strongly this year – the significance of *trips out*, beyond the Firs & Bromford, to inspire and enlarge people’s horizons of possibility (e.g. the trip to Winson Green which helped inspire ‘Flavours of Hodge Hill’). This connecting our neighbourhood with the wider world is important not just to broaden our collective imagination, but also to make a significant contribution to developing the kind of ‘linking social capital’ that can enable local people to get access to people, places and resources beyond the estate that can help them develop financially, socially, and in other ways. This is as significant for young people as it is for adults:

*“We know that, when young people get the opportunity to experience a completely different environment, culture or challenge, it inspires them and opens their eyes to the possibilities of life in a whole new way. With our Snowdon trip we saw young people put into action the things that community based social action had started to instil in them, such as teamwork, communication, empathy, leadership, encouraging others and perseverance.” (Dan, TWC!)*



## 6 What's next?

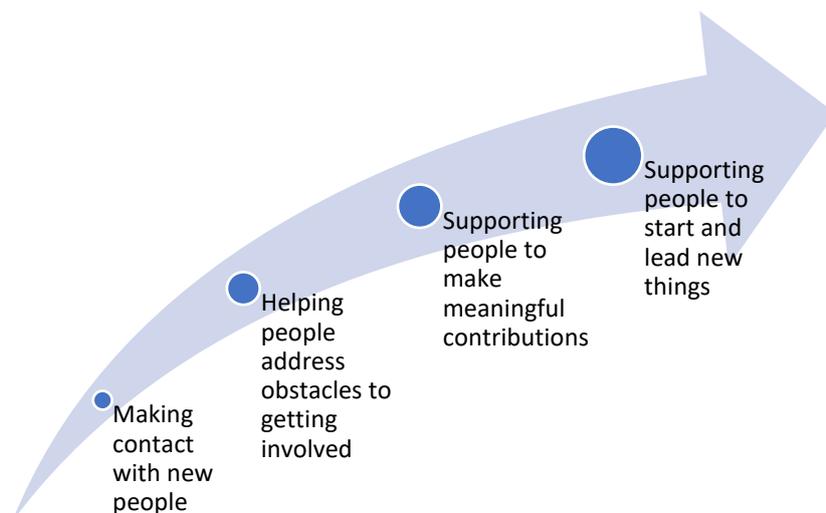
As we begin Year 3 of this 3-year-funded project, it is necessary not just to plan for the next 12 months, but to ask serious questions about what happens beyond the lifetime of *TWC!* While it has always been central to our approach to work with our neighbours towards a neighbourhood that is not dependent on paid practitioners for the sustaining and developing of the 'community ecology', we also acknowledge the reality – clear in our 'golden threads' (Section 1.2 on p.6) and borne out in this year's evaluation findings – that this process of community change is a long-term, if not generational, process.

### 6.1 Year 3

#### **Rethinking the Pathway**

Two years into the *TogetherWeCan!* project, we are at a point where we are beginning to rethink our core 'pathway'. So far, we have been working with a linear 'journey into deeper participation', which understands that some people will need significant support addressing obstacles' to getting involved ('barrier-removing'), and that some – but not all – people will journey beyond 'making a meaningful contribution' to 'start and lead new things'.

Figure 6 Original *TWC!* Project Pathway



The learning from Years 1 & 2 of the project has highlighted the complexity of the reality (compared with the necessary simplicity of the pathway), but also significant places where the pathway requires some amending:

- The significance of 'Places of Welcome' as 'entry points' for people to begin to get involved – beyond the 'first contact' of our connecting activities
- The inextricability of 'barrier-removing' support and more positive mentoring to enable people to make meaningful contributions locally
- The significance of *teams* – alongside the more individual model of 'group leader' – in enabling people to grow and deepen in the contributions they make

- The recognition that such teams often then resource and add capacity to many of the activities associated with ‘connecting’ and ‘Places of Welcome’ locally
- The emerging importance of formal and informal learning opportunities, to enable people to develop personally, and to develop skills and wisdom for group, team and community leadership

These additional factors are incorporated into a revised ‘pathway’ diagram below

Figure 7 Revised TWC! Project Pathway (proposed 2018)



### ***Firs & Bromford Neighbours Together priorities***

Firs & Bromford Neighbours Together (the resident-led Big Local partnership locally) is both a partner in TWC! and one of our two core funders (alongside Big Lottery Reaching Communities funding), and a key part of TWC!’s work is to support FBNT to deliver on its identified priorities. In January 2019, FBNT, in conversation with TWC!, agreed four revised priorities for the year, with related actions:

- 1. to work towards developing and implementing a Village Vision that is sustainable beyond Big Local**
  - a. To act as an overarching connection for the other priorities such that the actions deliver the other priorities feed into the Village Vision – particularly continuing to grow ownership and participation in developing the vision.
  - b. To continue to work towards a preferred governance structure to deliver the vision.
  - c. To deliver/progress on some specific projects (heritage trail, cycle path, heritage project, park improvement on the Firs) while still developing the strategy.
  - d. To continue to pursue political engagement and support for the vision.
- 2. to draw even more people into involvement and to continue to understand what people are passionate about**
  - a. To establish a set of traditions that say “every year we do these things together” (e.g. litter picking, summer event, talent shows, open evening celebration, etc).

- b. To find connectors for the groups (BAME, geographic areas) that are underrepresented and find their passions that the Partnership can connect with.
  - c. To look for opportunities to promote overlaps and collaboration between different groups, themes and activities (i.e. intergenerational work).
  - d. To take the holiday programme further as a mechanism for more participation and greater diversity in the delivery of local activities
- 3. to support & encourage other people to do stuff and make sure it is sustainable**
- a. To promote a culture of teams within groups and activities as this increases enjoyment for participants and improves motivation to remain involved.
  - b. To review the funding application process that encourages new people and new ideas but then promotes an understanding of being part of a bigger picture/movement.
  - c. To deliver a programme of Learning Circles for community leaders (including community safeguarding, community organising, mental health 1<sup>st</sup> aid, fund raising)
- 4. to nurture a sustainable community-wide network of interconnected individuals, groups & places**
- a. To deliver annual celebration events so people see, buy-in and own the progress.
  - b. To develop a network of buildings and spaces that promotes a shared ethos and a spirit of co-operation
  - c. To find new ways of promoting the ethos of FBNT and the progress towards the Village Vision but without putting people off (e.g. drawing on nudge theory?).

**Key objectives – across *TWC!***

Our two-way conversation with FBNT, and our learning and evaluation within the *TWC!* project, both shape our priorities for this final, third year of *TWC!* Here we outline priorities which cut across the project, followed by actions which sit more naturally within one of our streams of work.

- **Nurturing welcoming, resilient groups** (section 4.2, p.35)
  - CONTINUE to invest time and energy in ‘being / doing *with*’ groups, rather than trying to push them to quickly into the autonomous, ‘done *by*’ space
  - CONTINUE to seek to help groups reflect on the diverse contributions within the group, their impact on participants and the wider community, the tension of ‘bonding vs welcome’, the life cycle of a group, and their learning / development needs as a group
  - DEVELOP a focus on supporting the development of *teams* (rather than exclusively on ‘group leaders’), growing the opportunities for peer mentoring and supporting individuals within teams
- **Nurturing and supporting key people** (section 4.3, p.37)
  - DEVELOP the ways in which we intentionally invest time and energy in supporting the development of ‘key people’ in our neighbourhood
  - DEVELOP a ‘learning menu’ (alongside existing ‘learning circles’ and story-sharing spaces)

- offering one-off sessions (targeted or open access, as appropriate) with input including: developing a ‘community safeguarding’ culture; community organizing skills; conflict resolution; first aid; mental health first aid
  - DEVELOP the links between *TWC!*’s core activities and Worth Unlimited’s two ‘core’ social enterprises (Gear-up and Listen Threads) – as vital spaces for supporting and developing young people and young adults as ‘key people’ within the neighbourhood
  - EXPLORE the possibilities (and the resourcing needs) of developing more intentional ‘peer support’ spaces – extending the support offer beyond 1-2-1 worker time – including (but not only) support for those dealing with trauma
- **Supporting and developing community venues** (section 4.4, p.39)
  - CONTINUE to offer the Hub as an ‘incubator space’ for new groups and activities to start and develop
  - CONTINUE to invest time and energy in ‘pop-up’ spaces, in different parts of the neighbourhood, as an opportunity both to engage new people and to ‘test out’ the possibilities of different locations
  - CONTINUE to explore, with local partners, the possibility of developing other ‘Hub-like’ spaces, in different parts of the neighbourhood
  - EXPLORE, in partnership with Firs & Bromford Neighbours Together, the possibilities of developing “a network of buildings and spaces that promotes a shared ethos and a spirit of co-operation” (see FBNT priorities)
- **Contributing to the ‘community ecology’** (Section 5, p.41)
  - CONTINUE to support, in partnership with Firs & Bromford Neighbours Together:
    - The growth & multiplication of resident-led ‘connecting spaces’
    - The growth & multiplication of resident-led ‘supportive spaces’
    - The work of resident-led ‘place-making’ (e.g. through FBNT’s ‘Village Vision’, identified in FBNT priorities, above)
    - The growth & multiplication of resident-led ‘community traditions’
    - Other locally-rooted groups and agencies to strengthen and multiply their connections, and to ‘widen their circles’ of participation
    - The development of experiential and learning trips out, beyond the local neighbourhood, to broaden our horizons and imaginations
  - CONTINUE to develop collaboration across the *TWC!* core team, and with ‘Families Connector’ and ‘Green Connector’ workers
  - DEVELOP a ‘taster menu’ of experiences and activities, with the aim of helping more local people identify their passions and skills

### ***Street Connecting (Adults)***

- CONTINUE to build on the work of Street Connecting and Street Events, as a primary way of getting more people involved
- CONTINUE our commitment to “finding and nurturing active connectors and group leaders from the black and minority ethnic backgrounds represented locally” (Challenge 3 on p.19, above)
- DEVELOP regular habits of a growing ‘connectors team’ meeting, learning and celebrating together

### ***Social Action work (Young People)***

- CONTINUE our commitment to “drawing other local adults into the ‘We Can’ social action projects at an early stage in the process” (Challenge 3 on p.19, above)
- CONTINUE to support and develop the emerging ‘youth forum’, and mentoring young people to develop community leadership skills
- CONTINUE to support the coordination of the FBNT summer programme, promoting the further development of resident-led, intergenerational activities
- Support the DEVELOPMENT of inter-generational, resident-led holiday activities in other school holiday periods (e.g. Christmas, Easter, half-term holidays)
- DEVELOP short-term social action projects into longer-term, or annual/seasonal, activities
- EXPLORE the possibility of developing resources / training to develop the skills and confidence of local adults who want to engage in youth work

### ***Support and Development work (Adults & Young People)***

- CONTINUE to invest more time and energy in open-access youth clubs (replacing the ‘I Can’ drop-ins as the ‘entry point’ for support)
- DEVELOP more structured ways of following up (‘checking in’ with) adults and young people who have moved beyond intensive support
- Continue to EXPLORE, with local men, the possibilities of a neighbour-led Men’s Group (akin to the Women’s Group ‘Place of Welcome’ model)
- EXPLORE more crossover between male and female workers to allow for gender-appropriate support
- EXPLORE appropriate resources / courses to offer ‘foundation skills’ learning for teenagers and young adults

### ***Enterprise Support***

- CONTINUE to pilot, evaluate and further develop the ‘developing enterprise’ course with local people
- EXPLORE the possibility of an ‘enterprise hub’ space for incubating, and connecting between, locally-grown micro-enterprises

## 6.2 *Into the future*

Firs & Bromford Neighbours Together have made it clear that they recognise the vital contribution *TWC!* makes towards achieving FBNT's objectives and that the ongoing growth, development and sustainability of much which has developed in Firs & Bromford over the last few years will require significant support from something akin to *TWC!* for at least the next 3-4 years. We have also been encouraged by the Big Lottery Fund (Reaching Communities) to explore the possibilities of applying for further funding to develop *TWC!*'s work beyond the current funding (which runs out at the end of 2019).

Most of the objectives labelled 'DEVELOP' in 6.1 will require a timescale beyond these last 12 months of *TWC!* to evaluate their fruitfulness, and those labelled 'EXPLORE' are likely to need both *time* to develop, and also either additional or re-configured *capacity* (of paid workers) for us to be able to develop and implement them thoroughly.

In the first few months of 2019, the *TWC!* steering group, in ongoing conversation with Firs & Bromford Neighbours Together, *TWC!* staff and participants, will be working on developing proposals for a *TogetherWeCan!* phase 2 (from 2020 to 2022). Early work on these proposals includes these priorities:

- Supporting the multiplication and development of resident-led teams across different areas of local interest and activity
- Developing an extensive, resident-shaped (and often resident-led) 'learning menu / programme' across personal, team, group and community development (including foundation skills development, sharing psychological and sociological insights, and training adults in youth & community work practice)
- Developing more intentional, resident-led (worker-supported) 'peer support' spaces
- Further integrating 'core', multi-dimensional social enterprises (e.g. Listen Threads, Gear-up, and new starters) into our 'offer' of support and development
- Supporting the development of a collaborative "community venues network" across the neighbourhood, and an "enterprise hub" for incubating locally-grown micro-enterprises

## APPENDIX A – Reflection, Evaluation and Learning: Methodology

### *Our Approach*

*TogetherWeCan!* project uses an ongoing programme of monitoring and evaluation, designed to:

- Capture and reflect on the TWC! project – what we do (activities/outputs) and what is achieved (change/outcomes) – and our part in the wider growth and change of the neighbourhood
- Communicate the impact of our work and our learning around it
- Help TWC! partners to grow and change as a result of our learning
- Shape the direction and execution of TWC! into the future

Our approach is intentionally participatory and self-evaluative: The staff team, supported by Jane Perry (an independent social researcher), work together to design and implement a mixed-mode system for creating and collating quantitative and qualitative information regarding *TWC!* activities/outputs (process) and outcomes (impact). As the project develops, progress and developments are regularly discussed at team meetings, integrated with learning captured from a wider on-going programme of reflection, facilitated by Nurture Development. This two-way conversation allows real-time learning to be captured and assessed against wider evidence, in turn shaping future monitoring, evaluation and reflection activity.

Our evaluation approach is theory-based, uses a Theory of Change approach to draw out the underlying logic of the *TWC!* programme and assess that against its operation in practice. It also incorporates a developmental element, seeking to continually reflect on and refine the Theory of Change over the life of the project, understanding and addressing emerging issues in context.

### *Focus*

The focus of reflection and evaluation work will develop across the 3 years of the *TWC!* project:

- Year 1 – Understanding how we work: What is working? And why?
- Year 2 – Demonstrating and understanding change: What happens because of TWC!'s work? Including immediate and wider, intended and unintended, consequences?
- Year 3 – Bringing all together in a final report.

In Year 2, the TWC! Steering Group agreed the Year 2 evaluation should focus particularly on the role played by TWC! in “building resilience into the growing ecology of community groups and connections”. These were originally expressed in 4 evaluation questions:

- What does a flourishing, resilient **community** look like, and what are its ‘golden threads’ (as distinct from the ‘golden threads’ that guide the way *TWC!* offers our particular contribution to community-building, as a team of paid workers)?
- What do **‘key people’** (adults and young people) in such a community look like? What are their stories? What do they contribute? What are the pressures on them? How might others locally (adults and young people) grow and develop into ‘key people’ within the local ecology?
- How do we support **groups** to develop their resilience, ‘stickability’, inclusivity, and capacity to nurture their participants?
- How can ***TWC!* contribute** to supporting and developing this local ecology and its ‘key people’?

## **Scope**

To reflect on, and evaluate, on *TogetherWeCan!* activities delivered in the Firs and Bromford Estate, we sought to gather views from all key stakeholders: **participants** – young people & adults who take part in *TWC!* activities, as individuals and groups (e.g. ‘We Can’ group, Women’s Group, YSA, groups supported by Street Connector); **staff**; **volunteers**, and **external partners** – Firs and Bromford Neighbours Together, schools, venue ‘hosts’/ co-creators.

Owing to the nature of the project (and time and resource constraints), it was not possible to gain views from members of the local community who do not participate in *TWC!* activities, or took part at some stage, but are not currently participating. It was also felt not to be appropriate to attempt to collect information regarding participants’ overall perceptions of *TWC!* (because young people/adults relate to individual workers and activities, not the project as a whole).

## **Capturing the Story**

Design of systems for ongoing collection of monitoring data regarding activities, outputs and, where appropriate, outcomes, was a major focus during Year 1. These were further refined during Year 2, including improvements to monthly reporting, improving the detail and timeliness of information available throughout the year, whilst minimising the impact on staff.

## **Monitoring outputs**

The nature of participant engagement with *TogetherWeCan!* differs considerably between the different activities, particularly in terms of depth and regularity of contact. Monitoring tools needed to be designed to accommodate that difference, collecting an appropriate level of information in appropriate ways/times.

Regular recording activities (and their outputs) therefore depend on the nature of the group, but include:

- **Registration Forms** – details of individual participants, including contact details, demographic information and a baseline measure of community involvement.
- **Attendance** – the amount of information collected about participants will vary according to type of session/activity:
  - **Attendance Register: for activities where a registration form has been completed, cross-referencing attendance registers with registration forms**
    - **Attendance Sheet:** for activities without a registration form but where some sort of sign-in is appropriate - blank sheet for people to sign-in, with name and contact number/email (and, where possible, ethnicity, age, gender)
    - **Attendance Record:** where recording details of individuals isn’t possible/desirable – staff collect headline no. of adults and children attending, with estimates of age, gender, ethnicity breakdowns (where possible)
- **Session Records** – details of each session, including staff and volunteer contributions
- Details of the **Support Work** carried out during Open Door and 1-1 sessions
- **Timesheets** – records of staff time on different activities.

Note: for schools' work, anonymised demographic and attendance information was provided by school.

### ***Capturing outcomes***

*TogetherWeCan!* outcomes were captured through a range of instruments, designed to suit the particular activity and nature of participation:

- **Face-face questionnaires:**
  - **Event questionnaires** – collecting views (and reported outcomes) from adult participants at big community events and micro-local street events; conducted face-face by staff/volunteers during the event (25 responses)
  - **Project questionnaires** –collecting views (and reported outcomes) from adults regularly participating in group events; conducted face-face by staff in the fourth quarter of the year (35 responses – TRJFK: 22, Open Door: 18, Community Lunch: 14, Women's Group: 711)
  - **Individual support questionnaires** – collecting views (and reported outcomes) from those receiving 1-1 support work (6 adults; 14 young people); conducted, as appropriate, as part of on-going support work (with)
- **Outcome Stars (Youth Social Action projects)** – wherever possible, collected from young people at the beginning and end of projects (105)

Overall, 185 questionnaires were completed (66 adults, 119 young people). This represents a slight reduction compared to Year 1 – in part because the busyness of our workers with day-to-day delivery has, at some critical points in the annual cycle, squeezed their capacity to focus on evaluation. Further streamlining outcome collection and ensuring staff capacity at key points will be an area for development in Year 3.

### ***Evaluation and reflection***

As well as regular capture of *TogetherWeCan!* activities, outputs and outcomes, the project design includes a regular rhythm of reflection and evaluation:

Quantitative measures were supplemented by more open, detailed, qualitative information, captured through **questionnaires** and **detailed story collection (in-depth interviews)**. In Year 2, in-depth case-study interviews were conducted with 2 groups (Street Connectors team and Flavours of Hodge Hill) and 8 individual participants spanning a range of projects (Open Door & Community Lunch, Women's Group, The Real Junk Food Kitchen, FAB Kids, Youth Social Action, youth support / mentoring, Listen Threads, Girls Group, Bromford Theatre Group, Litter-picking group).

Regular opportunities for project staff to reflect on progress were provided by monthly team meetings, supplemented by a programme of reflection sessions, facilitated by Al Barrett / Tim Evans (TWC! Steering Group), Jane Perry and Cormac Russell (Nurture Development).

All monitoring and evaluation activities included gaining explicit, informed consent from participants to capture and hold information, and to contact them again in the future.

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<sup>11</sup> Participants could belong to more than one group.

## **APPENDIX B – Staff job descriptions and key activities**

### ***Street Connector Mentor***

- Finding & supporting local Street Connectors to do regular door-knocking
- Finding & supporting local residents with ideas for ‘new things’ \*
- Supporting groups of Street Connectors (& other local residents \*) to plan & deliver micro-local events / activities (& ongoing community groups)
- Recording and following up contacts made through street connector work and events
- Prep work, monitoring & evaluation, team meetings, etc

### ***Community Support & Development Worker***

- Supporting places of welcome and encounter (including weekly Open Door drop-in sessions, Community Lunch, Women’s Group, The Real Junk Food Kitchen \* & Hodge Hill Cuppa \*) & engaging women \*
- Volunteer recruitment & development (across TWC!’s projects) \*
- Supporting & mentoring individuals (towards greater participation & contribution) & ‘barrier-removing’ support
- Working with supportive partner organisations \*
- Prep work, monitoring & evaluation, team meetings, etc

### ***Street Connector (young people)***

- 8 hrs/wk detached youth work, alongside Support Worker (young people)
- Leading short-term ‘We Can’ projects in partnership with local primary & secondary schools (in school hours) (c. 6 hrs/wk)
- Leading ongoing weekly ‘We Can’ groups (outside school hours) (8 hrs/wk)
- Leading weekly Youth Drop-ins\*
- Liaising with schools & community groups to develop ‘We Can’ projects
- Prep work, monitoring & evaluation, team meetings, etc

### ***Support & Development Worker (young people)***

- Twice-weekly ‘I Can’ groups (4 hrs/wk)
- 10-20 hrs/wk of 1-to-1 mentoring & support
- 8 hrs/wk detached youth work, alongside Street Connector (young people)
- Supporting / leading Youth Drop-ins \*
- Prep work, monitoring & evaluation, team meetings, etc

\* additional activity to that stated in original TWC! funding bid

## APPENDIX C – TWC! Activities and Outputs

### STREET CONNECTING (ADULTS)

Activity	Output	Year 1 total	Year 2 target	Year 2 total	New in Year 2	Total Y1+Y2
Door-knocking / Street Connecting	Door-step conversations	124		119		243
	Hodge Hill Cuppa sessions	29		20		49
Street -level events	Engaging people through street events (registers taken)	348 (144 adults, 204 children)	200	388 (160 adults, 228 children)	216 (91 adults, 125 children)	564 (235 adults, 329 children)
	Engaging people through other street & community events (no registers)	662		600	n/a	
	No. of street level events/activities	7	10	10		17
Supporting new things	No. of new groups / activities	4		7		11
Volunteer Development	No. Street Connectors (regular door-knocking)	5	10	7	5	10
	No. Street Connectors (street events)	9		4	1	10
	No. supported to set-up new projects (leads)	17		11		28
	No. project volunteers supported	58		54	14	72

### STREET CONNECTING (YOUNG PEOPLE)

Activity	Output	Year 1 total	Year 2 target	Year 2 total	New in Year 2	Total Y1+Y2
Detached youth work	No. sessions	90		55		
	No. YP engaged	99	60	85	n/a	n/a
'We Can' school projects	No. sessions	36		45		
	No. YP engaged	290	120	151	151	441
Short- & long-term 'We Can' groups	No. sessions	58		43		
	No. YP engaged	34	30	27	27	61

### SUPPORT & DEVELOPMENT (ADULTS)

Activity	Output	Year 1 total	Year 2 target	Year 2 total	New in Year 2	Total Y1+Y2
Open Door drop-in	No. sessions	38		35		73
	No. people engaged	87	80	114	66	153
Women's Group	No. sessions	37		24		61
	No. people engaged	55		64	29	86
Community Lunch	No. sessions	38		42		80
	No. people engaged	71		83	50	121
1-2-1 support work	No. sessions	61		45		106
	No. people supported	30	20	33	19	49

### SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT (YOUNG PEOPLE)

Activity	Output	Year 1 total	Year 2 target	Year 2 total	New in Year 2	Total Y1+Y2
'I Can' groups	No. sessions	38		41		
	No. YP engaged	20	30	24	11	31
1-2-1 support work	No. sessions	170		128		
	No. YP supported	29	15	28	19	48

## APPENDIX D – Outcomes: What difference did we make?

OUTCOME	INDICATOR	Year 1	Year 2 adults	Year 2 YP	Year 2 Total	Target Year 2 (3 Yrs)
<b>Outcome 1 - People are more CONNECTED to their neighbours</b> across age & ethnic differences, in relationships of trust, friendship & mutual support.	1.1	108	59 /66	51 /119	<b>110</b>	100 (300)
	1.3	28	40 /41	n/a	<b>40</b>	35 (100)
<b>Outcome 2 - People are more able to OVERCOME OBSTACLES to flourishing</b> – having grown in confidence, skills & connections to build more sustainable livelihoods (financial, personal, social)	2.1	76	n/a	74 /119	<b>74</b>	30 (95)
	2.2	81	34 /37	68 /119	<b>100</b>	50 (150)
	2.3	78	34 /37	82 /119	<b>116</b>	50 (150)
<b>Outcome 3 People are more able to SHARE their passions, gifts and skills</b> having grown in confidence & connections to share their passions, gifts and skills with their neighbours	3.1	66	35 /36	82 /119	<b>108</b>	50 (150)
	3.2	52	31 /35	61 /119	<b>92</b>	35 (100)
<b>Outcome 4 - People have more places and groups to which they feel they can BELONG and contribute to</b>	4.1	4	7		<b>7</b>	-
	4.2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-
	4.3 (1.2)	75	41 /41	19 /25	<b>60</b>	50 (150)
	4.4 (3.3)	17	11	-	<b>11</b>	3 (10)

## APPENDIX E – Monitoring data by ethnicity, gender and age

ETHNICITY	Number of adults	% adults	Number of YP	% YP
<b>White</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>40%</b>
English / Scottish / Welsh / Northern Irish / UK	15133	58%		
Irish	355	0%		
Gypsy or Irish Traveller		0		
Any other white background	5	2%		
<b>Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9%</b>
Mixed ethnic background	9	3%	12	9%
<b>Asian / Asian UK</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>34%</b>
Indian	1	0%		
Pakistani	17	6%		
Bangladeshi	2	1%		
Chinese	2	1%		
Any other Asian background	15	5%		
<b>Black / African / Caribbean / Black UK</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11%</b>
African	30	11%		
Caribbean	16	6%		
Any other Black / African / Caribbean	9	3%		
<b>Other ethnic group</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6%</b>
Arab	2	0%		
Other	0	0		
Not stated	39		52	
<b>Total</b>	<b>301</b>		<b>180</b>	
<b>GENDER</b>				
Male	57	19%	79	50%
Female	244	81%	78	50%
Not Stated	0		52	
<b>Total</b>	<b>301</b>		<b>209</b>	
<b>AGE</b>				
0 - 24 years	20	10%	209	100%
25 - 64 years	161	80%		
65+ years	21	10%		
Not Stated (adults)	99			
<b>Total</b>	<b>301</b>		<b>209</b>	

## APPENDIX F – Expenditure breakdown

	Year 2 - Budget			Year 2 - Actual			
	RC	FBNT	Other	TOTAL	WU	ODCF	TOTAL
<b>EXPENSE</b>							
<b>Salaries, NI &amp; Pension</b>							
ODCF SCM	14,215	14,215		28,430		25,354	25,354
ODCF CSW	28,430			28,430		20,659	20,659
WU SC	14,305	14,305		28,609	30,793		30,793
WU YSW	25,513			25,513	25,902		25,902
<b>Other revenue costs</b>							
Training	1,000			1,000	339		339
Travel	400			400	-		-
Mobile phone	1,080			1,080	480	435	915
External evaluation	5,000			5,000	3,169		3,169
Business development support	5,000			5,000	2,088		2,088
BCLC			4,200	4,200	-		-
<b>Project running costs</b>							
We Can groups / projects	750	750		1,500	1,521		1,521
Open Door drop-ins	1,000			1,000		667	667
Women's Group	1,000			1,000		424	424
Street Connector resources	1,000	1,000		2,000		1,668	1,668
Monitoring, evaluation and learning	585			585	529		529
<b>Overheads</b>							
Project management	2,635	865		3,500	3,500		3,500
Line management (WU)	3,800	1,000		4,800	4,800		4,800
Line management (ODCF)			4,800	4,800		-	-
Financial management (WU)	3,800	1,000		4,800	4,800		4,800
Financial management (ODCF)	2,600	1,000		3,600		3,600	3,600
Venue costs (The Hub)	4,750	2,500		7,250	3,625	3,600	7,225
Utilities (The Hub)	2,350	1,000		3,350	1,675	1,680	3,355
Printing Annual Report	250			250	-		-
Insurances, legal fees, etc (WU)	600			600	600		600
Insurances, legal fees, etc (ODCF)	1,900			1,900		1,381	1,381
Contingency	3,681			3,681	503		503
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>125,644</b>	<b>37,635</b>	<b>9,000</b>	<b>172,278</b>	<b>84,323</b>	<b>59,468</b>	<b>143,790</b>



**Open Door**  
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

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**FIRS & BROMFORD**  
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Together We Can! is funded and supported by:

**Local Trust**

**Big Local**

**FIRS & BROMFORD**  
NEIGHBOURS TOGETHER



LOTTERY FUNDED