



Annual Review

2018/19

LinkAge
Network

People aged 55+ lead healthy, fulfilled and satisfying lives

To improve the quality of life among our local,
diverse communities of people aged 55+.

Contents

Welcome	3
---------	---

Our work

Strengthening communities

Community Development for Older People	4
--	---

The Network	5
-------------	---

Improving health and wellbeing

Macmillan Prevention and Re-enablement	7
--	---

Post-retirement Opportunities (PRO)	7
-------------------------------------	---

Sector Support	8
----------------	---

The Network	8
-------------	---

Reducing social isolation and loneliness

Talking Tables	10
----------------	----

Matinee Club	10
--------------	----

ACE Neighbours	12
----------------	----

The Network	12
-------------	----

Informing to support

Information	13
-------------	----

Our people	14
------------	----

Finance	15
---------	----

Welcome to our Annual Review

2018-19 was a year of rejuvenation and consolidation for LinkAge Network. The decision to become a network reflected that all of our work connects, informs and strengthens for the benefit of local people aged over 55 in Bristol and beyond. We bring together people and opportunities through our project delivery, support of the sector and membership network.

We started new projects such as Talking Tables and Post-Retirement Opportunities, and the organisation increased its support of the sector with dedicated resources. Our membership network took off as nearly 20 groups joined us and contributed to the local offer for the over 55s.

Meanwhile, the roots of the organisation not only remained steadfast but also grew. Our popular What's on Guides have proliferated. LinkAge Network's history is in community development work and our current project has empowered communities to take their own action. The Macmillan-funded project delivered more of its vibrant well-being days supporting people to get active and stay active.

Looking ahead, there are clear challenges for the community sector. There is political and economic uncertainty, resources continue to get tighter, and, partly as a result, demand for services will increase. LinkAge Network is working hard to be part of the solution for local people aged 55+. We will;

- build better ways to hear more from our audience about what is important to them and how they want it delivered,
- develop more partnerships to provide specialized intervention where it is most needed,
- extend further beyond Bristol to touch the lives of the population we can serve,
- expand our membership network so that more groups can strengthen the local offer together.



Jo Stokes
Chief Executive Officer



Trevor Jones
Chair of the Board

Project: Community Development for Older People

Strategy, Organising and Coordination

2018-19 was the second year of the LinkAge Network Community Development Work with Older People (CDOP) project, funded by Bristol Ageing Better. The project works across the city to generate new opportunities for people aged 50+, to make connections between existing organisations or groups, and develop asset-based practice. Three Community Development Co-ordinators (CDCs) cover the north, south and central/east of Bristol. Here are some great examples of some of their work.

Generating new opportunities

The CDOP project has resourced ideas which develop opportunities for the over 50s. The CDCs have worked alongside local groups, people and ideas to support their development. This year, the CDCs have spent



Case study: Sector support

In early 2018, LinkAge Network supported the Full Bloom Festival, a celebration of dance for and by people over 50, led by Gerry's Attic Dance Company. The festival included workshops with world renowned choreographers; a sell-out ticketed evening show, with performances from three South West dance companies; including discussion on perceptions of age, activity and dance, with the audience.

After this first festival, the central/east Bristol CDC worked in partnership with Gerry's Attic and Active Ageing Bristol to secure further funding, to introduce sessions to three new areas of the city. Classes started in early 2019.

The aspiration for 2019/20 is to bring all of the Gerry's Attic groups together for a second Full Bloom Festival.



Photo courtesy of Megan Ashton

Making connections

The CDC for north Bristol joined the pre-existing North Bristol Community Development Network (NBCDN) to meet local community workers and to offer an additional focus on work with people aged 50+. The NBCDN regularly meets to share information, to discuss challenges, to research opportunities for joint working and to share good practice.

A discussion at NBCDN about the lack of befriending opportunities in north Bristol led to a conversation about what makes an effective befriending service. NBCDN facilitated the exchange of experience, funds and resources. As a result, LinkAge Network are fund matching Bristol Charities to deliver the Meet Your Street project in Henbury and Brentry. Work will commence in spring 2019.

Developing asset-based practice

The CDC for south Bristol has worked in partnership with Bristol Ageing Better to develop training sessions to improve the engagement of groups identified at most risk of social isolation. The groups include; sensory loss, alcohol and substance misuse, being a carer, living with dementia, identifying as LGBT+, and engaging older Somali people. The training has been developed using the principles of community development work; co-produced with community groups and lived experience. In 2018-19, 165 people attended the training. More training will follow in 2019-20!

“ This was such an informative, powerful and moving training. I feel enriched and enlightened by the material presented and the personal stories that were shared. Thank you.” Professional who attended LGBT+ training



The Network

2018-19 saw the inaugural year of LinkAge's membership network. The objectives are to connect individuals, groups and organisations across the West of England, to share knowledge, resources and skills, to strengthen community provision for people aged 55+

Connect, Share, Strengthen

In its first year, LinkAge Network was proud to engage nearly twenty member organisations, all of whom work in the West of England to improve health and wellbeing of people aged 55+.

Members included;



The Network hosted three networking events in 2018 to connect members, share learning and strengthen practice. Network events included

- learning opportunities, such as 'GDPR; one month on', a session provided by Voscurl
- sharing good practice, such as Bristol Drugs Project presentation on planning and delivering training with their service users;
- networking time.

In 2019-20 the Network aims to provide more opportunities for local collaboration.



of members surveyed said that the events taught them things which benefited their work



of members surveyed said they had made useful connections



of members surveyed went on to say they are now collaborating with these new connections

“Excellent networking event, good buzz in the room, really valuable to meet so many other organisations doing great work. Also, came away with ideas.”



“The small scale network allows a greater understanding of what each partner/member offers allowing real conversation to happen.”

Further on in this report, you can read more about the benefits of the Network for its members and how it has contributed to the lives of local people aged 55+.



“It’s good to exercise with other people; it makes it more fun.”
BAME workshop participant

Project: Macmillan Prevention and Re-enablement

LinkAge Network and Macmillan Cancer Support have been working together since 2015 to support people aged 55+ who are living with and beyond cancer, to access a range of activities across Bristol.

Get active, have fun, feel better

To date, over 350 people have accessed support through the project. This year the project delivered;

- Wellbeing Days attracting 62 attendees
- Workshops for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups, in close partnership with local organisations. 72 people attended in total
- Support to over 60 activities across Bristol which accepted Macmillan Taster Tokens to their activities

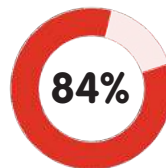


“I feel very optimistic and uplifted that so much is available and my condition doesn't have to hold me back.” Dianne, Wellbeing Day participant

Our evaluation of participants who attended the projects Wellbeing Days in 2018 showed that;



have since engaged in, or plan to engage in activity.



felt they have, or may have, experienced benefits to their mental health.

**MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT**
RIGHT THERE WITH YOU

Post-Retirement Opportunities

The Post-Retirement Opportunities (PRO) project launched in April 2018 with the aim to support people aged 55+ who are approaching retirement, recently retired, or facing redundancy in later life to manage the transition into the next phase of their lives.

Happy, healthy, fulfilling retirement

The project ran a series of free events across Bristol, offering attendees the opportunity to gather information on the tools, advice and options available to them, hear from those with lived experience of retirement, and meet people at a similar stage in life. The events focused on the areas of;

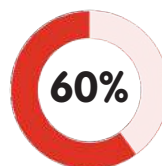


- 175 people participated
- Over 35 organisations were represented over 9 events

Our evaluation of these participants showed that;



of attendees found the events a suitable space for exploring and sharing ideas about retirement, and almost **90%** of those said that they have benefited from attending the event.



of attendees considered the events a good opportunity for meeting and socialising with people at a similar stage in life.

Sector Support:

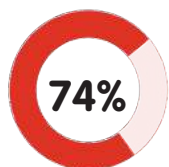
Active Ageing Bristol

LinkAge Network has a strong history delivering physical activity for people aged 55+. In recent years, we have continued to support this delivery through a relationship with Active Ageing Bristol (AAB). This year, we hosted and seconded a Project Officer to AAB, and supported the programme to manage Bristol Walkfest 2018.

Bristol Walkfest 2018

In May 2018, LinkAge Network was the legal entity for Bristol Walkfest enabling AAB to deliver a great festival.

- 4,448 people participated in Bristol Walkfest in 2018. Nearly 3 times as many people than the previous year.
- 163 walks and events were held



of participants said that Bristol Walkfest will encourage them to increase the amount of walking they do.

Project Officer work

Our Project Officer seconded to AAB, developed new activity opportunities for local people aged 55+, using Bristol WalkFest 2018 as a springboard.

The Project Officer introduced a dementia friendly walk, a photography walk, a lesbian and gay women's walk and a wheelchair accessible walk. The walks created opportunities for participants to increase their level of physical activity, whilst reducing their risk of social isolation and loneliness. Many of the walkers have gone on to participate in other AAB and LinkAge Network activities.

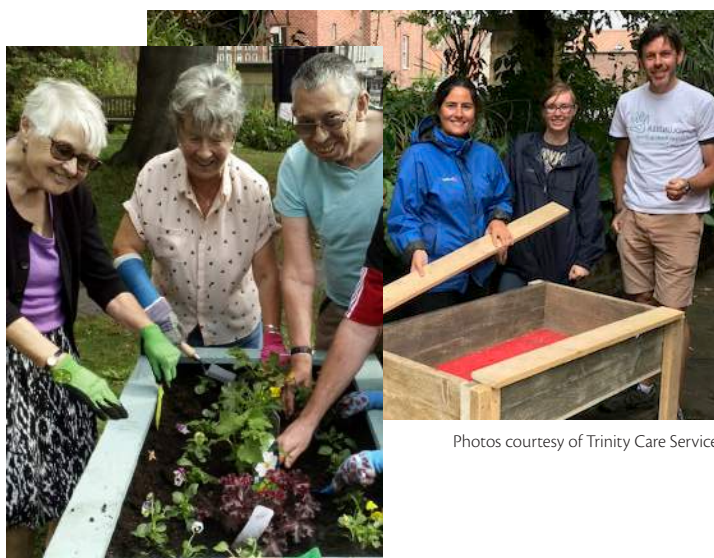
“The walks help me towards my daily walking targets to maintain fitness and strength and preventing muscle decline. The walks help me to concentrate on living ‘in the moment’ and appreciating what’s around me.”

Gareth, Photography Walk member



The Network

LinkAge Network shared a funding pot with two Network members to connect people aged 55+ with nature. Trinity Care Service and Stockwood Growing Together (in partnership with St Monica Trust) each were awarded the fund in summer 2018.



Photos courtesy of Trinity Care Service

Case study: Trinity Care Service

Trinity Care Service were successful in obtaining one of the Natural World funding pots, in partnership with Bristol Charities. The funding was used to build raised beds with the support of staff from Lloyds Banking Group. Clients from Trinity's Lunch Club planted the raised beds and continue to look after them throughout the seasons.

Part of the funding was also used towards additional plants and bulbs, which clients of the Lunch Club planted in handmade pots that they had made. The funding has meant that Trinity Care Service have been able to keep an interest going in gardening activity and include various different local organisations and groups at the centre to support the development of their community garden.



Case study: Rainbow Women's Group

An enthusiastic group of women from the lesbian and gay women's walk hosted at Bristol Walkfest went on to set up the Rainbow Walking Group and also a gig rowing group.

“It's a lovely reason to get up and get out of the house in the morning knowing that I'm going to be met by friendly people in a friendly atmosphere.”

Jean, Rainbow Women's member

Project: Talking Tables

Talking Tables is a cookery project for people over the age of 50, delivered in partnership between LinkAge Network and three of Bristol's city farms, and funded by Bristol Ageing Better.

A companion is someone with whom you share food

The farm settings offer participants unique environments to join a local community and participate in growing and cooking. There are opportunities for participants to continue to enjoy other activities on the farms, such as volunteering after they have finished Talking Tables.



Look out for the 'A Feast with Talking Tables' event, as part of Bristol Food Connections 2019 festival – supported by Talking Tables participants!

"It's been a great opportunity to work with the other city farms on the Talking Tables project. Getting together and learning from each other's sessions has helped our project grow and it's been really useful having the project coordinator from LinkAge connecting us all together."

Lizzie Spencer, Windmill Hill City Farm



Matinee Club

This year saw the launch of the Matinee Club, a partnership between Bristol Hippodrome and LinkAge Network, and now including Age UK Bristol's Friends Ageing Better project. The club aims to bring together individuals over 55 who share a love for theatre but might not have anyone to go with.

Club meetings take place once a month before selected mid-week matinee performances, with tickets offered at a discounted rate.

Members are treated to a complimentary tea and coffee, and a place to socialise with other members before the show. To date, there have been 10 Matinee Club meetings and more are planned!

"I love going to the Hippodrome but since I lost my husband I don't always have anyone to go with, plus the cost is too high for my budget. The Matinee Club allows me to see shows at a discounted rate and also make new friends when we meet for coffee before the performance. I love it!" Liz, Matinee Club member

**THE BRISTOL
HIPPODROME**



Case study: Talking Tables participant

Phil attended Talking Tables at St Werburghs City Farm in 2018. He has since gone on to volunteer at the farm and another initiative also funded by Bristol Ageing Better.

“Cooking is a social activity and I used to cook regularly but my son is now 26 and has left home and I’m single, so it was an opportunity to cook with other people and for other people... The course is a starting point. I have started volunteering here at the farm and that was a direct result of Talking Tables ... there are other things that I’m looking to do with LinkAge and other groups so it’s really been a springboard for me.”



Sector support:

ACE Neighbours

LinkAge Network is funding the ACE Neighbours project, delivered by St Monica Trust, for three years in Hartcliffe and Withywood.

Connecting with people and taking part in activities can make all the difference in tackling loneliness but it can be a bit daunting venturing out on your own; this is where ACE Neighbours makes a difference. The project aims to reduce loneliness in older people by matching a volunteer with an older person experiencing loneliness and together they can explore opportunities until the person feels confident getting out and about on their own. The project is being evaluated by the University of Bath.

“Everyone needs to help each other. I was helped in the past and now I’d like to help others pay it forward.” Roni, ACE Neighbours volunteer



Case study: ACE Neighbours participant

“I wasn’t coping with life and didn’t want to be here. I didn’t want to go out, I felt isolated and afraid to leave the house.” After being matched with volunteer Babs, Ellen adds, **“Going out on the walks was nice; it got me out and I met different people. I didn’t feel like I was the only one with this problem. You only have to do it a few times and then you’re out in the real world. [ACE Neighbours] made me feel as though there’s a future. And it’s not just me – there are other people in the same place. I’m now back to where I should be.”**

Ellen, ACE Neighbours participant

The second year of the project has seen it expand into its third area, Keynsham.



St Monica Trust

The Network

LinkAge Network has a history of generous support from local businesses which the organisation shares widely via Network members to pass onto their beneficiaries. In this way, LinkAge Network can help to reduce social isolation and loneliness amongst a wider group of local people aged 55+.

Opportunities have included theatre and film tickets, rugby match tickets, and corporate volunteering.



12
offers



184
beneficiaries



£6,553
value of offers

Case study: Corporate volunteering

Staff from Bristol Energy volunteered their time to support activities for participants of the weekly Trinity Lunch Club’s Dementia Café. Both staff and participants got to enjoy a morning full of singing and dancing, followed by a creative arts and craft session.

Informing to support

LinkAge Network is well-known for its information about local activities and events for the over 55s. The organisation produces information in several different media to reach as wide an audience as possible; the paper What's on Guides, our website, via email newsletters and social media.

The flagship of our information provision is the popular What's on Guides, produced since 2011. In 2018-19, the organisation increased its coverage of Bristol to 14 wards, plus a Guide for Bath and the surrounding area. LinkAge Network has continued to print hard copies because we know that much of our audience can only access paper guides, but we have also replicated the information on our website for the digital savvy.

"I love [the What's on Guides] because they give a clear and concise list of local events, they have great pictures, are easy to use, light weight to carry around to hand out to people that I visit in the community. These booklets are a very useful resource for me to signpost people I support in the community. These booklets make my job so much easier." Professional, North Bristol



668

Facebook followers
(30% increase in a year)



2,000

Twitter followers
(13% increase in a year)



600

recipients of our
e-newsletters
(14% decrease due to GDPR)



23,000

printed copies of
What's on Guides
(10% increase on last year.
3 new areas of Bristol covered)

Case study: St John's Foundation

"Membership of the LinkAge Network has benefited us greatly. More importantly, it has benefited the people we work with. Our membership has given us access to the new 'What's On' Guide. We were delighted to work with LinkAge Network on the first edition of the new guide in early 2018. We have distributed the guide far and wide and it has been an invaluable resource as we have expanded our Community Outreach Service, creating three satellite hubs to increase the provision of opportunities and activities for people aged over 55 in specific areas of Bath and North East Somerset."

Ricky Bush, Community Outreach Service Manager at St John's Foundation

"I only have to look in one place to find so many interesting and varied things going on. [The What's on Guides] are really well laid out and easy to follow." Beneficiary, aged over 55



In 2019-20 LinkAge Network aims to further improve coverage and provide information for even more areas in the West of England.

Our people



Jo Stokes
Chief Executive Officer



Kate Constance
Fundraising Manager



Hannah Somers
Marketing, Communications
and Support Officer



Jenny Pearce
Administrator



Sarah Parkes
Post-Retirement
Opportunities Events
Coordinator



Sally Crocker
Macmillan Prevention
and Re-enablement
Project Manager



Fran Garland
Macmillan Prevention and
Re-enablement
Project Assistant



Cheryl Martin
Project Officer



Tracy Edwards-Brown
Community Development
Coordinator (North Bristol)



Wendy Harris
Community Development
Coordinator (Central &
East Bristol)



**Magda
Kowalik-Malcolm**
Community Development
Coordinator (South Bristol)



Caroline McDonnell
Talking Tables
Project Coordinator



Trevor Jones MBE
Chair of the Board



Richard Jarratt
Treasurer and Secretary



Robert Durie OBE FRICS
Trustee



David Cottam
Trustee



Sue Silvey
Trustee



Jim Currie
Trustee



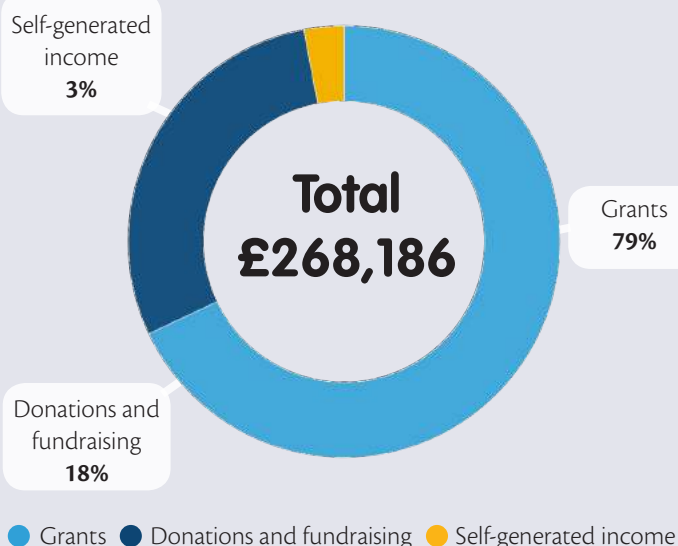
Ross Campbell
Trustee



Adam Rees
Co-opted Trustee

Finance

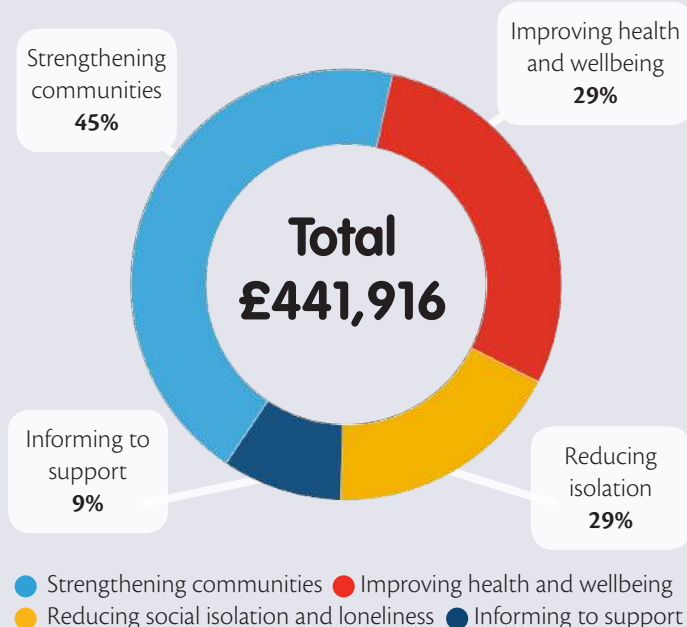
Income Sources



Where our income comes from

Just over two thirds of LinkAge Network's income comes from grants; the largest portion of grants was from Bristol Ageing Better for the Community Development with Older People project and Talking Tables. The information shows that expenditure was greater than income, largely due to a substantial donation received in 2017-18 which has been allocated over the three years until March 2020.

How LinkAge Network spent its money



How we spent our funds

The expenditure pie chart relates funds spent against LinkAge's objectives. Detail about the work carried out under each objective is described in the remainder of this report. Nearly half of expenditure was spent on strengthening communities, mostly via the Community Development project.

For a full record of the accounts, please contact the LinkAge Network office or see the Charity Commission website. Accounts should be ready from mid-summer 2019.



LinkAge Network

The Park Centre, Daventry Road
Knowle, Bristol, BS4 1DQ

f LinkAge Network
t @LinkAgeNetwork

☎ 0117 353 3042

✉ enquiries@linkagenetwork.org.uk

www.linkagenetwork.org.uk

LinkAge
Network