

Sporting Memories Spirit of 2012





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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Context

The Sporting Memories Foundation ('SMF') was established to improve the wellbeing of older people and to help tackle the isolation which dementia can cause. The SMF also aims to bridge generations by creating interactions around meaningful activities.

Research on older people documents the importance of participation in meaningful activity and social interaction for wellbeing. Older men, in particular, are susceptible to social isolation and poor health. When dementia is added to the equation, it is difficult to form social relationships.

The particular projects selected for this case study – an event run by City Academy Bristol, and a six week interaction between students at Bedminster Down Secondary School and the Sporting Memories Group based at Knowle West Media Centre – were considered flagship projects, partly because of their reach and scale, in the case of the event, and partly because they were seen as a potential template for future projects (Bedminster Down's regular interaction). The Sporting Memories Foundation has been experimenting with a variety of different interventions, all of which cohere around the context, mechanism and outcomes illustrated in Figure 1.

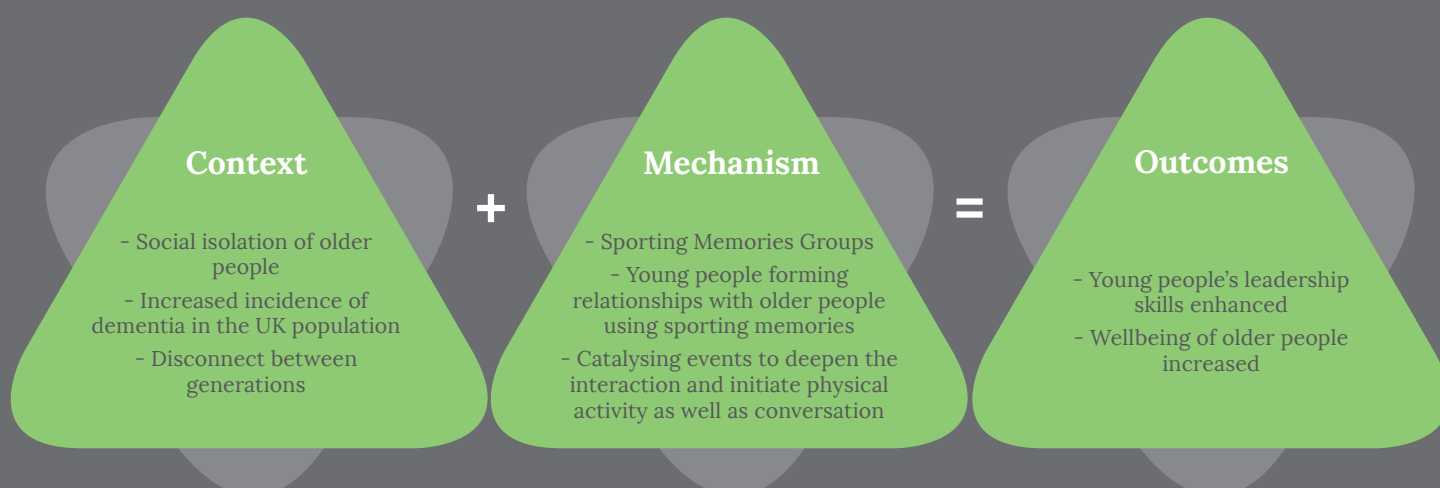


Figure 1: Methodological approach - 'Context + Mechanism = Outcome' (CMO)

Mechanism

Sporting Memories Foundation uses reminiscence to activate social interactions and to enable older people to access life memories. The value of this lies in both the accessing of life memories itself, and the use of these to catalyse conversations, leading to positive social interaction.

A second element of SMF's approach is the use of physical activities interwoven with sporting reminiscence work to convene older people and young people together around a meaningful activity.

These two elements occur in different ways in the different pilot projects.

1. Sporting memories groups – approximately 80 have been established around the UK
2. Intergenerational reminiscence – young volunteers working with older people, via an existing Sporting Memories Group, a local sports club, or a local day centre/care facility. This activity can also take place at a once-off event.

Outcomes

Despite the limited snapshot obtained which just reflected a small portion of SMF's variety of activities, and notwithstanding the fact that SMF is currently conducting pilot activities primarily to generate material for toolkits, evidence for two of Spirit's outcomes pathways, Empowering Young People and Connecting Generations was clearly visible.

Empowering Young People

Young people had substantial support from the teachers in their school, and 'stepped up' to the task of interacting with older people with dementia, either as part of a one day event combining reminiscence, physical activities and other activities, or as a weekly visit to a Sporting Memories Group over a six week period. Over and above mere passive attendance, they were active in planning and delivering the activities, and in taking responsibility for the interactions, which built confidence in themselves and real connection between the young people and the older people with whom they interacted.

Connecting Generations

Rather than just being physically present together, young people and older people with dementia interacted, having conversations and playing games together. Over and above this, the animation of the event led to highly visible changes in the behaviour of the older people with dementia. There were several very moving examples of this, for example, a 70 year old woman, whose prowess at table tennis (she had been a county champion in her youth) was revealed for the first time during the event. Memories of the event resurfaced and provided conversational fodder for days and weeks after the event. And perhaps most importantly, both schools, and one of the care homes involved, wish to continue these activities on a more regular basis: continued interaction with Sporting Memories Groups, in the case of one school, and making their students and facilities available for interactive physical activity for older people, in the case of another school.

Conclusion

The evaluation concludes with some small suggestions for finessing the activities, and states that there is a strong sense within SMF that it has struck gold in matching an existing (and indeed, increasing) need for holistic care and meaningful activities for older people with dementia, and the ongoing need to develop young people's potential and build communities by connecting generations, with a targeted, precise, compelling and evidently successful intervention.



1. INTRODUCTION

This evaluation is part of the Spirit of 2012's ('Spirit') evaluation of the outcomes and impact generated by the portfolio of projects it funds. The Sporting Memories Foundation (SMF) received £50,000 in funding from Spirit 2012.

The objectives of SMF are to relieve the needs of, promote and preserve the good mental health of people aged 50 years old and over, who experience or suffer from memory related conditions, such as dementia. The organisation focuses on the facilitation and delivery of sport related reminiscence and activities.

Funding from Spirit is being used to create a set of intergenerational and community-based pilot activities around the UK and age-specific online training modules and tool-kits to enable young volunteers of various ages and abilities to engage in intergenerational activities based on memories of sporting events such as the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics, the 1966 World Cup victory and other national and local sporting memories.

This project targets Spirit's core outcome areas of Wellbeing and Challenging Perceptions of Disability, in addition to delivering to the outcomes pathways Empowering Young People, Connecting Generations and Volunteering.

1.1 Evaluation Design and Methods

Telephone interviews were conducted with the following individuals.

ROLE	ORGANISATION
Director	Sporting Memories Network
Director of Policy & Research	Spirit of 2012
Programme manager	Spirit of 2012
Care worker	Bristol
Teacher	City Academy, Bristol
Teacher	Bedminster Down School, Bristol

Additionally, a consensus workshop and group discussion was conducted with seven of the participating students from Bedminster Down. This took place at the end of the summer term over two hours during school hours. The students worked with the evaluator to create a timeline of events in the project, and the emotional highs and lows they experienced over time. They then participated in a short consensus workshop, generating ideas around benefits of the project, clustering them and elaborating on them verbally.

Though it would have been desirable to have included older people's voices in this evaluation, it was felt that their dementia was such that conversing with a stranger about an event which had happened some time ago was unlikely to yield useful insight into the real value of the activities for this group. This is discussed in the conclusion and recommendations.

All material was transcribed verbatim and a qualitative thematic analysis was conducted using Dedoose (qualitative data analysis software which facilitates the tagging and sorting of text by the evaluator).



2. CONTEXT

2.1 Beneficiaries' Neighbourhoods

SMF does not exclusively focus on particular areas of geographic disadvantage, as disconnection between generations and isolation of older people, especially those with dementia, is an issue which spans social class and socioeconomic status.

However, it is of note that a number of projects (e.g. Bristol) are in Low Output Areas, and most of the schools involved with a slightly higher proportion of average of pupils on free school meals than the national average, which indicates that there is not any inadvertent bias creeping in.

2.2 SMF Organisation

The organisation has two directors, and a development manager and contracts out creative and media work to another organisation.

A particularly strong feature of SMF is its extensive network of both formal collaborators (e.g. the Youth Sports Trust) and informal links. It has a group of advisors with professional expertise in clinical psychology, dementia, and life story and reminiscence work.

2.3 Rationale for Project

SMF grew out of its director Chris Wilkin's existing interest in reminiscence as a therapeutic intervention for people with Alzheimer's or dementia. There is a substantial evidence base¹ on the value of life story work and reminiscence work in general in dementia care. Three key documented benefits of reminiscence which SMF is focusing are: creating emotional connections; creating interactional connections; and building new connections (a fourth relates to creating insights for improving practical care, which is not so relevant to SMF's approach). Some implementations of life story work involve focusing on particular themes, and this is SMF's approach: using sporting history (personal, local and national) as a topic.

Rather than establishing itself as an intervening agency, SMF is configuring itself as a facilitator, developing toolkits and best practice, and supporting implementing partners so that their model can be scaled up and disseminated to interested organisations as toolkits combined with training.

1. Kindell, J., Burrow, S., Wilkinson, R., & Keady, J. D. (2014). Life story resources in dementia care: a review. *Quality in Ageing and Older Adults*, 15(3), 151–161. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4239434/>



The work of the organisation at the moment is therefore focused on development of materials (both process and content toolkits), and piloting of the approach in a number of different contexts and configurations, e.g. single events, regular relationships, and combination with physical activity.

The second key element of SMF is using sport as common ground with which to connect generations, both in terms of reminiscence work and in shared physical activity. This area, known as “intergenerational practice” (IP) has a slightly less substantial evidence base in the UK. It tends to consist of policy recommendations and small scale projects designed to address local need.

A literature review conducted by inFocus on IP highlights the following features of this approach. The underlying assumption of IP is that different generations do not naturally get along together, necessitating some form of intervention.² The “increasing gap” between the generations is widely acknowledged, with some authors highlighting reasons for this change such as traditional structures breaking down (such as apprenticeships or intergenerational family living), or demographic changes such as the ageing of UK society.^{3,4} A particular scenario in which this gap between the generations is highlighted as a problem is in the use of shared public space, where (in deprived neighbourhoods at least) older people often express concerns about the behaviour of younger people.⁵

IP claims a number of potential benefits across multiple fields. It is emphasised that the benefits accrue to both young and older people in each case, without an emphasis on one group or the other. The full list of benefits claimed for IP is extensive, including items such as

- Improved health and wellbeing, reduced isolation

2. Vegeris, S., and Campbell-Barr, V. (2007). Supporting an Intergenerational Centre in London: Scoping the Evidence. Policy Studies Institute. <http://www.psi.org.uk/pdf/2007/ScopingIntergenerationalPractice.pdf> page 7.

3. 4Children (2007). For all ages: Bringing different generations closer together. http://www.4children.org.uk/Files/d18c0745-720e-4a92-a9d3-9f3b01055b80/ForAllAges_final.pdf

4. Granville, G. (2002). A Review of Intergenerational Practice in the UK. Beth Johnson Foundation. <http://www.centreforip.org.uk/res/documents/publication/Review%20of%20IP%20in%20UK.pdf>

5. Martin, K., Springate, I., Atkinson, M. (2010). Intergenerational Practice : Outcomes and Effectiveness National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales., and Local Government Association (England and Wales), , LGA research report http://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/IPI01/IPI01_home.cfm page 5

- Improved understanding between generations
- Increased confidence and feelings of safety, reduced fear of crime
- Learning and developing new skills
- Building better links with the community
- Increased enjoyment of learning
- Greater community cohesion
- The release of the potential of older people to contribute positively to their community^{6,7,8}

Improved trust between generations is mentioned in one report as the result of IP activity, but it is not emphasised as a particularly important factor⁹

Though there is consensus in the literature regarding the assumed benefits of IP, many of them have not been tested with any rigour and may be grounded in small scale studies. This is not a criticism of SMF's approach: rather, it highlights that the form of highly structured and intentional work which it is catalysing between generations may provide a useful research opportunity in order to understand this area in more detail.

Potential negative outcomes associated with IP work were also highlighted, in particular the risk of confirming negative stereotypes. This risk was associated with poor project management or delivery: "It must, however, be noted at this point that bringing young and old together does not automatically result in positive and beneficial exchange. If not properly facilitated and planned, activities may confirm or exacerbate prejudice."¹⁰ This is something which it is important to note, particularly as SMF works not just with older people, but specifically with older people with dementia, a group with which young people may be even less familiar.

What factors contribute to effective IP work?

- High quality project management is very important, which includes devoting time to preparing the different age groups separately, in advance, to set expectations before they come together on a project. It is also helpful to recognise that IP work tends to involve partnerships across multiple agencies, and recognition of the value of multiple participating groups is important.¹¹

6. Juniper Consulting (2012). A Review of Intergenerational Approaches to Community Safety in Northern Ireland. Linking Generations Northern Ireland <http://www.centreforip.org.uk/res/documents/page/LGNI%20CSU%20Research%20FINAL.pdf>

7. Martin (ibid).

8. Granville, G. (2002). A Review of Intergenerational Practice in the UK. Beth Johnson Foundation. <http://www.centreforip.org.uk/res/documents/publication/Review%20of%20IP%20in%20UK.pdf>

9. Martin (ibid).

10. Granville (ibid).

11. Granville (ibid) p. 5



- It is suggested projects should take a long-term approach, allowing relationships to develop.¹²
- Staff need the training and skills to work with both generations, as they initially may be experienced with one generation and not the other.¹³
- Activities need to be meaningful and purposeful for both groups: IP is not just about placing generations in the same space, but is about enabling them to collaborate, to mutual benefit, on an activity which engages and motivates both groups.

12. Springate et al (ibid)

13. Springate et al (ibid)

3. MECHANISM

SMF combine one off events with projects which have repeated contact. They occur in a variety of settings. Some activities interweave physical activity with reminiscence, particularly when there are one off events. Some, but not all, projects include an intergenerational component, where volunteers are primary or secondary school children. The categorisation of projects in is not exhaustive but illustrates SMF's current portfolio of activities.

	<i>Interactive reminiscence only</i>	<i>Combined active reminiscence & physical activity</i>	<i>Physical activity only</i>	<i>Exhibitions and memory curating</i>
<i>One-off event</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • England Rugby 2015 • Le Grand Depart – one year on • Llailltud Faerdref Primary School • Pinkie Primary School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spirit of the Games – Uniting Generations – Bristol Memory Day – City Academy • Le Grand Depart 2014 (spectating) 	Youth Sports Trust collaboration	Scottish National Portrait Gallery
<i>Continued activity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80 Sporting Memories weekly groups • Leeds training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Premier League • Lords Cricket Ground 	City Academy – physical activity afternoons (planned spin-off)	Memories of 1966 Lords Cricket Ground
<i>Regular activity for a finite period</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bedminster Down & Knowle West SMG • Muirfield Memories • NHS ward 			

Figure 2: A snapshot of SMN's portfolio

The specific activities which were evaluated for this case study were:

1. City Academy Bristol Sporting Memories Day
2. Bedminster Down / Knowle West Sporting Memories Group

3.1 City Academy Bristol Sporting Memories Day



Wednesday May 13th , 11.00 to 3.00
The City Academy, Bristol
Russell Town Avenue, Bristol, BS5 9JH



Join in*



This event was designed and run by forty four students from City Academy Bristol. The students were drawn from a variety of specialist subject areas, including health and social care, English, media studies and included twenty-one “sport leaders” specialising in sports. The project was part of timetabled ‘leadership time’.

Local care homes were contacted and encouraged to bring clients to attend a day of mixed activities, including a quiz, an exhibition of historical sporting photographs, physical activities including table tennis, curling, bowling, badminton, and a number of other ‘stalls’ including healthy eating, puzzles etc. Approximately seventy older people attended, many with dementia and other complex needs.

3.2 Bedminster Down/Knowle West Sporting Memories Group

Eight pupils from year nine in Bedminster Down Secondary School worked with the Knowle West Sporting Memories group weekly for six weeks (the visits occurred with their teacher and took place on Wednesday afternoons). This initiative built on a previous successful project on which the school and SMF had collaborated. The invitation to participate was offered to all Year 9 pupils, regardless of their specialist topic, but there was a tendency for most of the volunteers to be at least somewhat interested in sport. Their teacher also encouraged them to identify links between the project and their existing career plans.

The pupils interviewed members of the group regarding their sporting memories, and worked with them on the George Gallop Photographic Collection of sporting events held by the Knowle West Media Centre, in order to generate oral histories and provide captions for printed reminiscence cards. Equipment was provided by SMF and pupils recorded and transcribed their interviews.

The two activities converged when the Bedminster Down pupils attended the City Academy event.





4. OUTCOMES

It is important to emphasise that the aspect of the Sporting Memories Foundation which was being evaluated is a pilot project. It has gathered momentum very quickly – partly as a result of the commitment and energy of its founders, but also because the proposition is straightforward and compelling. A substantial number of small, somewhat heterogeneous projects have been implemented with the aim of compiling materials and also to refine the intervention. Therefore, this case study should be seen as a case study within a case study, examining the relationship between the intervention and the aspired outcomes for two sample activities. The participant numbers within interventions are small, and aggregating across projects is difficult due to the variety of contexts. Also, the activities have a dual purpose – they are an intervention in themselves, but they also deliver materials which will be used to compile toolkits in the future.

As the two activities converged, and involved similar participants (school students and older people with dementia), the data have been combined.

4.1 Empowering Young People

Spirit's outcome pathway for Empowering Young People, which can be viewed in the online version of Spirit's Theory of Change¹⁴ is illustrated in Figure 3.

The small scale of the regular interaction, and the limited time span of the event means that it is difficult to detect very substantial change, but as a pilot activity there is qualitative evidence across the entire outcome pathway for empowering young people. The ticks on Figure 3 indicate where evidence was found of progression through the pathway. There were elements of all of these preconditions visible in the qualitative data provided by young people and adults interviewed, with the exception of 'having a voice in their community'.

14. http://issuu.com/spiritof2012/docs/our_theory_of_change

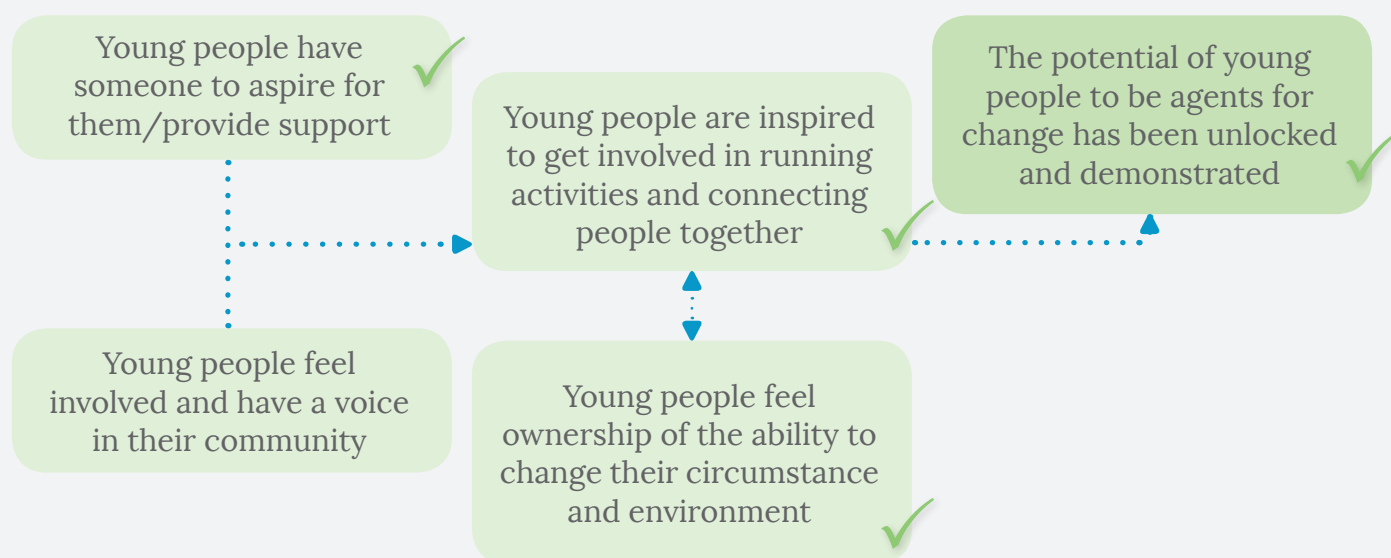


Figure 3. Spirit's 'Empowering Young People' Outcomes Pathway

Both the once off event which was held at Bristol City Academy, and the longer term weekly collaboration between Bedminster Down students and the local Sporting Memories Group contributed to empowering young people.

Young people specifically mentioned that they had someone to provide support for them, and it was strongly evident in the testimony of the lead teachers from both schools that whether or not the young people were aware of it, they had superb support and leadership from their teachers, from the identification of this opportunity in the first place, through the substantial workload involved in implementing it, and their continued motivation and encouragement of their pupils.

“ So, there was so many “this is why I went into teaching moments” for me and my colleague just seeing... the way some of our young people really had to get out of their comfort zones and really challenge themselves. ”

TEACHER

Both of the teachers interviewed were committed to delivering a follow up activity: either a repeated activity with a different pupil cohort when the new school year begins, in the case of Bedminster Down School, or a weekly physical activity session to be held by young sports leaders on the City Academy premises for local day care clients.

“ One thing that’s really lovely is a group of our students, our advanced sports leaders, are still going in and working with one of the care homes – and that’s come from [that event], which is just brilliant. ”

TEACHER

“ So, as of next September once we start our sports leaders courses again we’ve got all these contacts of these local residents that need support from our students... when I was in that timetabling meeting earlier I found out that all our leadership time is going to be on a Friday afternoon for two hours which is just perfect. So, we’re going to be able to get – we’ve got all these contacts now... we’re going to be putting them in every Friday and say not a problem, get yourselves a taxi to the school and we will be available to do some physical activity with you and do some stuff with you. So, yes, it’s going to be great. ”

TEACHER

Both schools became involved specifically to provide young people with skills, experience and opportunities related to their chosen career paths, and also to give them a development opportunity which was more holistic than that which can be provided in curricular activities. Both schools found the intergenerational element particularly compelling, as they strongly felt that this benefited both groups.



“ We do leadership, we do so much leadership for our students and they do so much leadership with younger children and working all with children. But actually they don't get the opportunity to work with many elderly people. ”

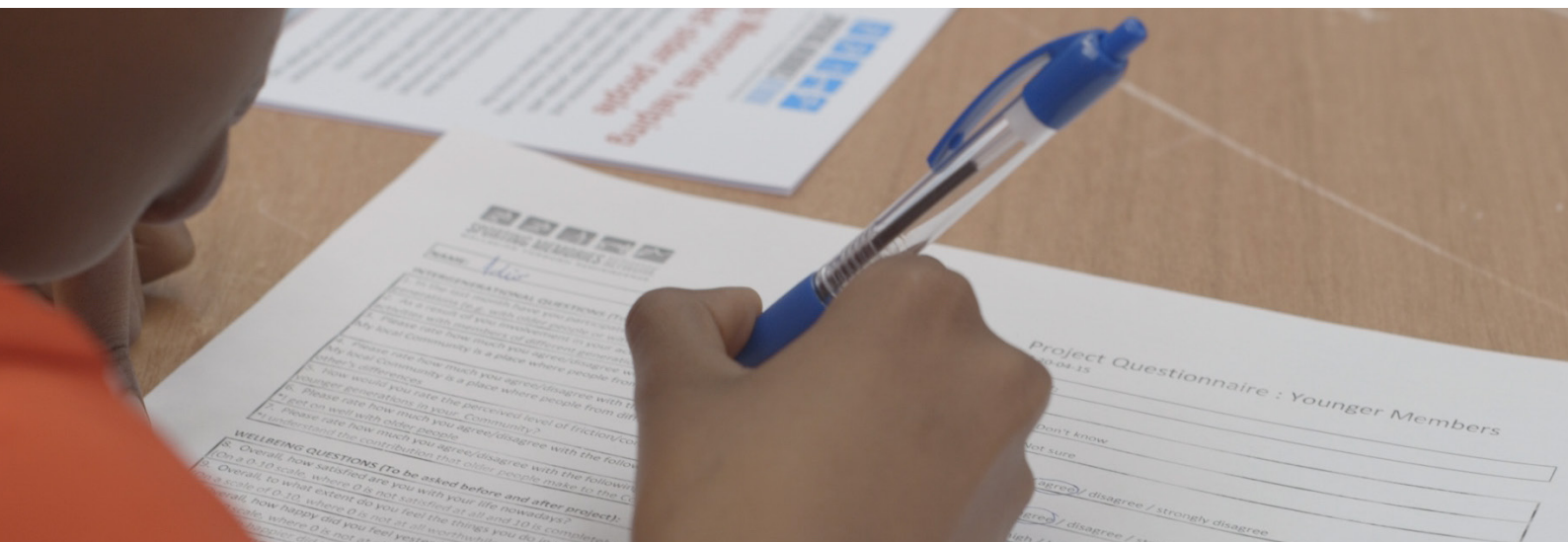
TEACHER

Students at Bedminster Down felt that the project had specifically improved their communication skills

“ I liked talking to them because I find it easier to interview or ask/answer questions. ”

STUDENT

Their teacher felt that it had also helped them in learning how to capture and organise information (e.g. recording and transcribing interviews during the group visits, and collating attendance data at the event).



There was a strong sense of personal agency: students remained committed throughout the project, and students in both schools were heavily involved in the design and delivery of the activities. The young people were spontaneously commended by other adults involved:

“There was respect there which in a lot of parts of our society you wouldn't get... they made a lot of effort ... I wanted it to go on record that I really appreciated the effort that they [young people] put in.”

CARE WORKER

“I can only compliment the City Academy students, they were brilliant in the way in which they welcomed everybody and tried to, you know, of all ages to try and include.”

TEACHER FROM ANOTHER SCHOOL

4.2 Connecting Generations

Figure 4 illustrates Spirit's Connecting Generations outcomes pathway. The intergenerational element is a core proposition of SMF, and each of there was evidence for each of the outcomes along this pathway.

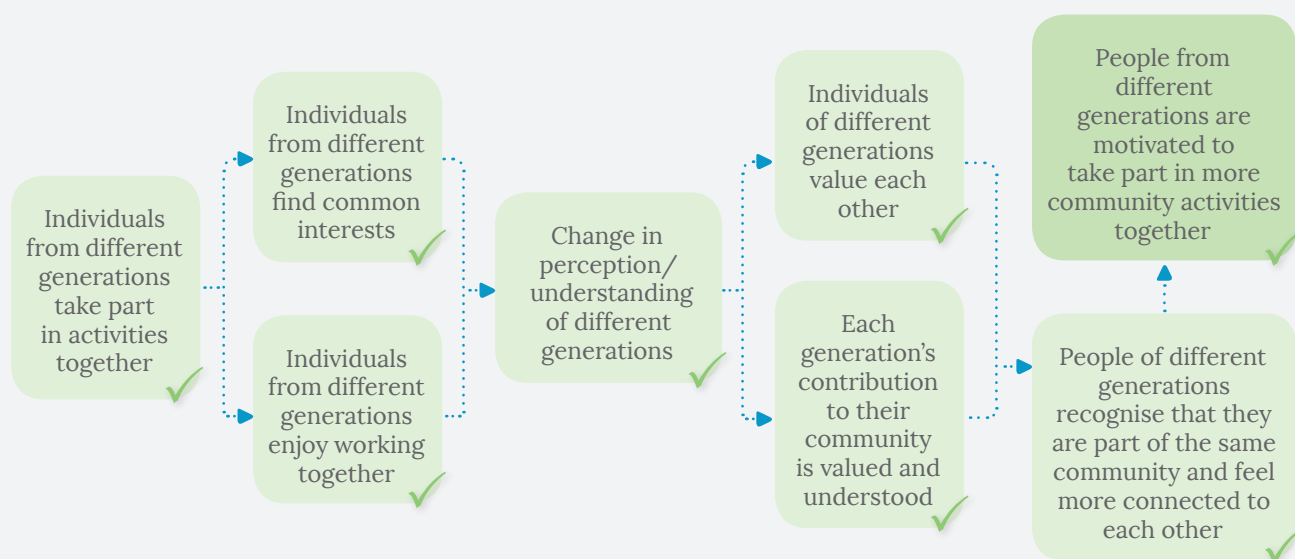


Figure 4: Spirit's Connecting Generations Outcomes Pathway

Individuals from different generations enjoy working together

- The atmosphere at the both the event and at the regular meetings was lively and enjoyable.

“ I want to do more activities like [this]. It doesn't have to be about sport... it's about having a conversation topic. ”

STUDENT, *regular meetings*

“ Once this group got together, you know, they really, really enjoyed it. ”

TEACHER, *regular meetings*

“ So, I have to say generally the kids involved in it were fantastic. They clearly enjoyed the day as well. ”

CARE WORKER, *event*

“ And [the older people were] talking a good week or so after. 'Hey, remember that?'... in fact [one of the participants] made a comment the other day [several months later]. ”

CARE WORKER

Change in perception/understanding of different generations

- There was very little evidence of a pre-existing negative perception of different generations. For the young people, there was more a sense of a lack of existing relationships with or experience of older people, and therefore the project was valuable in this regard.

“ Older people can figure out what younger people like. ”

STUDENT

“ Older people could connect with us – and us to them: back and forth. ”

STUDENT

The awareness of this ‘bridging’ element was more salient to observers such as the teachers and care workers:

“ I don’t think just the fact that they are out of school, but the fact that they [students] met people who were probably older than their grandparents in some cases but who had a huge, huge bank of memories. ”

TEACHER

“ And I know that quite a lot of elderly people or elderly people within the community maybe don’t see the good things that some young people are doing. So, I thought it’d be a really good opportunity to sort of take away that stigma and that, you know, that – I don’t know what’s the word I’m looking for, you know, a generalization I suppose. ”

TEACHER

- Individuals of different generations value each other
- Each generation’s contribution to their community is understood and valued
- People of different generations recognise they are part of the same community and feel connected to each other

These three elements of the pathway are discussed together because the evidence here is subtle and important. It seems that both the event and the Sporting Memories regular activity achieved the most ambitious element of this pathway: a sense of real connection.

“ I have to say, I mean, some of them have, I think, fallen in love with some of these [men with dementia] because they were so lovely. ”

TEACHER

“ Quite a lot of the guys liked the idea that some of the girls played football and that they were actually doing really, really well within their league as well as at school. And then, they then started to follow them in their matches as how they were doing and seeing things in the press. So, that was lovely, you know. ”

TEACHER

Therefore, though ‘valuing’ was present, e.g. in the young people’s appreciation of the historical and community element of the project, it was part of the process, and was a route to meaningful interaction and relationships, rather than an end in itself.

“ Telling us things we didn’t know, e.g. there used to be a racecourse near here. ”

STUDENT, *regular meetings*

Wellbeing is an overarching outcome for Spirit. Specific measures of wellbeing were not made as part of this evaluation, but it is apparent that the outcome pathway of allowing people to realise their potential, work productively and creatively, and build relationships and contribute to their community is unfolding in SMF, as exemplified by the progress along the contributing pathways of empowering young people and connecting generations.

4.3 Other Spirit of 2012 Outcomes

This case study concentrated on Connecting Generations and Empowering Young People outcomes. Therefore, though a number of other projects in the SMF portfolio make extensive use of volunteers, this was not a component of this case study. SMF also has a strong disability component to it, dealing as it does with a somewhat hidden disability: dementia. A particular strength of SMF is that it mainstreams gender and disability using activities which are inclusive and accessible to a wide range of individuals.



5. CONCLUSION

There is a strong sense with SMF is that it has struck gold in matching an existing (and indeed, increasing) need for holistic care and meaningful activities for older people with dementia, and the ongoing need to develop young people's potential and build communities by connecting generations, with a targeted and precise intervention.

Were SMF to be delivering its interventions directly it might be desirable for it to narrow down some of the variation in order to fine tune, pilot and roll out the model and associated toolkits. However, as many of the interventions are being facilitated by SMF, but delivered by intermediaries, e.g. schools, it may be that this heterogeneity will enhance the flexibility and robustness of the toolkits.

Evaluation is and will continue to be a challenge in this project for several reasons:

- Heterogeneity of contexts
- In depth work with small numbers of participants
- A particular beneficiary group – older people with dementia – with whom specific data collection skills are required and for whom retrospective self-report may be challenging
- Challenges in gathering data via schools

As part of the development of the toolkit, it will be desirable to create a simple evaluation toolkit to accompany the reminiscence tools, as all the intermediary organisations will also want to gather monitoring and evaluation data (this was apparent in discussions in both of the schools, where they would have really valued more detailed evaluation data, in particular where they in turn were being evaluated themselves).

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations from the evaluator

Succession planning and delegation: there is a sense that the organisation is heavily dependent on the energy, vision and charisma of its directors. This is natural for a developing organisation, but in time, there may be a need to focus some time and resources on developing second line leadership and bringing on board new staff.

Related to this, there is a sense that the pace of the organisation may be outstripping its ability to monitor, evaluate, document and learn from its interventions. Again, this is to be expected for the stage that the organisation is at, but with increasing funding from a wide number of sources, there may be a need to integrate M&E requirements and reporting obligations across different funding streams. SMF intends to road test the toolkits between September and January 2015 and build systematic evaluation into these pilots.

Collection of evaluation data mustn't be confused with collecting testimonials and communication material. Video material is compelling and valuable, but as a way of communicating what the organisation does. Video recording and editing by its nature is selective and amplifies the positive. It also does not document unintended outcomes or negative outcomes. Therefore, the vignettes and testimonials collected need to be treated separately from collection of evaluation data.

From this evaluation of one of the events (which is a limited perspective) it seemed that Sporting Memories Network events are as much catalysts of further activity as they are interventions in themselves. There were some very highly positive outcomes from the event itself, but the real value of the event is likely to be in initiating and fostering ongoing relationships, which it has done. Therefore, there is a question in my mind regarding to what extent SMF's events need to be evaluated at all: rather it likely to be the activities which evolve from it which are likely to deliver the most substantial impact.

In relation to gathering quantitative data, the organisation must not underestimate the challenges of collecting data in schools. It would seem superficially easier as it is possible to track students down, but teachers are heavily burdened with other administration. Equally, though, schools themselves require evaluation data, so a careful discussion in advance of how activities could best be evaluated, and how that data could be shared, in order to benefit both SMF and the schools would be valuable.

Sample sizes in the quantitative data were too small to make differences meaningful. I recommend concentrating efforts on compiling data across participants (especially young people) in similar activities. Note that the current format of spreadsheets will need to be modified to enable rapid analysis, with variables (pre and post questions) across the top



and participants in rows. This will enable easy filtering by school, gender, age etc. and rapid detection of differences before and after an activity. It may not seem vital now, but with scale up, this will become important. Mobile data collection using tablets was discussed with SMF, and this may be a valuable direction in which to go, especially given the challenges in collecting data via third parties, e.g. teachers.

This evaluator regrets very much not being able to collect first hand data from the older people who attended the event. This may illustrate a more general challenge: the evidencing and reporting of outcomes for people with dementia. Time and resource did not permit visiting either the care home or the Sporting Memories Group at Knowle West, and therefore the evaluation relied on second hand accounts of the outcomes. Given that either qualitative or quantitative data collection with people with dementia is highly skilled work, and would need to be observational (actual behaviour) rather than relying on retrospective accounts, it would be valuable to consider whether Masters or PhD research projects could be activated in order to provide evaluation data. SMF have an advisor, Charlie Murphy, who has extensive expertise in this area (evaluations involving people with dementia) and SMF are currently preparing to implement evaluation with this group, particularly in Scotland.

In relation to sustainability of the SMF's activities: there are very positive signs that the activities will continue in the two schools, in two different ways. One school is planning to continue to provide sporting activities for older people on the school premises, and the other school is planning to continue reminiscence work with SMF groups with a new cohort of students. This is to be strongly commended, as regular contact to deepen relationships is the ideal, according to the intergenerational practice literature.

Recommendations from participants

With regard to the event, implementing partners on the ground sometimes felt a little lost – not knowing how many people would be turning up to an event, for example, and therefore it advisable for the future that very clear lines of communication and contact are established between the implementing partners and participating centres.

Young volunteers need very systematic briefing on the possible challenges they may encounter when dealing with people with dementia, in order to maximise the possibility

of having a positive interaction. There were one or two instances in the early stages of meeting where interaction was a little stilted and the care worker and one of the teachers felt that a little more briefing on communication challenges which may be encountered when interacting with people with dementia may have been beneficial. Though debriefing was not mentioned by any of the evaluation participants, it is likely that young people would also benefit from careful debriefing of their experiences, which would also serve to deepen reflection and hence would extend their learning from the activity.

To conclude: SMF has embodied many of the recommendations for high quality IP work (project management, multiple participating groups, and a long term approach), and, as a separate activity, also provides training to care staff. SMF catalyses and facilitates very valuable activities and events, bolstered by its training initiatives with staff in different sectors. The remaining challenge for the organisation will be continuing to evidence its work in order to maximise the credibility and reach of the resources it is developing.

