



Preston **CONNECTED** **COMMUNITIES** Project

**A study of the social and community networks of residents of
Broadgate and Hartington**

2018

by

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We are particularly grateful to everyone who participated in the community survey: especially the diverse group of volunteer community researchers (see Appendix 2 for details) who were the heart of this project and made the survey possible; and, not least to all the residents of Broadgate and Hartington who took part in interviews, giving generously of their time and sharing their experiences. We hope this report goes some way to capturing the community's experience and views.

Research team

The UCLan research team from the Centre for Citizenship and Community was led by Dr Julie Ridley (Co-Director), and included Ismail Karolia (Lecturer in Community Building) who worked in partnership with PCC Community Engagement team to support community development and was involved in the training days; Dr Manjit Bola (Community Engagement Lead) helped develop and deliver the Community Researcher training; Associate Professor Steve Broome (Co-Director) provided data analysis expertise including social network analysis and led on presenting the data at the community feedback event; and Prof David Morris (Director) who had an oversight role. In addition, Ellen Dobson (Centre Administrator) provided invaluable administrative support to the project at various stages, and Dr Anna Gekoski (Broome/Gekoski Associates) provided quality data input.

This report has been compiled and written by Dr Julie Ridley and Professor David Morris.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

National policy and practice increasingly emphasise the importance of recognising and harnessing the strengths and assets within communities. This report focuses on a year-long 'Connected Communities' study commissioned by Preston City Council (PCC) and conducted in Broadgate and Hartington during 2017-2018. Essentially, the study combined deliberative community engagement with social network analysis.

The project comprised five key stages:

1. Convening a project steering group involving local organisations and stakeholders;
2. Recruiting and training residents as volunteer 'community researchers';
3. A community survey of residents;
4. Social network analysis and wellbeing analysis;
5. A community playback or feedback event to present and discuss the findings with the community.

Project Aims

The overall purpose was to use a 'Connected Communities' approach to help develop strong, resilient communities that support people to enjoy happy, healthy lives for longer and to overcome barriers that get in the way of communities being more supportive.

In short, the study aimed to:

- Work with community organisations and residents in one area of Preston to find out about local resources and identify community needs.
- Enable local organisations to understand what people value within the area; where they go for advice and support and to identify barriers that prevent greater connectivity in the area.
- Explore the opportunities for local organisations to work together to increase human/social capital.
- Raise the profile of Preston by its participation in a ground-breaking piece of research-to-action activity with national links and profile, through the university and the Centre for Citizenship and Community's partnerships with the RSA and LSE.

In the context of the 'Preston Model', PCC sought to use the findings to reflect upon the potential within the area for developing co-operative initiatives to address identified community needs, and to consider the cost and savings of initiatives designed to increase community capital.

Profile of the Survey Sample

- In total, 205 individual residents living in Broadgate and Hartington area of Preston were interviewed between April - May 2018, a sample of approximately 5% of the 'Riversway' area population.
- Females were slightly overrepresented in the survey at 58% compared to the gender profile of 'Riversway'.
- Similar to the age profile of 'Riversway', most respondents were adults aged 25-54yrs, with smaller proportions of under 25s (13%) and older residents over 65yrs (12%).
- English was the first language for 73% of respondents, followed by Gujarati (15%). Ten other languages were named, although none were reported by more than five respondents.
- The community survey reached proportionately more people from Asian communities - half of the sample described their ethnicity as 'White' (compared to 71% for Riversway), and a third (36%) were 'Asian/Asian British' (compared to 21% for 'Riversway'). Six percent of the sample were of 'Mixed/Multiple' ethnicity.
- Most residents (83%) were living in households with others, including those living with dependent children and student households. 17% of the sample lived alone.
- Respondents tended to be established residents: almost two thirds (64%) had lived in the area for at least 10 years, many of these (42%) for over 20 years. Only eight percent had lived in the area for less than a year and 18% for 1-5 years.
- A majority (57%) were in paid work or were self-employed, and for most this was their main social role. A high proportion (39%) of those in work did not identify any other social or economic role.
- Half of the respondents rated their health as 'good', with one fifth rating their health as 'excellent'. However, 24% rated their health as 'fair', and 6% as 'poor', a similar profile to 'Riversway' and lower than for other wards in Preston and the North West.
- Most did not describe themselves as disabled, however, 23% stated that an impairment or long-term health condition limited their social life to some extent;
- Average mental wellbeing scores were 24.1, which is slightly higher than the national average (23.6).
- Over half (57%) reported 'hardly ever or never' feeling lonely, while 36% reported feeling lonely 'some of the time', and 7% were 'often lonely'. People living alone, or people whose impairment or long-term health condition affected their social life were the loneliest. Females and Millennials (those under 35yrs) were also slightly more likely to report loneliness.

Key Findings

Satisfaction and belonging

- Overall, Broadgate and Hartington residents were happy living in this area. Both satisfaction with this as a place to live and a strong sense of belonging were high -78% and 81% respectively. Furthermore, nearly three quarters of people (72%) felt that people in the area looked out for each other and 77% agreed that they could always find someone from the local area to help them.
- The 'best thing' about Broadgate and Hartington was its location or physical environment, including its proximity to the city centre, the river and to Avenham park. Some believed there was already a sense of community in the area with 'friendly local people' and 'good neighbours', and that people from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds generally 'get along well together' – indeed 6% of respondents thought this was the area's best feature.
- The survey identified a wide variety of ideas about how the area might improve. Some wanted to focus on the physical environment - cleaning up some streets and alleys, removing litter and rubbish, and environmental initiatives. Others wanted more localised facilities, such as, a cash machine, a supermarket, or better public transport. Increasing involvement with neighbours and 'more community spirit' were mentioned by some, along with a desire to redress negative reporting of events in the local BRAG newsletter.
- However, the two commonest areas identified for improvement were a) addressing problems with car parking (on Riverside and in Hartington streets), and b) tackling crime and anti-social behaviour from temporary residents and/or youth crime. Related to this, just under one in ten people thought it would be a good idea to have more places for children and young people to go to such as a 'play zone', youth friendly activities or a youth centre.

Faith organisations

- Faith-based connections were a significant part of many respondents' social support networks in respect of all types of support, with 53% of respondents having such a connection.
- They were particularly significant connections in that they could help change something locally: 87% of those with a faith-based connection had this type of resource, compared to 67% of those without a faith-based connection.
- Those from Asian/Asian British ethnicity (73%) were far more likely than those of 'White' ethnicity (37%) to have a connection to a faith-based resource.
- It appears therefore, that there are 'small world' networks based on connections with key faith-based institutions in the area – St Stephen's Church, PMCC, the GHS and BAPS.

Trust

- There were mixed results on levels of trust: just over half agreed that ‘most people could be trusted’, with a quarter believing ‘you can’t be too careful’, and 19% were undecided. Interestingly, under 35s reported the lowest levels of trust. Those with ‘high trust’ tended to be Asian/Asian British, or male.
- Those who ‘definitely agree’ that people from different backgrounds get on well in the area had high trust. A lack of opportunity for people from different backgrounds to mix together, ignorance, prejudice, and racism were all proposed as explanation for people from different backgrounds not getting along well together.
- Those with ‘high trust’ were the most connected and able to obtain different types of support from local community groups/organisations and neighbours as well as their family and friends. There was little difference in accessing emotional support between those with high and low trust.

Volunteering

- Almost half of the respondents (44%) had been engaged in some form of volunteering activity in the past year, and many had multiple volunteer roles. Over a quarter (28%) had been local volunteers contributing an average of 1.7 hours in the past month, volunteering formally and informally with Broadgate Residents Action Group (BRAG), faith-based organisations (temple, mosque, or church), and the primary school.
- Females, those over 25yrs, people from BAME backgrounds, and more established residents were the most likely to volunteer. People who lived alone were less likely to volunteer. People with disabilities or long-term chronic health conditions were no less likely to have volunteered than non-disabled people.
- Those who engaged in volunteering were also those who were positive about this as a place to live and those with a strong sense of belonging to the area – 62% felt they belonged ‘very strongly’ compared to 29% of non-volunteers.
- Of note was that half of respondents stated they would like to participate in voluntary activities more often in the future, indicating valuable community capacity is currently untapped.

Millenials

- Millenials (defined as those under 35 years of age for the purposes of this project) were found to have lower trust than older residents.
- There was little difference in the resources Millenials accessed compared to over 35s, except they were more likely to mention social media and online resources such as ‘Blog Preston’.

Social and community support

- For most people, their social support - especially practical and emotional support and engaging in social activities - was predominantly provided by family and friends.
- When they wanted help to find out what is going on locally or to change something locally, however, they sought the help of local community groups or organisations, public bodies, or turned to online sources.
- Two thirds spent time with some family member(s) every day in the past fortnight. There was less support from both relatives and friends when they did not live with them.
- For the most part, ties with neighbours were weakest. Certainly, these could not be described as relationships through which support and mutual interests could be exchanged and actively shared.
- The findings show a broad diversity of local resources in Broadgate and Hartington and the dominance of key resources particularly the 'Church' (mostly referring to St Stephens Church), the Preston Muslim Cultural Centre and the Gujarat Hindu Society (GHS).
- Aside from family and friends, faith institutions and GPs were named as the community groups/organisations that provided practical help and emotional support if residents needed it.
- By far the most commonly mentioned resource providing information about what was going on locally was the local BRAG magazine.
- State actors (Local Authorities, Police, School, local Councillors, etc.), along with faith institutions and BRAG featured most strongly in terms of supporting residents to make changes in the community. Those who had least access to change making resources were people aged 45-65 yrs and people living alone.
- Very few people mentioned connecting with local sports or social clubs in the area despite there being several large membership clubs offering bowling, cricket and other social activities.

Next Steps

It would be beneficial to think of this project over a two-year period, enabling what has been achieved so far to translate into benefits of scale in the locality. In a second 12 months, subject to further funding being identified, an intervention developed by the community could be implemented and evaluated.

Five key themes, not mutually exclusive, emerged from the findings as strands that could potentially become future work streams including:

- ✓ Increasing community capacity through better social connection
- ✓ Developing key community hubs and neutral spaces
- ✓ Targeting the experience of loneliness
- ✓ Improving the environment
- ✓ Increasing citizenship through volunteering

It is important to establish who (or which organisations) will take this agenda forward and whether the Project Steering Group or another group will continue to have a role.

Residents, community organisations and public services need to continue to work together to identify different ways to build trust within the community and to develop and enhance community connections.



Some initiatives that could be developed would benefit from the continuing and extended partnerships that have been set up in this Connected Communities project. Improved connections with Health would be even more beneficial especially in light of the national loneliness strategy.

The many limitations of the study are acknowledged, including that it neglects the experiences and views of children and young people, or those from specific groups such as Black, African and African Caribbean or Eastern European groups living in the area.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Background

In recent decades, there has been keen policy and practice interest in the notion of ‘social capital’, particularly in how to access and nurture it. Various definitions of social capital exist with Putman (2000) suggesting that at its core, it implies that ‘social networks have value’. This value lies in the opportunities it affords and in providing access to resources and valued attributes such as trust, and community values (Kadushin, 2012; Glanville and Bienenstock, 2009). Based on a belief in communitarian principles, in particular that ‘stronger, more civic-minded communities can contribute to making life better for local people’ (Parsfield et al, 2015, p4), the RSA, together with the Centre for Citizenship and Community at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) with the Personal Social Services Research Unit of the London School of Economics (LSE), engaged in a major programme of work that tested this hypothesis. The work resulted in the generation of a theory of change regarding mobilising ‘community capital’ that acknowledges that assets within communities can be used to benefit members of these communities ¹.

Community capital refers to ‘the sum of assets including relationships in a community and the value that accrues from these’ (Parsfield et al, 2015, p12).

In any given locality, such assets may include buildings or formal institutions such as libraries, community halls, as well as community projects or sports clubs; or they may be individuals with official or otherwise locally acknowledged influence and, crucially they include the social relationships between people. ‘*Connected Capital*’ research, a three-year Big Lottery-funded study involved extensive research and action to strengthen communities in seven locations across England. It found that building community capital generated four types of value or ‘dividends’: namely, wellbeing; citizenship, capacity and economic dividends. The findings suggest that ‘community capital’ can be built using an approach combining participatory action research methods involving community members, with social network analysis, to understand, involve and connect local people and thereby increase social relationships and improve wellbeing.

¹ <https://www.thersa.org/discover/publications-and-articles/reports/community-capital-the-value-of-connected-communities/> <https://www.thersa.org/discover/publications-and-articles/reports/community-capital-the-value-of-connected-communities/>

The increasing policy focus on communities playing a bigger role in contributing to public life also comes at a time of unprecedented government cuts to public service budgets (LGA, 2015), and changes in the relationships between communities and government, emphasising increased control over local decision making requiring public services to consider the wider social, economic and environmental benefits (e.g. Public Services (Social Values) Act, 2013; Localism Act, 2011). From David Cameron's 'Big Society' speech in 2010 to the *Five Year Forward View* published in 2014 by NHS England and other public bodies, and the introduction of programmes, such as, *Community Organisers*, *Our Place*, and *Placed Based Social Action* (Renaissi, 2018), the UK government has expressed a desire to see more resilient communities that are better able to support themselves and that reduce pressures on public services.



While not proffered as a panacea and acknowledging the gap between stated government policy and realistic outcomes in localities, the findings from our Connected Communities work continue to vividly demonstrate that community-led action and targeted interventions can indeed contribute to strengthening local communities, and that working in this way can accrue substantial benefits for community members.

Experience has shown, however, that to release value from community capital requires 'careful engagement with people, the weaving and brokering of social networks, and ongoing support for communities' (Parsfield et al, p5).

This is consistent with much recent research and several policy reviews. For example, Marmot's review of inequality, *Fair Society Healthy Lives* (Marmot et al, 2010), signified the importance of strong connected communities: 'Individuals who are socially isolated are between two and five times more likely than those who have strong social ties to die prematurely'. One way that social capital has been measured is in capturing information about the everyday relationships of social support provided through family, friends and neighbours (Kadushin, 2012). Connections, and the *capacity to connect*, are we argue, assets that can and should be harnessed, appreciated, protected and cultivated (Parsfield et al, 2015, p13). The project described here set out to apply a Connected Communities approach, starting with involving local people and organisations, to better understand the nature of social connections and local issues, supporting community connectedness and thereby increasing inherent community capital.

Study Purpose

This project aimed to form partnerships with, and between local organisations and residents in an area of Preston to help develop strong, resilient communities that support people to enjoy happy, healthy lives for longer and to overcome barriers that get in the way of communities being more supportive.



The University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) in partnership with Preston City Council (PCC) was commissioned to apply a Connected Communities approach to better understand needs as defined by residents and to help create a plan to address these needs. Through discussions between UCLan and PCC it was decided to focus on 'South-East Riversway' - later to be renamed 'Broadgate and Hartington' by the project steering group - as the location for a Connected Communities project.

In summary, the project aims were to:

- Work with community organisations and residents of the area to find out about local resources and identify community needs;
- Enable local organisations to understand what people value within the area; where they go for advice and support and identify barriers that prevent greater connectivity in the area;
- Explore the opportunities for local organisations to work together to increase human/social capital;
- Raise the profile of Preston by its participating in a ground-breaking piece of research-to-action activity with national links and profile, through the university and the Centre for Citizenship and Community's partnerships with the RSA and LSE.

In the context of the 'Preston Model', and a desire by PCC to create synergies between these two projects, this Connected Communities project also aimed to reflect on the potential within the area for developing co-operative initiatives to address identified community

needs, and to consider the cost and savings of initiatives designed to increase community capital.



This was a one-year project, with subsequent progression to be based on the emergence of promising early outcomes, further commitment of partners and the availability of funding and personnel.

Methodology

An adapted version of the 'Connected Communities' research process developed by the RSA, UCLan and LSE (Parsfield et al, 2015) using the theory of change – *understand, involve, connect* - was undertaken with the community in Broadgate and Hartington during 2017/18. This operationalised the core method of 'Connected Communities', combining deliberative community engagement with social network analysis.

The focus on community engagement reflects the growing interest in community-engaged research (CTSA, 2011).

It draws upon the theoretical perspective of Arnstein (1969), Fawcett et al's (1995) notion of community engagement as 'processes of working collaboratively' to address issues of health and wellbeing, and Popay's (2010) 'pathways of community participation' from basic informing to community control to improve health outcomes. Our deliberative community engagement approach also draws upon the (UCLan) Centre for Ethnicity and Health's model of community engagement, which similarly argued that of equal importance to research outputs is the process of building the skills and capacity of organisations, community members, local service planners, commissioners and providers (Fountain et al, 2007).

As noted earlier, one way that social capital has been measured by researchers is by capturing information about the everyday relationships of social support provided through family, friends and neighbours (Kadushin, 2012). In this research, information about individual or personal networks has been used to understand the organisation of informal relationships and connections to community resources (Chua et al, 2011). Social support and network information was used to provide indications of community capital within this community- that is, the resources embedded in individual networks which are accessed and/or mobilised through these ties (Borgatti et al, 2017; Parsfield et al, 2015).

The project comprised five key stages as follows:

1. Convening a project steering group involving local organisations and stakeholders.
2. Recruiting and training local residents as 'community researchers'.
3. A community survey of local residents.
4. Social network analysis and wellbeing analysis.
5. A community playback or feedback event involving local organisations, community researchers, research participants and the wider community.

Project steering group

The first stage of the project involved PCC community engagement officers with UCLan staff scoping which local organisations and groups in the area might have an interest in the project. From a broad list that initially included local newsagent businesses and hairdressers, organisations or groups that served the local population in some way and that had an interest in how the Connected Communities project developed were invited to join the project steering group.

In November 2017 a group was convened consisting of representatives of local community organisations, public services, representatives of faith organisations in the area, sports and leisure organisations, together with research and academic staff from UCLan.

This group was tasked with directing, supporting and steering the project through providing expertise about the locality and the questions to be asked; using their networks to help recruitment of community researchers and promoting participation in the survey; commenting on the findings and influencing how they are responded to; facilitating sharing of the findings with the local community, and potentially helping secure further funding sources; and, importantly, ensuring the project has local ownership and engagement.

Meetings of the steering group were held in different community venues in Broadgate including St Stephen's Church Hall and the Gujarat Hindu Service so as to be more inclusive of local community venues, rather than in buildings such as PCC Town Hall, where the first meeting was held.

The project steering group helped to define the focus of the project and the questions to ask of the local community, and they were consulted on and commented on the early draft of the survey questionnaire.

In addition, these organisations promoted the survey to residents through local newsletters and personal approach, helping to recruit community researchers through their networks to conduct the fieldwork. Four steering group meetings were held between November 2017 and November 2018 and, in addition, many steering group members took part in the community feedback event held in September 2018 to share the early research analysis and discuss the results and future directions.

Community researchers

After advertising for volunteer community researchers in the local BRAG newsletter posted to over 2,000 households in the area, posting up notices in local shops and on community boards, holding a drop-in session at St Stephen's church for residents to find out more about the project, 20 people volunteered to be community researchers. This exceeded the aim to recruit 12 community researchers from the local area. The volunteer group was diverse in several respects -in age (youngest was 17yrs, oldest was 76 yrs); included both women and men; people from different cultural and ethnic identities; and people from different religious backgrounds.



Volunteers attended a one-day training course run by UCLan staff and received a certificate of attendance. This was held on two separate days in March 2018, and when it became apparent that not everyone could attend during a weekday, on a Saturday. One training event was held at UCLan and one at St Stephen's Church Hall.

The community researchers were trained to engage with local people in a structured one-to-one interview, using a survey instrument designed to collect residents' opinions of the area, social network information, demographic and wellbeing data.

The training covered basic fieldwork practice including ethical codes of conduct relating to information and consent with research participants, confidentiality and data storage, and safe working practices. In person and online support during the fieldwork process was provided by two lead community researchers appointed from within the community researchers team, as well as the UCLan research team to resolve any practical or emotional issues during the process.

Community survey

The community researchers surveyed a total of 205 residents in the Broadgate and Hartington area using a questionnaire completed via a face-to-face interview. The interviews were undertaken through a mix of door-to-door enquiries, interviews at the homes of neighbours, family and friends living in the area, and a few were undertaken in community resources including the local cafe.



The questionnaire captured the personal and demographic characteristics of each respondent (e.g. age, gender, employment status etc), data about their subjective wellbeing, and self-assessed loneliness through nationally validated standard measures. This included the Shorter Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS), a nationally validated

research tool for measuring mental wellbeing, and the single item loneliness scale used in the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA) asking 'how often do you feel lonely?' (hardly ever or never/ some of the time/often).

In order to gain an understanding of how people are connected to each other, the survey also included a section on reported social support resources to collect data for social network analysis (Borgatti et al, 2017). These questions elicited information about respondents' important social relationships by asking them to identify the type of person, for instance, family member, friend, neighbour, community or faith organisations or social media sites they would be able to rely upon if they needed access to support of various kinds.

The questionnaire consisted of four main parts asking:

1. What respondents thought of Broadgate and Hartington as a place to live and as a community to be part of.
2. What community and social support they had.
3. Their personal characteristics.
4. Standardised questions about health and wellbeing.

The data were collected over a four-week period during April/May 2018, the community researchers using either a door knocking approach in allocated streets or interviewing up to five people known to them (family, friends, neighbours) to provide information, gain consent and complete the questionnaire.

Community researchers leafleted the streets before approaching people on the doorstep to participate in the survey, with information about the research study. The leaflets provided information and invited expressions of willingness to participate either in advance by telephone or when approached by community researchers.

At this subsequent door knocking stage, residents were invited to participate either at that point in time and place or at a mutually acceptable agreed future date and/or local venue. Completing the questionnaire took variable amounts of time - between 15 minutes and up to an hour - dependent upon interviewer and respondent interaction.

Sampling

Non-probability sampling of residents was adopted, involving random door-knocking of residents living in a variety of housing types in some 20 streets across both Broadgate and Hartington areas aiming to reach at least 150 residents. Sampling also involved tapping into the networks of some of the community researchers, who were from diverse backgrounds and thus had different personal networks including with people from BAME backgrounds that other local surveys had found hard to reach. The community researchers were encouraged to include no more than five residents known to them when planning their interview strategy.

Ethical approval

Ethical approval was sought from and granted by the University of Central Lancashire, PsySoc Ethics Committee. Information about the study was given to all potential participants outlining the aims of the study and purpose of the interview; consent and the right to refuse; confidentiality; and what was to happen to the information collected. Participants were asked if they had any questions about their involvement before the interview commenced and were also asked for their verbal and written consent.

The importance of confidentiality was stressed to participants, both in the written information given at the start of the interview and during the introduction to the study at the doorstep prior to the data collection.

The participants' verbal consent was recorded by the Community Researcher. Respondents were asked if they wanted to receive information about the findings and/or attend the community feedback event. All such identifying information was recorded at the end of the interview on the final page which was separated from questionnaire responses prior to data inputting and analysis. Responses were treated as confidential and the anonymity of all participants in the study assured.



Data Analysis

The analysis presented in Chapter 2 is based on the completed community questionnaires. Descriptive statistics and frequency data has been presented in the results section and a small number of social network maps are included to illustrate key aspects of the findings regarding connectivity. The questionnaire data was entered into an Excel spreadsheet and analysed using a combination of Excel, SPSS, UCINET and NetDraw.



Social network analysis and wellbeing analysis

Information about individuals' social support and networks has been aggregated using social network analysis computer software (UCINET and Netdraw), to create a 'network map' of all the social relationships reported by all the respondents, providing visual representations of 'who knows who', and who is connected to who in the Broadgate and Hartington area.

This analysis enables us to understand something of the patterns of connectivity and isolation, and to identify key types of support people turn to, the places and institutions that were (or had the potential to be) central assets within networks that bring people together.

Community playback/feedback event

After the data had been analysed by researchers at UCLan, a community 'playback workshop' was organised in September 2018 held at St Stephen's Church, to share the findings with residents and partners, including survey respondents (where they had indicated they wanted to be involved), the volunteer community researchers and members of the Project Steering Group.

Posters giving notice of the feedback event were placed in several locations in the area (shops, community notice boards, Health Centre), advertised through organisation's newsletters, and personal invitations issued to people on our mailing lists.

The event was organised by the UCLan research team and attended by over 60 people, including amongst others, members of the Project Steering Group, community researchers, representatives of local community groups including BRAG and faith organisations, the School, the Fishergate Health Centre, Police, and senior academics from UCLan's Schools of Medicine and Business and Enterprise.

The reflexive conversations initiated by playing back this data, including visualisations of social network maps to illustrate key findings, enabled wider involvement and engagement in the process of its analysis and in generating ideas for local interventions that could make a key difference in tackling identified local needs, based on the community's understanding of its connections (and disconnections).

In previous projects, this process has helped to shift understandings of community from place to relationships, and to spark an explicit understanding of outcomes being dependent on social relationships.

More broadly, the process of change – relational and network-building – is central and based on previous experience of this research approach and extensive local participation, communities may develop social initiatives on which to base bids for funds to support further capacity building.



CHAPTER 2: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

In this Chapter, we present the information gathered through the community questionnaire survey of residents.

First, we consider the diversity and similarities among the people interviewed by examining their characteristics and self-reported health and wellbeing scores using standardised measures. Next, we explore the different opinions on living in Broadgate and Hartington, residents' satisfaction with the area, and reflect on levels of trust of others living in the area, and their engagement in volunteering. Finally, we aggregate the information collected on residents' personal social networks of support to reflect upon degrees of connectedness and to highlight emerging issues.

Survey participants

In total, 205 individual residents living in Broadgate and Hartington were interviewed between April - May 2018. 'Riversway' ward incorporates Broadgate and Hartington and based on 2011 census information has a resident population of 6,351 (ONS, 2016).

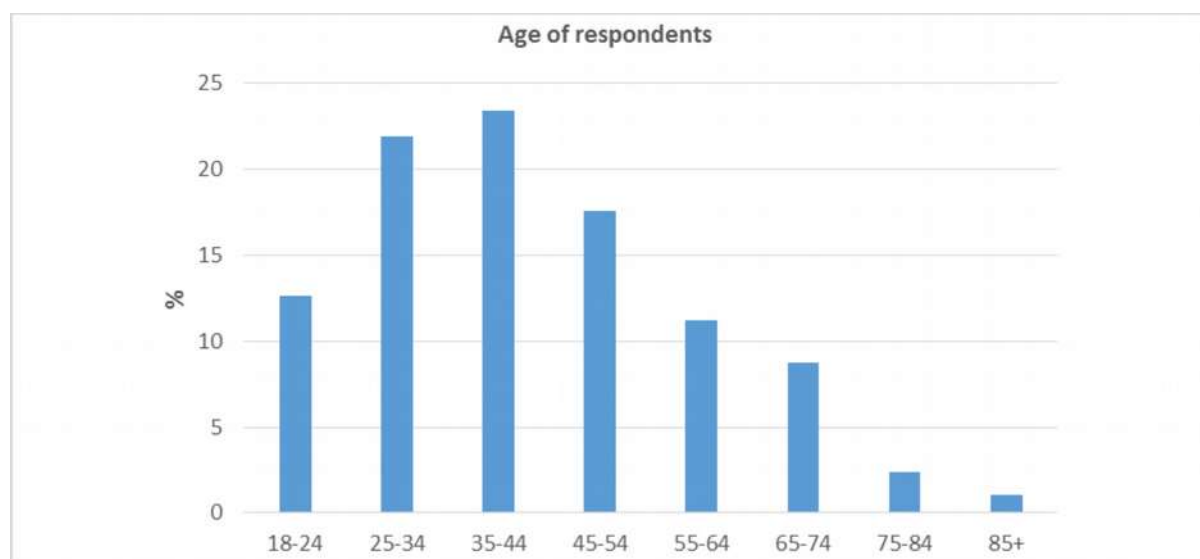
While Broadgate and Hartington area is not strictly equivalent to Riverside ward, comparison suggests the survey reached at least 5% of the area's population, and this figure is possibly a lot higher.

Some of these residents were known to the community researchers as family, friends or neighbours, while the vast majority surveyed on the doorstep were not known.

The sample was predominantly female (58%), slightly higher than the population of 'Riversway' which is 47% female. They were of mixed age groups, and similar to 'Riversway' as a whole, almost two thirds of the sample were 25-54 yrs; 12% were aged 65yrs+ and a similar proportion (13%) were aged under 25 yrs.

For details of ages of respondents see figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Age range of respondents



For almost three quarters of the sample (73%) the first language was English. Gujarati was the first language for 15% of respondents. Ten other languages were named as first languages (i.e. Hindi, Punjabi Urdu, French, Spanish, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Arabic and Sesotho), although none of these were reported by more than five respondents each. Over half of residents responding to the survey (53%) described their ethnicity as 'White', and over one third (36%) described themselves as 'Asian/Asian British'. Six percent stated they were of Mixed/Multiple ethnicity. This is somewhat different to 'Riversway' population overall, which is 71% White and 21% Asian/Asian British (ONS, 2016), suggesting that the community survey was particularly successful in reaching Asian/Asian British residents in the area.

The vast majority of respondents (83%) reported living in households with other people, while 17% were living in single households. Over half of those who lived with other people had children in their household, which equates to 45% of the sample overall. Some of those interviewed were students living with peers or in student accommodation. While people who have been in the area for different periods of time participated in the survey, the people interviewed tended to be well-established residents: almost two thirds (64%) had lived in Broadgate and Hartington for at least 10 years, with 42% of those being in the area for 20 years or more. Those who had been living there for short periods of time were in the minority: just eight percent had lived in the neighbourhood for less than a year and 18% for 1-5 years.

Work and social roles

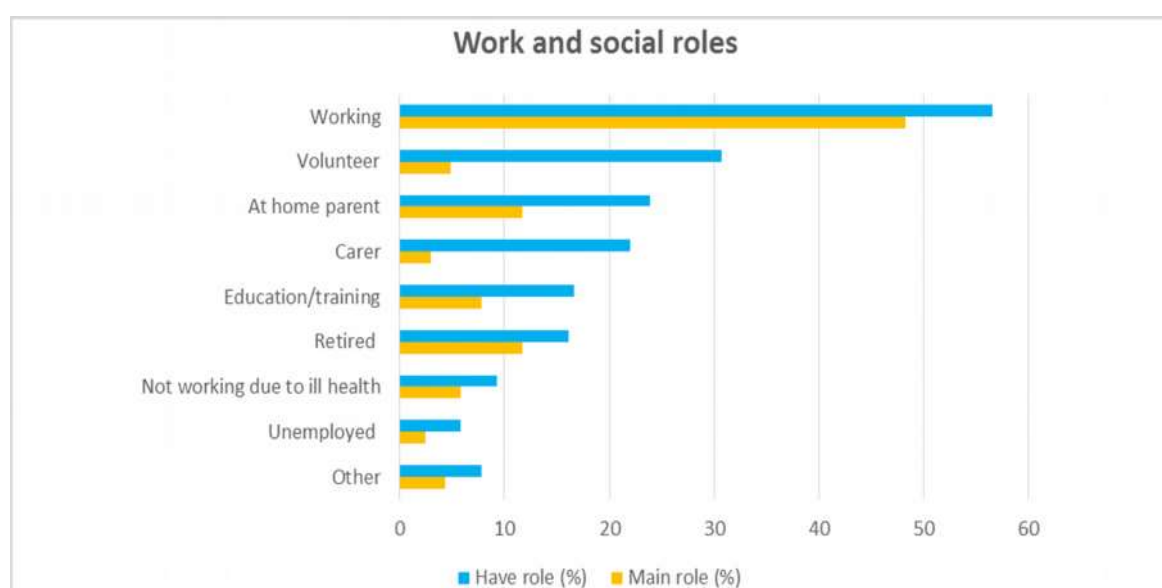
Respondents were asked about their work and social roles, for instance, whether they were currently in paid employment/self-employed, retired, in education or training, were at home

parents, on maternity or paternity leave, providing care to a relative or friend, unemployed, or they were not working due to long term health condition.

If identifying multiple roles, they were asked to identify which of these was their 'main role'.

A slight majority (57%) of respondents reported being in paid work/self-employed, which nonetheless is lower than the national rate of employment - currently reported to be 75% for 16-64 yr olds (seasonally adjusted). For nearly half of those in employment (48%), this was their main role. Almost two fifths (39%) of those in work did not participate in any of the other social or economic roles listed, which may be an indication of the way employment patterns and roles limit some people's capacity to become more involved or engaged in leisure and other activities outside of work as well as with their communities.

Figure 2: Work and social roles: comparison of roles and main roles



A significant proportion reported they had a volunteer role (31%). Over one fifth of people responding to the survey identified as providing care to a relative or friend (22%), although volunteering and being a carer were main roles for only a relatively small proportion of people (5% and 3% respectively).

Health and wellbeing

Asking respondents how they rated their current health status found half reporting their health as 'good', a fifth as 'excellent', 24% as 'fair' and 6% as 'poor'. The proportion of people who rated their health as 'poor' is a comparable to 'Riversway', but lower than for other wards within Preston and the North West of England (ONS, 2016). Almost a quarter of

respondents (23%) had an impairment or long-term health condition that they felt limited their social life to some extent. Average mental wellbeing scores on the SWEMWBS standardised measure were 24.1, which is slightly higher than the national average (23.6).² Within the SWEMWBS statements, scores were highest (most positive) when people considered whether they were able to make up their own minds about things, and lowest (least positive) when they assessed if they had been feeling relaxed.

A single item loneliness question used in the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA) was used. This asked, 'how often do you feel lonely?' (hardly ever or never/ some of the time/often). In response, a small majority of respondents (57%) reported hardly ever or never feeling lonely. However, over a third of people (36%) reported feeling lonely some of the time, and 7% were 'often lonely'.

Those living alone were much more likely to report being lonely 'some of the time' (66% of those living alone compared to 38% of those who lived with others). Also, those with an impairment or long-term health condition were more likely to report feeling lonely either 'some of the time' or 'often' (53%). Women and 'Millennials' were also slightly more likely to report being lonely.

Residents' perspectives on the area

Satisfaction and belonging

Residents' sense of satisfaction and belonging to the area were both high. Across the sample, high levels of satisfaction were found with Broadgate and Hartington as a place to live – 78% were either 'fairly' or 'very satisfied'. Only one in 10 were 'fairly dissatisfied', while a tiny minority (4%) were 'very dissatisfied' with the area. Similarly, 81% felt 'very strongly' or 'fairly strongly' that they belong to the area, while only 12% had little sense of belonging, and 4% had no sense of belonging at all. They also tended to agree that people in the area look out for each other: almost three quarters (72%) strongly or slightly agreed that this was the case in the area, while just 11% slightly or strongly disagreed. Over three quarters (77%) slightly or strongly agreed that they will always find someone to help them in the local area, with 13% slightly or strongly disagreeing.

When asked what was the 'best thing' about living in the area, half of all respondents gave an answer broadly concerned with the 'locality' or related to the physical environment.

² Mental Wellbeing was measured on the 7-item Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS). Scores given are adjusted to reflect use of the 7-item scale, and possible scores range from 7 (lowest MWB) to 35 (highest MWB). See [for overview](#) and [for score conversion for SWEMWBS](#).

These answers referenced the close proximity and easy access to a range of different amenities, including shops, transport, parks, rivers, churches and temples, and the Preston town centre in general. Features of the local environment (parks, the river, green spaces) were identified by 10% of respondents. Next most common (17% of respondents) concerned the local sense of community, including reference to 'friendly local people' and good neighbours. Related to this, were many positive comments about the diverse, multi-cultural character of the area with 16% of people suggesting that there was nothing stopping people from diverse backgrounds getting on well together despite different backgrounds and the comment that 'people mix well'.

Respondents gave a far more diverse set of replies when asked what they would change to improve the local area with 5% of people stating that 'nothing' could be improved. Amongst the suggestions from some were improving the physical environment by cleaning up the streets and alleys – 'less fly tipping', 'clean up the dog poo' – and one person proposed more environmentally sustainable initiatives such as solar panels, no plastic straws in the café, projects to educate on local ecosystems. Some wanted a better range of local facilities in the area, including a cash machine, 'a fish mongers, a butcher and another pub', a better bus service and a supermarket.

A small number people identified the need to increase 'community spirit' and levels of 'community involvement', and to improve communication between neighbours - 'to get to know each other better'.

The only answers to be given by more than ten percent of respondents related to a) the need to improve car parking for residents (11%) in some streets; and b) tackling crime and antisocial behaviour, often associated with young people (11%).

Anti-social behaviour generally was a problem mentioned by 5% of people, along with highlighting the need to increase safety (2%), reduce crime (4%), tackle drug and alcohol problems (2%), and addressing the problem of 'troubled' or 'unsavoury' people' (4%) coming into the area. Having somewhere for children and young people to go like a 'play zone', or activities for them to engage in to help tackle anti-social behaviour was mentioned by 8% of respondents.

It was suggested that provision for young people outside of faith groups is limited, although there is a youth group at the GHS, the PMCC and St Stephen's Church, there was nothing that catered for young people who do not associate with any of these faiths.

Trust

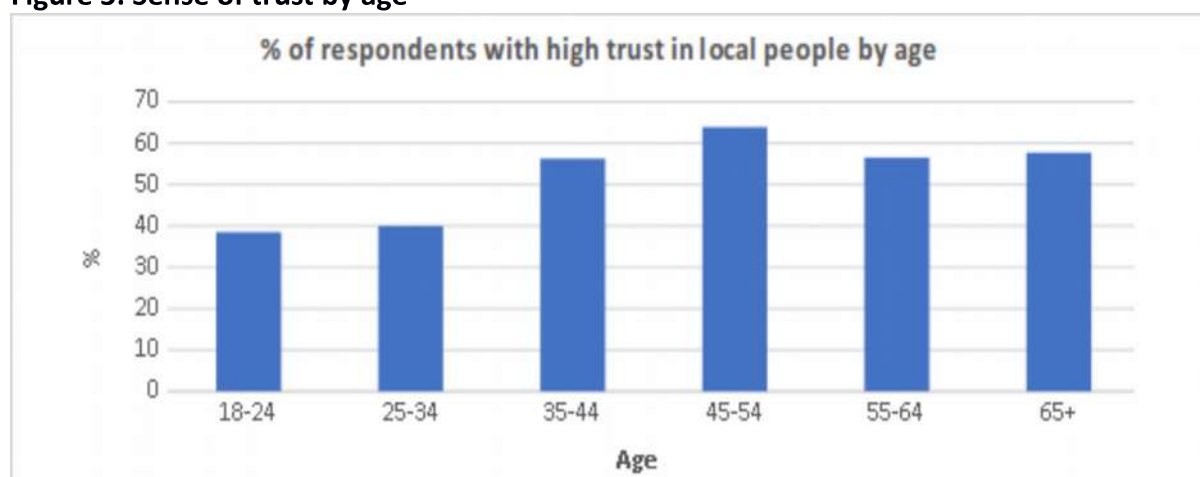
Trust, a broad concept that commonly relates to ‘belief in the reliability, truth, or ability of someone or something’ (Oxford Dictionary), was used in exploring residents’ relationships to each other, and the degree to which people in this area felt able to trust others. The survey found mixed results regarding trust in others.

Just over half (52%) believed that most people in the area can be trusted, while a quarter took the view that ‘you can’t be too careful’, 19% were undecided and 3% preferred not to say.

This result is somewhat at odds with the reported degree of solidarity and familiarity with other local people expressed in response to earlier questions including the high degree of satisfaction and sense of belonging, and the comment that ‘most people get along’.

Exploring this data further, we found that those who consider most people can be trusted scored higher on the mental wellbeing scale than those who do not (25.0 compared to 23.2). Additionally, those who trusted most local people were less likely to feel lonely: almost two thirds of those with high levels of trust (65%) were ‘hardly ever’ or ‘never’ lonely compared to less than half (49%) of those with lower levels of trust. Trust in other local people generally increases with age, and trust is significantly lower for those aged under 35 (broadly, the ‘Millennial generation’). The rate of high trust also appears to be slightly higher than average among Asian/Asian British respondents (59%, compared to 51% for White British), and slightly lower among women (49% compared to 56% for male respondents).

Figure 3: Sense of trust by age



Although only a handful of people identified the diversity of the area as the ‘best thing’ about Broadgate and Hartington, almost half (49%) of those surveyed saying they ‘definitely agree’ with the statement that ‘people from different backgrounds get on well together in

the local area', with another 42% saying they 'tend to agree'. Far fewer said they 'tend to disagree' (7%), and just three people that they 'definitely disagree' with this statement. Further, a majority (71%) of those who 'definitely agree' that people from different backgrounds get on well together also agree that most people can be trusted. This proportion falls for those who 'tend to agree' that people from different backgrounds get on well (36%) and falls even further for those who 'tend to disagree' (27%) and is zero for those who 'definitely disagree'.

A wide range of reasons were given for why people from different backgrounds might not get on well with the most common response given being 'don't know' (14%), followed by a cluster of responses including 'ignorance', 'racism', 'prejudice' and 'bias' together accounting for 10% of responses. A lack of shared spaces for people from different backgrounds to mix (7%) and language barriers (5%) were also mentioned.

Table 1: Connections to groups and neighbours by trust

Resource network domain	Groups		Neighbours	
	High trust (%)	Low trust (%)	High trust (%)	Low trust (%)
Practical support	42	30	57	39
Help to find out what's going on	46	34	46	43
Emotional support	27	26	22	18
Help to change things locally	52	26	31	23
Support for social activities	37	27	25	15
Likely to be asked for help	50	31	73	61

In Table 1 above, the degree of trust felt by respondents has been correlated with participation in groups and connections to neighbours across many of the domains of social support (see later section). Those with 'high trust' were more likely to be able to obtain practical support from both community groups/organisations and neighbours, help to find out what's going on locally from groups, and support for social activities from groups and neighbours.

People with 'high trust' were much more likely to be able to access help to change things locally, and more likely to be asked for their help, especially by local community groups.

It appears that there is little difference in being able to access emotional support from local community groups or neighbours according to whether people have high or low levels of trust in other local people. It might be remembered however, that most respondents identified family and/or friend resources as those providing emotional support.

Volunteering

In response to asking whether they had been a volunteer in the past 12 months in any capacity, either informally or formally, almost half of the respondents (44%) reported having been engaged in some form of volunteering activity, and for many this involved multiple volunteer roles. This compares with national figures of 42% of adults aged 16 and over (in 2014/15) having engaged in formal volunteering at least once in the previous year, and 59% of adults having engaged as informal volunteers over the same period (NCVO, 2016). Over a quarter of volunteer roles (28%) had been in locally based organisations, with local volunteers contributing an average of 1.7 hours to these groups in the past month. Most notably, this included volunteering for the Broadgate Residents Action Group (BRAG), faith-based organisations (temple, mosque, or church), and the primary school.

Further analysis shows that levels of volunteering were highest amongst women, residents older than 25yrs, those from BAME backgrounds, and most especially amongst those who have lived in the area for more than five years. People who lived alone were less likely to be volunteers.

People with disabilities or long-term chronic health conditions were no less likely to have volunteered than people without disabilities or long-term health conditions.

Volunteers were more likely than those who did not volunteer, to be satisfied with Broadgate and Hartington as a place to live and were more likely to feel they belonged to the area – 62% felt they belonged ‘very strongly’ compared to 29% of non-volunteers. Similarly, those who felt they could trust most local people were more likely to have volunteered in the past year than those reporting lower levels of trust.

Significantly, half of the people interviewed stated they would like to participate in voluntary activities more often in the future suggesting untapped potential that could be engaged.

Social Support and Community Resources

Using social network analysis methods, we put individual respondents’ social support networks together to explore patterns of connectivity and isolation in this community, including considering the places and institutions that were (or had the potential to be) central assets within people’s networks for tapping into and increasing community capital.

Most respondents reported being able to access at least one resource (i.e. family, friends, neighbours, colleagues, local community groups/organisations, local services, businesses, or online media) in each of the five support domains explored in the survey.

Respondents were asked whether anyone or any group could (if needed) provide the following -

- a) Give practical support
- b) Support them to find out what's going on in the local area
- c) Give emotional support with personal matters
- d) Help them change something in their community in a short timeframe
- e) Do something social with them.

We also asked if they believed anyone or any group would be likely to ask for their help or support. Table 2 below summarises the findings.

Table 2 Types of resources and sources of support

Domain of support	% reporting at least one resource	% of respondents reporting at least one resource by category							
		Family	Friend	Neighbour	Colleague	Com group	Local service	Local business	Online/ media
Practical support	95	82	74	48	28	37	22	9	18
Find out what's going on	95	47	58	44	16	40	19	17	60
Emotional support	94	82	72	20	19	26	25	3	10
Change things locally	78	35	36	27	9	40	39	9	15
Support for social activities	94	70	83	21	24	32	2	5	10
Likely to ask for help	94	83	83	67	40	41	11	6	9

Family and friendship connections

As can be seen from the table above, family and friendship connections were significant for most people in accessing support in all domains except to help find out what is going on locally and to change things locally. Over two thirds (69%) had family connections across at least four of the domains. Only 9% of respondents had no connection to family across the domains, rising to 11% if the last domain (asking the respondent for help) is omitted. Support received from family members, both those they lived with and those living elsewhere was high: two thirds had spent time with some family member(s) every day in the last two weeks, and only 9% reported spending no time with family in the past fortnight. Frequency of contact with both relatives and friends was lowest when they did not live with the respondent: just over one in five (21%) saw relatives and friends not living with them every day, with a third (34%) having contact most days, and two fifths (40%) having this type of face-to-face contact on 'a few days' over the past two weeks. Just four percent did not have face-to-face contact with either friends or relatives they did not live with during the last fortnight. Almost three quarters of respondents looked to friends for support across at least four of the domains.



Seven percent of respondents had no connections to friends in the domains explored by the survey (rising to 9% if connections in which the respondent is asked for help are omitted).

Ties with neighbours

Nearly half of the respondents reported relying on neighbours for practical support and information sharing, and over two thirds reported that neighbours are likely to ask them for help (which is some 20 percentage points higher than any kind of support received from neighbours). Across the five domains, over one third (35%) of people had no connection to neighbours. When more general questions were asked about links with neighbours, almost half (47%) reported knowing 'most' of their neighbours, while 45% stated they knew 'a few'

neighbours. A tiny proportion (2%) of respondents replied that they did not know any other people in the area. This might imply that while most respondents to some extent did have some connection with other people in the area, for the most part these could be described as 'thin' and not relationships through which support and mutual interests were exchanged and actively shared.

Similarly, colleagues were less likely to be relied upon to provide support, and more likely to ask the respondents for help. Without further data, it is difficult to interpret these results definitively, except to say that they appear indicative of fairly 'weak' ties between neighbours. That they felt it more likely they would be asked for help than to provide it, may also reflect people's inability to let neighbours know when they needed help and/or a strong desire for privacy – to keep themselves to themselves so to speak.

On the other hand, it also suggests there is untapped potential within this community for people supporting each other.

Community organisations or groups

Connections to local community organisations or groups provide different forms of support for between a quarter and two fifths of the sample across the different domains. Two in five respondents connected to local services (including Local Authorities) to help to change something locally, but only one in ten reported that they were likely to be asked for help by local services (a rate roughly four times lower than for local groups and organisations). Just over a quarter (29%) reported being able to rely upon local groups or organisations (including faith organisations) across at least four different domains.

It was noteworthy that around a third of people did not report connecting to local groups or organisations as part of their support network.

Businesses and online/media resources

Local businesses did not feature much as resources in many people's social networks. Just one in six people used local businesses to help them find out what is going on in the local area. Similarly, online and media resources were infrequently mentioned: although nearly two thirds of people (60%) used online and media resources to find out what is going on locally, the vast majority of respondents made no mention of using online or media resources to support them in other ways explored by the survey. Connections to local businesses and online/media resources were 'shallower' than connections to local organisations/groups and services, that is, respondents relied on very few resources of these types. While those with some connection to local organisations/groups and services reported up to three or four different resources, those who mentioned local businesses and/or online resources often reported only one, or at most, two different resources.

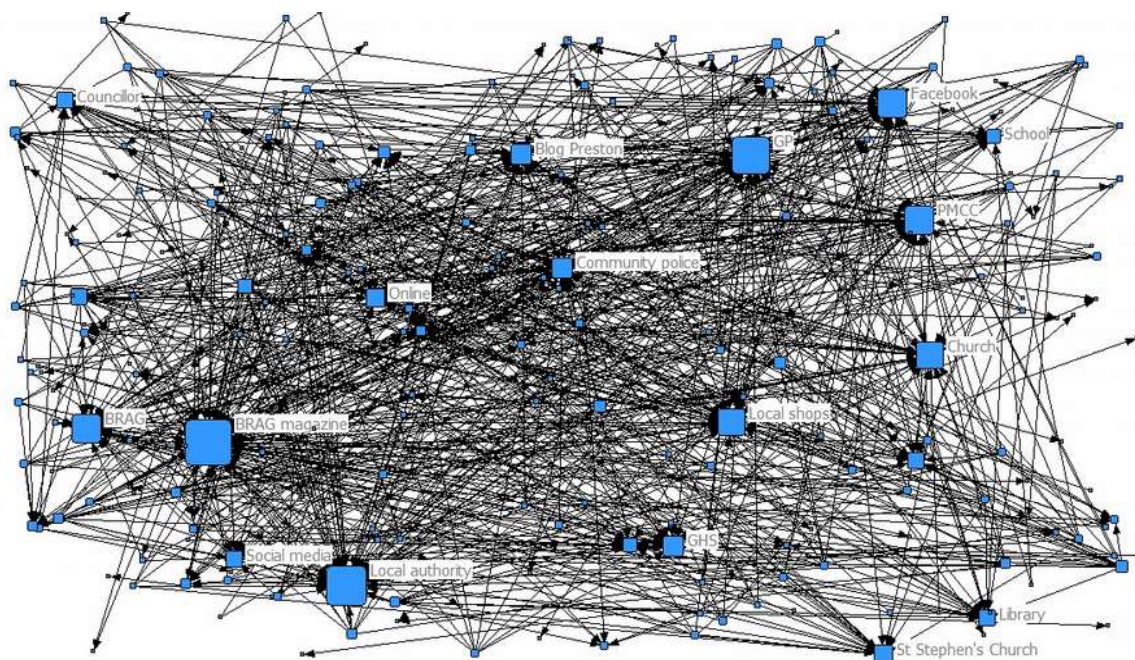
Key resources

Respondents named 126 different individual resources as providing different types of support that is, they were mentioned as providing support across the different support domains explored in the survey. The resource that respondents mentioned as providing the greatest range of support was the 'Church', sometimes referred to as 'St Stephens Church' and in a couple of cases specifying a Catholic church elsewhere in Preston. The Preston Muslim Cultural Centre (including the PMCC women's group, and children and young people's group) was the next most mentioned resource. The Gujarat Hindu Service (GHS) was mentioned 57 times. The 126 different resources are mentioned by respondents in relation to social support a total of 1,323 times between them. Two fifths (43%) of these resources were mentioned only once in people's social networks and 102 (81%) were mentioned fewer than ten times.

This illustrates both the diversity of the local resource network in Broadgate and Hartington, and the dominance of key local resources within it.

Some categories such as 'local shops' or 'online' will contain a diversity of specific resources within them (unspecified in the survey), meaning that the network will contain more individual resources and fewer key hubs. Figure 4 below illustrates the pattern of community networks.

Figure 4: Graphic representation of key resources in Broadgate and Hartington



Practical support

There are interesting differences between the various components of the resource network offering social support in the domains explored in the survey. While most people identified family and/or friends as the main providers of practical support, respondents also mentioned a total of 52 other resources they might rely upon to provide practical help, over half of which were only mentioned once. The resources for practical support mentioned at least 10 times are shown in Table 3 below.

The 'Church' (many referring to the local St Stephen's church) was the most commonly mentioned community resource offering practical help and support. Perhaps surprisingly, the next most common was GPs.

This finding may have been influenced by giving respondents an example of practical help as 'picking up a prescription for you', and any misinterpretation of that. The chemist also features in this list for perhaps similar reasons. Faith based institutions, Local Authorities, and local shops are the other most commonly mentioned resources. Online searching (7 mentions of Google) also appears, along with online shopping (6 mentions) and online (4 mentions), which is perhaps indicative of the self-reliance of some respondents in terms of the need for practical help – there is a sense of some people equipping themselves with the knowledge or equipment they need for a practical task rather than engaging another person or organisation.

Table 3: Practical help resources

Resource	Number of times mentioned
'Church' incl. St Stephens	40
GP	22
PMCC	20
Chemist	11
GHS	11
Local Authority	11
Local shops	10
Women's Centre	10

Information networks

A total of 54 different resources were mentioned in people's information networks – that is, resources that people use to help them find out what is going on. The resources of this type that were mentioned at least ten times are shown in Table 4 below. Almost half (44%) of the resources mentioned in total are named only once.

The local BRAG magazine, which is delivered to over 2,000 households across Broadgate and Hartington was by far the most commonly mentioned information resource.

Faith institutions, local shops, the Local Authorities and various online and social media resources were again important sources of information. Other local media such as the 'local newspaper' and 'Blog Preston' (another online resource) featured strongly, as did key community facilities such as the library and 'The Continental', a local pub and events venue for 'They Eat Culture' music and other cultural events.

Table 4: Resources to help find out what's going on locally

Resource	Number of times mentioned
BRAG magazine	65
Blog Preston	27
PMCC	27
BRAG group	25
Facebook	22
Local shops	18
Library	17
Local newspaper	16
'Church'	17
Online	14
GHS	13
Continental (Pub)	13
Local Authority	11
Social media	10

Emotional support

Emotional support was predominantly provided by family and friends. However, several community organisations and groups, and online support were also mentioned as providing emotional support to respondents. Forty-four different resources were cited, 25 of which (57%) were cited only once. The GP is by far the most commonly mentioned resource providing emotional support, with various faith institutions also featuring relatively strongly. Table 5 below summarises the key sources of emotional support mentioned by respondents.

Generally speaking, being able to access emotional support through local groups or neighbours was less prevalent in both high and low trust groups compared to other forms of support and connection.

Table 5: Emotional support resources

Resource	Number of times mentioned
GP	41
'Church'	27
PMCC	13
Preston Women's Centre	9
Online	7
Health Centre	5
Google	3
Mind Matters	3
Social media	3
UCLan	3

Support to make changes in the community

Respondents named 49 different resources that they felt could help them to change something in their community, 28 of which (58%) were named by one respondent only. This set of resources features state actors more strongly than other domains: that is, Local Authorities were mentioned significantly more times than other resources, and community police, councillors and local schools also featured as potentially providing support to make

changes in the community. Faith institutions again featured strongly, and BRAG was believed to be a relevant change-making resource.

The proportion of people who had a connection that they felt could help them to change something in their community was relatively high (78%), although this was significantly lower when compared to access to other forms of support. Those who were relatively new to the area – i.e. those who had lived in the area for five years or less - had less access to change-making connections than people who had lived in the area for longer.

Those with access to change-making resources were also more likely to feel satisfied with Broadgate and Hartington as a place to live, and to have a stronger sense of belonging to the local area.

They also had a higher average mental wellbeing score (24.6 compared to 22.3 for people without change-making resources). There was an age-related aspect to accessing support to change something in the community: those aged 45-64 years of age reported less access to change-making resources. Further, those who lived alone reported less access to change-making resources.

Table 6: Change-making resources

Resource	Number of times mentioned
Local Authority	46
PMCC	26
BRAG	24
'Church'	23
Community police	22
Councillor	20
Facebook	13
Local shops	13
GHS	11
School	8

Social activities

While it was predominantly to family and friends that respondents turned when they wanted to do something social that they enjoyed, there were still some other types of resource mentioned that people turned to for social activity support. Respondents named 41 resources through which they can do something social that they enjoy. Table 7 below shows all resources named more than once – 28 resources (68%) were only mentioned once.

Faith institutions, including the local church, PMCC (including the ladies group), and the GHS dominate the list and account for almost half of all mentions.

Perhaps surprisingly few people mentioned local sports or social clubs in the area given there are several membership clubs offering bowling, cricket and social activities.

Table 7: Sources of social support

Resource	Number of times mentioned
'Church'	18
PMCC incl. 'ladies group'	17
GHS	11
Facebook	8
'Church'	8
Continental (Pub)	6
Social media	5
BRAG	3
Local shops	3
Online	3
Preston Sports club	2
UCLan	2

Resources that ask for help

In addition to exploring which types of resources people in the local area can turn to provide five different types of support, we asked whether the respondent believed if anyone or any group would ask them for support.

They named 48 different resources that (potentially) may ask for their help – 38% of all resources identified across all domains in the survey, which is indicative of a degree of reciprocity within existing local resource networks.

Faith institutions featured most strongly as asking them for help with the ‘church’ mentioned 30 times, PMCC mentioned 25 times, St Stephen’s primary school 13 times, GHS 9 times, and BRAG mentioned 8 times. Other resources mentioned were social media online, local shops and UCLan.

Faith-based networks

Just over half the respondents (53%) had a connection to a faith-based institution in their resource network. This perhaps reflects the multi-faith nature of the area and its population – Broadgate and Hartington area has a mosque, four temples (two Hindu, Sikh, and Buddhist), and St Stephens Church. Those with ‘Asian/Asian British’ ethnicity were more likely to have a connection to a faith-based resource (73%) than those of ‘White’ ethnicity (37%).

Those with a faith-based connection were more likely to have access to a resource in each separate domain covered by the survey, meaning they felt they could turn to these organisations for these types of support.

While the difference was small in some domains of support, this was particularly significant for connections that could help change something locally: 87% of those with a faith-based connection identified having an organisation they could turn to for this type of support, compared to 67% of those without a faith-based connection.

In other words, faith-based institutions were central to the resource networks of several of the people sampled.

The following diagrams graphically illustrate some important differences in the support networks of those with and without faith-based connections:

Figure 5: Local resource network of all respondents *with* a faith-based connection

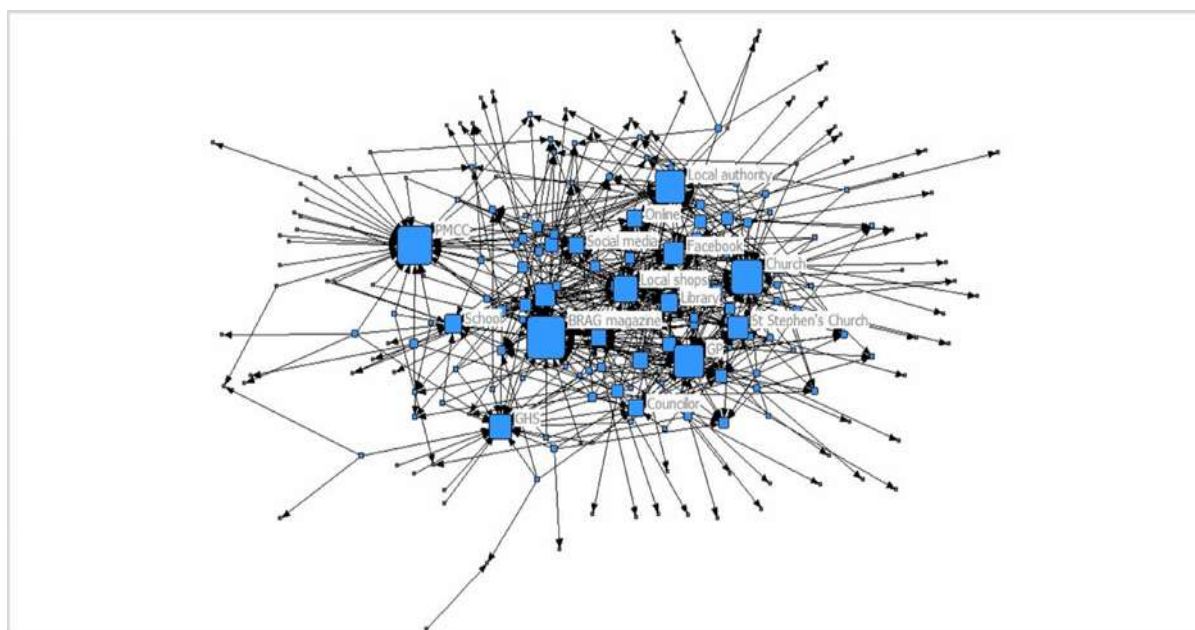
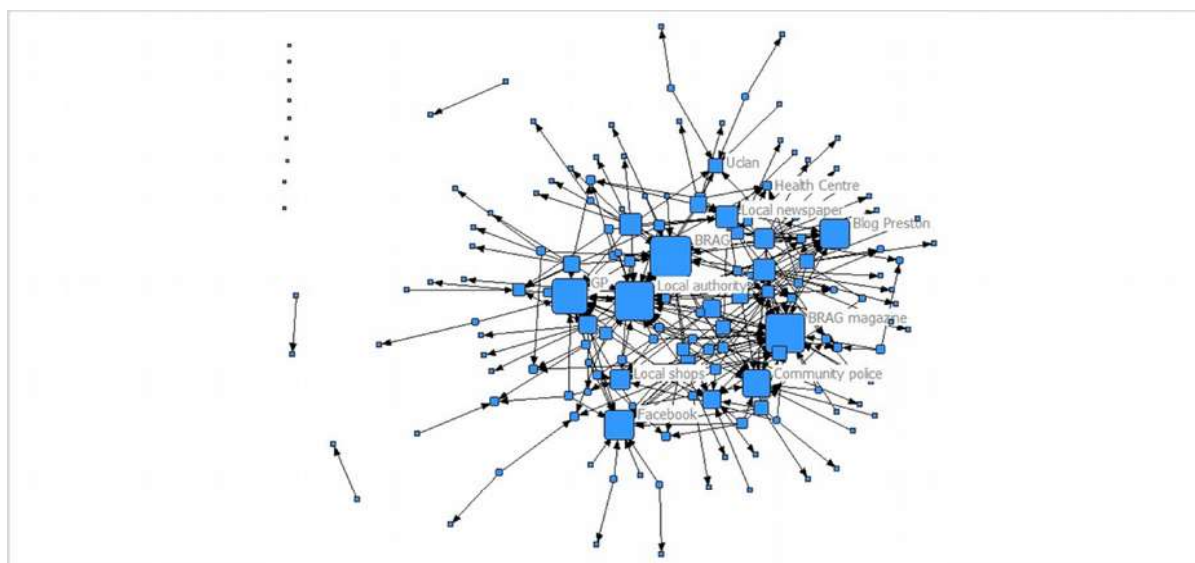


Figure 6: Local resource network of all those *without* a faith-based connection



When examining the local resource networks therefore, it appears that there are 'small world' networks based on connections with faith-based institutions, while those who were not connected to any faith-based institutions had more 'scattered fragments' network structures and greater reliance on public or statutory services, for example, Local Authorities, and GPs. The BRAG and the BRAG magazine are also more prominent resources that people not connected to faith organisations turn to.

Millennials' resources

As described above, 'Millennials' (defined as those under 35 years of age for the purposes of this project) had lower trust in other local people than older respondents. The table below shows the most often mentioned resources for both Millennials and respondents over 35 years.

Generally, the table shows little difference in the main resources mentioned by Millennials and by respondents over 35 years.

Both frequently mentioned PMCC and the church. The BRAG and Local Authorities were mentioned much more frequently by respondents over 35 years than Millennials while social media and specifically the online resource 'Blog Preston' was mentioned more by Millennials. It is unclear whether these resources contribute to lower trust, whether Millennials have different experiences of the same resources used by respondents over 35 years, and/or whether there are other factors that explain the difference in trust.

Table 8: Comparison of most often mentioned resources for respondents under and over 35 years

Resource	No of mentions by under 35s	No of mentions by over 35s
PMCC	58	67
'Church'	40	123
GP	27	51
Local Authority	27	50
BRAG incl. magazine	25	106
Local shops	24	27
Social media incl. Facebook	44	35
GHS	11	46
Community police	10	20
Online incl. Blog Preston	23	23

CHAPTER 3: DISCUSSION & NEXT STEPS

This study involving a partnership between the University of Central Lancashire, Preston City Council, residents and community groups/organisations from the Broadgate and Hartington area has researched residents' views and experiences, measured health and wellbeing, and looked at social networks of support. It sought to understand what people value within the area, including where they go for information and other types of support, and to identify key local resources and barriers that may be preventing connectivity between individuals and groups in the area. The Centre's previous work on Connected Communities (Parsfield et al., 2015) found social connectedness is of greater importance to wellbeing than other factors and that working at a community level to build social networks is one way of unlocking the community capital that generates wellbeing, citizenship, capacity and economic dividends.

In this final chapter, we draw together the key themes that emerged from the community survey together with points from discussions with the wider community at the playback event.

We consider the findings and discuss how community capital in this locality could be enhanced.

Increasing Community Capacity

The investigation of personal social networks found that many residents had networks of support that predominantly consisted of family and friends giving all types of help and support. In addition, where they did get support from local resources, this meant relying on few key local resources, particularly the faith organisations such as St Stephen's Church, Preston Muslim Cultural Centre, Gujarat Hindu Society, and BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir. Around one third of respondents, however, had no such connection to local resources of any kind. Furthermore, ties with neighbours were generally found to be 'thin' in terms of the number of ties and the types of support that neighbours could be relied upon to provide. This clearly did not extend to relationships through which support and mutual interests can be exchanged and actively shared. Furthermore, more than one third of residents had no connection to their neighbours.

Reliance on family and friends in social networks means the 'micro-systems' of care and support that sustain people will be vulnerable to 'shock' – that is, they can easily be disrupted through ill health and other major life changes. This can lead to greater reliance on public services such as GP/ Health services and Local Authority services

Key local resources (community organisations/groups and public services) therefore, become vital assets having a role in providing opportunities for people to connect, as well as working in ways that help people expand relationships beyond family and friendship networks.

However, what needs to be improved upon is exchanges between, rather than within, existing networks and resources.

Both the level of engagement in the project by community researchers and residents taking part in the survey, alongside the findings, point to significant *capacity dividend* that could result from extending and deepening local ties to both neighbours and to local resources, potentially resulting in more resilient informal social networks of support.

The general perception that Broadgate and Hartington is a place with ‘friendly people’, ‘good neighbours’, where people look out for each other and residents report a desire to increase community involvement and ‘community spirit’, all highlight the potential capacity dividend that could be generated.

Indeed, this has already happened during the project: over the summer, individuals and groups/organisations involved in the Connected Communities project contributed to the ‘Big Broadgate Brunch’ offering free food and activities for families during school holidays. Increased connections between neighbours reported by residents who volunteered as community researchers because of undertaking the survey, increased connections between and across community organisations through the Project Steering Group and the active engagement of residents from across the area as survey respondents and at the playback event already demonstrate impact and the potential capacity dividend of the work. It will be important to find further ways to continue this momentum once the first phase of the Connected Communities project finishes.

The following practical ideas for community events to increase participation were proposed at the playback event:

- ✓ Hold street parties at different times of the year
- ✓ Organise ‘community lunches’ and invite everyone, perhaps quarterly
- ✓ Put on a community show
- ✓ Organise a Broadgate in Bloom competition
- ✓ Hold self-help groups/classes, for example, business skills for entrepreneurs, increase computer skills
- ✓ Organise ‘street play days’ providing safe play times for the children and opportunities for neighbours to get together.

Key Community Hubs and Neutral Spaces

The survey results highlight the existence of ‘small world’ networks based on connections with key faith-based institutions in the area: 53% of respondents had a connection with a faith-based organisation, and for many people these organisations were significant and provided different types of social support. Moreover, accessing information support and help to change something in the area highlighted the importance of other resources in people’s social networks of support such as the BRAG and GPs/Health Centre.

This suggests that existing physical and organisational resources in Broadgate and Hartington could potentially become key hubs for delivering future initiatives to increase community connectedness.

Indeed, our Connected Communities report (Parsfield et al, 2015) provides several examples of initiatives seeded through hubs such as GP surgeries, to help ‘thicken’ local community networks.

Currently, community needs tend to be met in ‘silos’. In light of the findings it could be concluded that someone moving to the area for the first time with no faith connection, might be hard pressed to know how best to connect to people in the area. Despite the best intentions of faith organisations that offer universal services such as lunch clubs, youth clubs, parent and toddler groups, exercise classes and so on, not all members of the community can, or indeed do, access them. A building by its nature becomes associated with its key function if it is not a neutral space. Accordingly, the question arises as to how to meet general community needs using existing spaces, or how might existing resources be used more flexibly so as to improve the likelihood of being more broadly accessed.

If the intention is to develop community capacity by increasing opportunities for all residents to participate in a wider range of events if they wish to, some thought needs to be given to offering these in suitable venues.

At the playback event, ideas for improving the area included proposals to bring neighbours and community members together and increase opportunities for community involvement. Some younger residents at this event suggested that what is needed is somewhere for people to ‘bump into’ each other. In other words, a neutral space(s) offering an opportunity for people from different backgrounds, who otherwise may not meet each other, to be able to do so.

It was suggested the area needed a community café, an arts venue, or a community centre that could provide such a neutral space. There is currently no such resource in the area.

Interestingly, despite having religious roots the local primary school was successfully used over the summer as the venue for the Holiday Market and the 'Big Broadgate Brunch'. Both these initiatives resulted from diverse community members coming together to create and deliver the events pointing to the potential of the school as a comparatively neutral venue to offer at least a partial solution to this resource question. This links with the idea of holding community events in rotation at different faith hubs to better utilise the facilities that they have at their disposal. A further suggestion was to explore what potential there is for holding community events at the local sports and social clubs as these are underused by residents. As with the 'Big Broadgate Brunch', community events could benefit from not being badged as run by one specific organisation.

Instead, events that seek to involve the whole community, such as 'clean up' events, family fun days, or dementia friendly events, could make use of existing resources while at the same time thereby sparing any one organisation the burden having sole responsibility.

Targeting the Experience of Loneliness

Research has found loneliness to present the same risk to mortality as well-known risk factors such as smoking and obesity, increasing the risk of premature death by around 30% (Holt-Lunstad et al, 2015).

Loneliness is also identified as a natural aversive biological signal warning us to attend to our social connectedness (Cacioppo, 2010).

A small minority of people (7%) in this survey reported they 'often' felt lonely while 36% of respondents said they felt lonely 'some of the time'. Among all the sub groups analysed in our survey data (according to age, gender, impairment and long-term health conditions, work and social roles, length of residency, household composition), those who were living alone and people whose impairment or long-term health condition affected their social life were the residents who felt the loneliest. Women and Millennials (those under 35yrs) were also more likely than other groups to report feeling lonely.

Our results highlight that there are residents who would clearly benefit from creating networks of social relationships (and the attendant norms of trust and social support they can contain), through implementing some of the ideas suggested earlier, and that this would offer an opportunity to address loneliness through increased social contact.

Further, there is a significant opportunity through the UK's first loneliness strategy, launched by the government earlier this year, for public and community organisations to work together. GPs will be encouraged to use 'social prescribing' to refer lonely people to community and voluntary activities that include walking clubs and art groups as a way of reducing pressures on the NHS and of improving people's quality of life. This is clearly an opportunity for health services and community organisations to work more closely together on a major social issue.

Improving the Environment

Relationships are not developed and are not sustained in a vacuum but are helped or hindered by the conditions and physical context within which they try to grow and flourish.

It is important not to overlook the impact of the physical environment on social relationships.

In exploring residents' ideas for improving the area, some wanted to focus on the physical environment - cleaning up some streets and alleys, removing litter, dog mess and rubbish, and environmental initiatives. Others wanted to see more localised facilities, such as, a cash machine, a supermarket, or better public transport. The two areas most commonly identified for improvement were those of problems with car parking, and crime and anti-social behaviour from temporary residents and/or youth crime were problematic for a significant minority of residents.

Not attending to such factors that impact significantly on people's lives in a community can create barriers to thickening local relationships, and at worst, prevent their development altogether.

In planning ways forward aimed at fostering better social ties, it will be important to consider how people can come together to tackle the environmental problems highlighted. Doing so can create mutually reinforcing 'double wins', both the process of change (developing groups to tackle problems with the relationships, confidence and the aspiration

that develops in turn) *and* the outcomes generated (tangible, visible benefits that create a sense of local pride, belonging, and pro-social norms). This was a key part of the approach developed by the Centre for Citizenship and Community with a Housing Association (in West Midlands) as part of a desire to create a more connected, supportive community with a stronger sense of shared identity and belonging.

Citizenship Through Volunteering

A significant proportion of residents in this area already volunteer, comparing favourably to UK wide figures for volunteering in the formal and informal sectors. This reflects in part the active engagement of residents with various faith groups in the area. More than a quarter of volunteers were volunteers in the local area giving time to BRAG and other community groups, to faith-based organisations and the primary school.

Those who volunteer were more positive about Broadgate and Hartington as a place to live and they had a stronger sense of belonging compared to those who did not volunteer.

We discovered that the residents who are least likely to volunteer are those who are male, under 25yrs and white and those who are newer to the area and those living alone. It is of particular note that half of respondents stated they would like to participate in voluntary activities more often in the future, indicating valuable community capacity that is currently untapped.

Creating opportunities to volunteer locally could yield a significant *citizenship dividend*, which in turn could generate a *wellbeing dividend*, particularly if volunteering opportunities are designed to foster regular and sustained social interactions between people.

Volunteering opportunities in the area may currently be limited and some work may therefore be required to marry identified community needs with volunteering opportunities as suggested at the playback event.

This might extend the scope of volunteering opportunities in the local community to those that address both environmental and social issues. Targeting opportunities at those groups who currently volunteer least - males, under 25yrs, of White ethnicity, those who are newer to the area and those living alone – would be one way of reaching those who are least engaged and of potentially increasing a sense of belonging to the area. One idea from the playback event was for establishing a befriending scheme that would aim to connect volunteers with people who are isolated and lonely. [Such an initiative would need to build

on knowledge of what works across the life course in addressing loneliness (What Works for Wellbeing, 2018)]. Another idea was for volunteers under 35yrs to be matched with older people who are isolated, thus tapping into both the expressed capacity for volunteering and the potential to increase the wellbeing of both volunteers and older people.

Next Steps

This chapter has focused on developing five key themes from the Connected Communities project in Broadgate and Hartington, all of which have the potential to be developed further:

- ✓ Increasing community capacity through better social connection
- ✓ Key community hubs and finding neutral spaces
- ✓ Targeting the experience of loneliness
- ✓ Improving the environment
- ✓ Increasing citizenship through volunteering

An important finding of the original Connected Communities (Parsfield et al, 2015) study concerned the time and patience necessary to organise and run studies that lead to effective practical outcomes, whenever the resources of communities are being engaged to uncover community capital or drive its development.

Accordingly, it would be beneficial to think of this project over a two-year period, enabling the project to derive benefits of scale in the locality. In the second 12 months (subject to further funding being identified) an intervention developed by the community could be implemented and evaluated.



In considering next steps, it will first be important to establish who (or which organisations) will take this agenda forward and whether the Project Steering Group or another group will continue the work. There is clearly an appetite locally to work to improve the area: engagement from the local organisations and volunteer community researchers, and demonstrated in practice by local organisation of the 'Big Broadgate Brunch'.

It is crucial that residents, local and community organisations and public services work together to identify ways to build trust within the community and to develop and enhance community connections.

People at the playback event expressed a wish for the Local Authorities to invest more in the area and express this by, for example, supporting more local community focussed events. It will be incumbent upon the local statutory authorities to reflect on their future investment of time and resources. Some initiatives that could be developed would benefit from the continuing and extended partnerships that have been set up in this Connected Communities project, while developing a better partnership with Health would be beneficial especially in light of the opportunities for action locally that reflect the broader national loneliness strategy.

Finally, we acknowledge that this study has a number of limitations including that of adding little to the literature on the perspectives and social connections of children and young people (under 18s), or those from particular BAME groups such as Black, African and African Caribbean or Eastern European groups living in the area. There would be merit in further exploration of the community connectedness of young people and residents at the playback event suggested that this should be undertaken.

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Appendix 1: Community Researchers

The Community Researcher team included the following local residents/people associated with the local area:

Adam Dadabhoy

Ainazah Dadabhoy

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Danka Jaszek

Greg Smith

Hana Patel

Isaac Ellery

Kailash Parekh

Katherine Martha Jubb

Mark Ellery

Mateo Mbewe

Michael Edmondson

Muhammad Dadabhoy

Phil Green

Saleha Lokhat

Shreya Ghodke

Steve Mills

Tina McKee

In addition, the team included Ben Hunt (PCC) and Julie Ridley (UCLan)

Appendix 2: Project Steering Group

Core members of the Project Steering Group were:

Ambrish Limbachia – BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir

Andy Pratt – St Stephen’s Church

Arshad R Dadabhoy – Preston Muslim Cultural Centre

Ben Hunt – Community Engagement Officer, PCC

Clare Cobb – Friends of Euston Street Park

Dave Hanson – St Stephen’s Church

Dave Johnston – BRAG

Ismail Karolia – Lecturer, School of Social Work, Care and Community, UCLan

Ishwer Tailor – Gujarat Hindu Society

Julie Ridley - Co-director of Centre for Citizenship and Community, UCLan

Laura Brennan – Community Engagement Officer, PCC

Mark Reynolds – Lancashire County Council/Resident

Cllr Peter Moss – Riversway Ward Councillor (Observer)

