

THE GOOD LIFE PROJECT!



Working in partnership with
Wiltshire Council
Where everybody matters

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‘From ‘why haven’t they done that’ to ‘why can’t we do this’. We need to create a new vision for our community. The essential elements that make up a good life cannot be controlled or owned by the state.’

Amartya Sen 1999

‘Get by with a little help from my friends.... my neighbours, my pets, the local supermarket, the lad at the bus stop, my hairdresser, my grandchildren, my daughter, the local pub.....’

The Beatles 1967 (with additions)

‘Civilisation is fragile. Cities and towns are fragile. And people - amazing resilient, tough, wonderful people - are the most fragile things of all.’

Neil Gaiman 2018

Thank you

A big thank you to the people of Tidworth Community Area, who have been incredibly welcoming throughout the lifetime of this project. It has been an absolute pleasure spending time in your community.

Thank you to our funders:

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Thanks also go to Marc Read, TCA Community Engagement Manager, who has provided considerable support for this work.

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The Good Life Project

3 Key Messages

To have a good life a person needs to have the freedom to choose how to live it, a reason and a purpose to get up and get out and lots of opportunities to make everyday connections with people

Communities can and do support these everyday connections, which take place in their streets, shops and meeting places

Connections are easy to make and every community member can play their part. People just need to take notice of each other, make small actions so others feel 'seen' and valued and encourage the contribution of all community members

Background and Introduction

Tidworth Community Area (TCA) is in the southern part of Wiltshire, it consists of two small towns and a number of villages, all set within beautiful countryside. The area has a high population of service personnel and their families and it has a younger population than other areas of Wiltshire.

Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living (CIL) is a disabilities charity. Our aim is to ensure that disabled and older people have a voice in Wiltshire and are able to live a good life of their choosing. As well as working directly with people we also work with our local communities, encouraging them to be inclusive and welcome the positive contribution that disabled and older people can make to community life. This project is part of this work.

Aim: to understand what makes a good life for people, what they need in order to live this life and how the community they live in can support this.

Our ambition is to make TCA the kindness capital of Wiltshire, with all its residents playing their part in making sure everyone can live a good life!

Methods

1. 1:1 semi-structured, in-depth conversations with residents of TCA.

Questions asked:

- What does a good life look like?
- What/ who is important?
- What do you do and what do you have?
- What would make things better?

2. Visits to community groups, gathering of community stories and a community group questionnaire.

Questions asked:

- What does your group do and what type of members do you have?
- How does your group contribute to community life in Tidworth Community Area?
- What does your group need in order to be at its best and do you have this?
- What is great about your community?
- What would make things better in your community?

Recruitment and fieldwork

1:1 interviews

Focused on older people but open to speaking with others who could be perceived as at risk of being socially isolated. Youngest person was 38 years old and oldest person was 87 years old.

| Recruited from | Number |
|--|----------------------------------|
| GP surgery; flu clinic and 'leg club' | 6 |
| Community groups: | 5 |
| Direct Payment recipient, supported by Wiltshire CIL | 1 |
| TOTAL | 12 (3 men and 9 women) |

Nine interviews took place in people's home and 3 interviews took place as part of a community group visit.

Interviews were in-depth, ranging in time from 45 minutes - 2 hours, they were semi-structured, using prompts to encourage the interviewees to explore ideas fully. Interviews were anonymised with names changed. Interviewees were given this option to enable them to feel able to be fully open in the interview. Age (where collected), gender and general location included. Interviews were written up as a story, with key themes highlighted, and sent to the interviewee who could request changes and approve. All interviews were then analysed together and common themes were identified.

Community groups

Contact made with groups and organisations signed up to our Make Someone Welcome campaign, (a social media campaign run by Wiltshire CIL, promoting inclusive communities for all) and with activities and groups identified by Marc Read, Community Engagement Manager, TCA Board.

Four visits:

- Enford Community Café at the Swan pub
- Tidworth Over 60's Club
- Showoff Dance
- Tidworth Titan's Inline Hockey Club

Seventeen questionnaires were sent out to groups and clubs who had signed up to the Make Someone Welcome Campaign and a total of 8 returned.

- Over 60's Club Tidworth
- Army Welfare Service (which supports a number of community initiatives in the area)
- Fittleton Parish Council
- Tidworth Town Football Club
- Tidworth Titans Inline Hockey Club
- Tidworth Memory Café
- Nether Avon Day Centre
- Showoff Dance

Marc Read, Community Engagement Manager, provided stories from the community:

- Men's Sheds
- Nepalese Community
- Walking Netball

The Good Life Story - what people have and what they need to live their version of a good life

The interviews tell a story of what a good life looks like, and the resources people have in order to live this life, they also show what happens when things break and what needs to be done in order for people to start living a good life again. The information gathered from the wider community shows how they can effectively support people to live the good life.

Freedom and independence

Interviewees talk passionately about the desire to have independence, seeing this as a fundamental requirement of a good life. They want the ability to have choices and control over what they do on a day to day basis and the future plans they make. A number described themselves as 'lucky' purely based on the fact that they had this autonomy. There were important resources identified to help maintain this independence including the ability to drive or pay for transport like taxis, financial security and health.



'What makes life good is good health, freedom to do what you want, being able to drive'
Eleanor

Independence was hugely valued and there was real fear attached to losing it, with interviewees showing a willingness to fight to preserve it.



'most important thing in life is to be able to look after yourself, the day I can't do that is the day I lay down and die'
Mrs Knight



'At the moment I am strong and powerful, in a few years' time I am going to worry about losing it. What I will do is modify what I do - I won't give up, it's a problem with older people – they give up'
Paul

Mrs Pritchard's story illustrates the impact that even small freedoms have on a person's quality of life, she is a 38 year old woman with a condition which means she is unable to leave the house; 'to have a bit of life outside the home even if it is just travelling up to Tesco's for a pint of milk and freedom!'. The importance of this freedom was illustrated by the 'cost' she was prepared to pay in order to have it: 'I would rather go out for an hour and be in agony for the rest of the day....but I have got out'. For Mrs Pritchard independence wasn't defined as doing everything for herself. She fully accepted that she would need a mobility scooter and support from a carer when she was out and about in her community, and welcomed this support as an enabler in helping her live the life of her choice.

Who I am

Interviewees talked about how their individual life stories and self-identity informs how they respond to external events in their life. This was especially relevant to this group of people, a number of whom had experienced significant ill health and the loss of a loved one. At these times how a person perceives themselves is an important determinant on whether they are able to recover and find their way back to a 'good life'. Paul spoke eloquently about his own, ongoing, journey through grief after losing his wife to cancer, he perceives himself as a powerful man, determined to carry on whatever the

circumstances, this is largely informed by his long career in the army: 'Military training means I am not programmed to give up.' He believes his motivation and determination have played a key role in getting him through his grief, 'As regards to loving my wife I have not changed but I know I have to do more and keep living'.

Mrs Knight talked about her challenging childhood defined by her mother dying in childbirth when Mrs Knight was just 8 years old, leaving her and her elder sister to care for her younger brothers and manage the house. She describes this as a terrible life, with little care. These formative experiences inform what Mrs Knight values; she prides herself on being self-sufficient, not relying on others to provide support. Mrs Knight lost her husband of 54 years four years ago, this was a very hard time for her; as she also lost her sister in the same year. Mrs Knight says that when her husband died she could have died too. Because of how Mrs Knight sees herself she wouldn't ask for help or go to her GP at this time even though she was very low, she believed she was ultimately responsible for pulling herself through this, saying 'I sat down and had a chat with myself and said get up and get on.'

Conversely, Mr Taylor used his optimistic disposition to inform his response to adverse events:



'I always look forward to the future, I said to my brother in law we have to make a pact to live to 100.....I have always been optimistic.....I do have trouble with me lungs and there is nothing they can do for me, when the consultant told me this I said 'I got to get on with it', I would like to get rid of things that are wrong with me but I can't so I have to live with it'

'To Do' Lists, full diaries and daily routines

Interviewees talked about their daily and weekly routines, which included regular activities and tasks. As Mr Taylor illustrates, these would often be highly structured:



'I am usually up by 4.30am then I go and walk up to get my papers at 7.30am and I see my friends and my cousin who I like to tease. On Tuesday and Thursdays I go across the road to get a cup of tea with my neighbours.....'

There are more to these routines than simply getting jobs done. They provide the scaffolding for a life, giving structure and a sense of purpose. For a number

of interviewees they enabled them to cope with life's changes. Amanda describes this well when talking about the death of her mother:



'When my mother died there was nothing and my calendar was empty, so I decided I was going to join everything and I did ...I didn't like an empty space ahead of me – I had to do something, I wasn't that type of person who sits and does nothing...I [still] like to have things in the diary, for example this week I am meeting a friend for fish and chips for tea., nothing of great importance.....I get on and do things – it's my way of coping.'

Self-constructed routines and activities are tools that can be used to motivate people so they can keep moving forward, when external motivators, such as work, child rearing and caring for others have disappeared. As Paul describes, the alternative is that a person stops living:



'As you get older it is a lot easier to say 'sod it' – it happens to well-motivated people it's like you go through life at 100mph then get old, something big happens and in a matter of months you are down to 15mph, but it is not the way to do it – switching off'

Close Friends and Family

What people wanted in terms of friendships depended on their personal preferences. Some interviewees talked about large networks of friendships which spanned generations. For some, like Elizabeth, friends were not important:



'I am not the friendliest person in the world, I don't go around chatting to people, if something comes up I go along with it but I don't have to have a best friend.'

For others like Mrs Knight and Amanda they didn't want to create a reliance on friends, preferring to protect their independence and privacy.

Family often played the most significant role in people's lives. There is a mutuality to these relationships which makes giving and receiving support acceptable and easy. Janice and Mrs Smyth are a good example of this, they receive support with things like shopping and both share a house with their grown-up children, they are also able to give support, for example Janice helps her 83 year old sister in law on a weekly basis and Mrs Smyth provides after school care to her great grandchildren. Both women feel that this family back up enables them to be confident in living their life, Janice claiming she 'feels strong with having her family there as back up', whilst Mrs Smyth claims that 'family help me cope'

The intergenerational aspect of family life was also valued. Mrs Knight liked the fact her granddaughter confided in her about her love life which she didn't profess to understand and would talk football with her grandsons, who stated that she knows more about Arsenal than they do.

Everyday interactions with everyday people in everyday places

What came out as significant in all the interviews was the importance of everyday interactions within the community. These provided people with an accessible and valued social connection as Mr Taylor illustrates:



'I belong to the British legion but I can't get down there anymore - which doesn't bother me. I am very happy with my friends and neighbours so I wouldn't want to join any clubs.'

These connections work because they are easy to come by and easy to maintain, requiring minimal effort from the person. They were often centred around an activity that is part of a person's daily life, examples include going to the local paper shop, having a neighbour pop around for 'a brew', going to the supermarket and getting to know the cashiers and chatting to the taxi driver.

These interactions could be built upon to create fuller relationships, for example Janice has met friends whilst dog walking who now come to bingo with her, she also takes the bus from Ludgershall to Tidworth each week and has become friends with the other regular passengers who all go for a coffee before doing their shopping. They could also be called upon when times were more challenging which Amanda experienced when she was ill:



'I could turn to people, if you find you might need help you would be surprised who comes. I have recently been ill and two ladies from around the corner came tapping on the window asking to help.'

She also described the lady next door as 'a guardian angel' at this time... 'she didn't say a word but every week took the dustbin out. She found something that would help and just did it.'

However, these everyday interactions didn't need to be developed to be meaningful, and some interviewees actively avoided deepening the everyday connections. This relates back to who a person was and the life experiences they had had. A good example was Mrs Smyth, she describes herself as never being a joiner and there was no reason why this should change just because she was older:



'Nothing stopping me going to the bingo but I don't want that sort of thing - I don't want that, never liked the wives club; someone knocking on my door for a coffee, and feeling like you have to entertain them.'

She provided a great explanation of what these small social interactions meant by explaining the support and friendship she gets from shopping at the local Co-Op:



'Camaraderie that's the sort of community spirit I like - you don't want forced friends, you want natural, easy friendships.'

The importance of this was shown by her willingness to spend more to maintain these relationships:



'People say why don't we go to the big Tesco's but me and my daughter like the Co-Op, you pay a bit more but we know all the people in there, we can have a chat.'

She also valued her trip to the local hairdresser for the same social reasons:



'I go to my local hairdresser and nail bar, all the girls know me and I feel I could sit there and take my time. My hairdresser knows everybody, I go quite regularly. That to me is community spirit, that's how you want it.'

Creating Connections

Interviewees talked about how they promoted social connections within their own community, which often only require small interventions.

A great example of this is the pivotal role Mr Taylor plays in his community, a combination of his own nature and his pride in his local neighbourhood means he wants people to feel welcome and supported. He does this through small everyday actions, which in turn are appreciated and reciprocated:

'Wednesday when the bin men come I put about 5 people's bins in, people are very grateful for this, my neighbour always gives me cheese at Christmas, and that very nice lass who is new to the area she has given me some biscuits, her children always say hello, I have seen a lot of people come and go and I always try to make new people welcome, I like to be able to help. In the morning if my curtains are closed my neighbour will come and knock on the door and the other day I fell asleep in my chair and missed going up the shop so the lady at the shop sent someone down to check on me.'



Mr Taylor's actions, although seemingly small, bring his community together, and create a welcoming and friendly atmosphere, in return he is supported and able to remain in the neighbourhood he loves, requiring little external assistance despite being 87 years old with complex health conditions.

Amanda also gave a lovely example of an engineered situation which started people connecting:

'I used to attend a church and went for some time and nobody ever spoke to me, everyone just walked in a line in and out of the service, I met the priest who asked how I was getting on and I said 'no one spoke to me' - So we came up with the idea of someone handing out hymn books this starts interaction; people have to say thank you and good morning – all it was is that you gave a hymn book and you could start a conversation.'



What makes a place work?

The physical spaces where these interactions took place were on the streets people lived in and in the shops, churches, pubs and cafes of their local town. These spaces provided vitally important points of connections in a community.

A good example is the local pub, which still exists in most communities. The pub can be the hub of a community, bringing together different members who are then able to connect. An excellent example of this is The Hub, based at The Swan in Enford and founded by Diane Christie-Rundle. This café is run every week and attracts members from all parts of the community, young and old, with reciprocal relationships being established. It enables people to come together and be welcomed and welcoming. It is extremely successful and popular because of this. Mr and Mrs Davis also talked about their pub in Ludgershall;

'The pub landlord and lady are very welcoming, they always chat and they run things throughout the year, like a carol service at Christmas with free mince pies.'



They were made to feel welcome on day one and go for an older people's lunch every Thursday, meeting new people and making friendships. They contrast this to their old village pub:

'Over the years in the village the pub turned into a restaurant and we didn't know anyone there anymore.'



When everyday interactions break

These everyday connections proved vital in supporting people to maintain their wellbeing. They can be broken by big acts such as the loss of a loved one, which can isolate someone as they find themselves having to rebuild their life and re-establish their purpose.

'The big problem is not feeling useful and wanted. I was a captain, in my military career, I killed people, I was in charge of people, I trained people and then all of a sudden the door shut and no one called, no one talked to me and that was it. Hard to be someone who is powerful, has the power, got your job, got your abilities and your control - to have nothing. went through a long period of feeling bloody useless.'

Paul



These connections can also be eroded through small incremental changes. Examples include Mrs Smyth who used to be out every day, as lived closer to town, but now is unable to walk into the town as there is a hill. This separated her from her community, and she expressed how she missed these small interactions; 'miss gossiping with people in the community –it was just nosiness!'. Amanda also found herself disconnected to her community, just by not being visible to people in her street: 'I used to know people better when I was working in the garden'.

We know what is going on – we don't need more leaflets or websites

The interviewees contradicted the idea that people didn't know what was available to them in their community. They presented themselves as incredibly resourceful; they knew what was available and felt that there were ample opportunities to take part in activities.

'In terms of a social life there is plenty to do, I can walk down to the club, go for a meal...if I want company I will go out, there are over 50 clubs I could join. I could sit here and be an alcoholic but I make myself do things..... I have lots of interests. no need to sit here moping I can go and do it.'

Paul



Accessing community support, therefore, wasn't down to lack of knowledge, the story was more complex and related to how a person perceived themselves based on life experiences and preferences, what they valued, their desire to maintain their independence and how they felt mentally and emotionally.

What makes for good community support?

Stories from the community groups show how the natural supports offered by family, friends and the wider community could be enhanced through group attendance, with some community groups having a powerful and positive impact on a person's life. There are certain factors identified that contributed to the success of a community group.

1. Reaching out to people

Some of the people interviewed had found themselves at a point where they didn't know how to move on and had become 'stuck'. Interviewees talked of changes such as loss of a loved one, illness, aging and negative views of themselves that contributed to this. Community groups who were able to be proactive and reach out to people were able to support this person to find new social connections and new ways in which to grow their confidence.

Joanne is a great example of this. She had become isolated due to her husband's ill health. She describes that she was starting to slide down, with feelings of loneliness. One phone call changed this: someone from the church asked Joanne whether she would like to contribute to a project knitting squares for blankets to help raise money for the church. Joanne started meeting people through this project and through discovering people with similar interests she decided to start a local craft group. Joanne says that if the blankets haven't had happened she doesn't know where she would be, and is amazed at how things have grown, she feels the lady who called her started a chain reaction of kindness as now Joanne has gone on to help others get involved. As Joanne remarks herself; out of little acorns grow big trees.

2. A community within a community

Showoff Dance is a local community dance company, running a range of classes for people young and old which include a summer camp and an end of year show. It is an excellent example of providing a community for its members, who describe it as a home away from home. Brenda, a group member, explained how being part of Showoff Dance had really changed her

life. Before she joined she didn't like to leave the house as she was overweight and didn't like to be seen, because of this she was lonely. She met Liam (the Showoff Dance leader) at a community event and he actively encouraged her to give dance a go. She has now been part of the group for 5 years. She describes being part of the group makes her feel like she fits somewhere.

Tidworth Titans Inline Hockey Group has the shared interest of hockey, but group members come from a variety of backgrounds. Again they pride themselves in creating a welcoming atmosphere for all new members, with people being genuinely interested in each other. The vice-captain explains how this community/ team spirit is used to support members 'It was one lad's birthday and we didn't even know him that well so his wife invited us around and we all dived up to his house, as a big group of lads it was nice to do that for his birthday'

Tidworth and Ludgershall Men's Shed, is a group of men who use their skills to help with community projects. It works two ways; supporting its members by giving them a social setting and a support network and helping the wider community with its projects. They too operate as a community, able to be called upon to support members. For example, recently one member developed deep vein thrombosis, and hasn't been able to keep his allotment tidy over the last couple of months, so the shedders descended on mass to give it a tidy up so that he wouldn't lose his plot, whilst he recovers.

3. Skills and interests - giving people something to do!

Community groups work best when they can positively contribute to someone's identity. This can happen really well when group members share a common interest and skill, examples include dance, art and crafts, sports and DIY skills. They don't work as well when the only point of connection is a shared characteristic such as age or disability.

Mrs Smyth gives a good explanation of why a group that was set up as a coffee morning for older people wouldn't be attractive to her.

'I don't want to be just with older people, don't want to be tarred with the same brush, I get more from my grandchildren, don't want to be told you are old and you have to intermingle with people.'



Mrs Smyth had nothing in common with this group of people, and the group didn't provide a shared activity or interest in which to bring people together. Mrs Smyth did attend once, but found that it wasn't welcoming.

'I went to the coffee morning but everyone was sat in their little cliques and people who were sat on their own weren't being included.'



Groups that were based on this approach could work if they provided a positive friendly atmosphere – such as the over 60's club in Tidworth whose leaders had boundless energy and enthusiasm. However, even in this positive setting members could become dependent and one group member felt that there was an expectation for people to 'give up' and expect things done for them.

4. Everyone Welcome!

For places like the hub in Enford a key attraction is that it brings all people together. People interviewed enjoyed mixing with all age groups, it gave them energy and a different perspective. Amanda values the opportunity to mix with the younger population of Tidworth through one of the WI she attends:

'I started going to the WI with my grandmother, and now attend two, Shipton which is over 60's and Tidworth are very young, which is brill, I am the 'grand old lady of the WI', we do lots of things, cooking and crafting, we made bracelets. I enjoy the young company and the mix of civilian and army.'



Showoff Dance is also inclusive and incredibly welcoming and supportive of all its members. One lady joined who had several health conditions, so isn't able to always do what everyone else does:

'I had been to other dance classes where this rules you out but Liam just finds another way, before this class spent a lot of time in my flat on my own but have really come out of my shell, and have gained loads of confidence.'



Other examples included the Tidworth Walking Netball Club, who had adapted their sessions to include a woman who had had a stroke.

5. Community Spirit

The groups taking part in this project had a strong sense of social purpose and community spirit, wishing to be inclusive and help build a positive community. Every club and group has the ability to be inclusive. Even the inline hockey group, which is a niche sport, were open to welcoming people with disability. Mike, the chairman, talked about how the team isn't just the players on the pitch and that there was potential for anyone to be part of it.

With this community spirit groups were able to make real and lasting changes to the people who lived in their community; The Men's Shed was asked to help an Army veteran who was suffering with PTSD. One of his problems was that his pet Staffie continually escaped from his garden because of a dilapidated fence. The result of this was that his dog was taken away. The next door neighbour had also volunteered to pay for the job in full. The veteran had a number of problems, one of them was that he had begun to drink heavily to deal with losing his dog. The fence was put up, and the man was able to get his dog back, he had also given up alcohol. The impact of this is neatly summed up by a member of the Men's Shed: 'It appears that as soon as he realised that there were people on his side he was able to take the next step.'

What Next

This project shows that a recipe for a good life is simple:

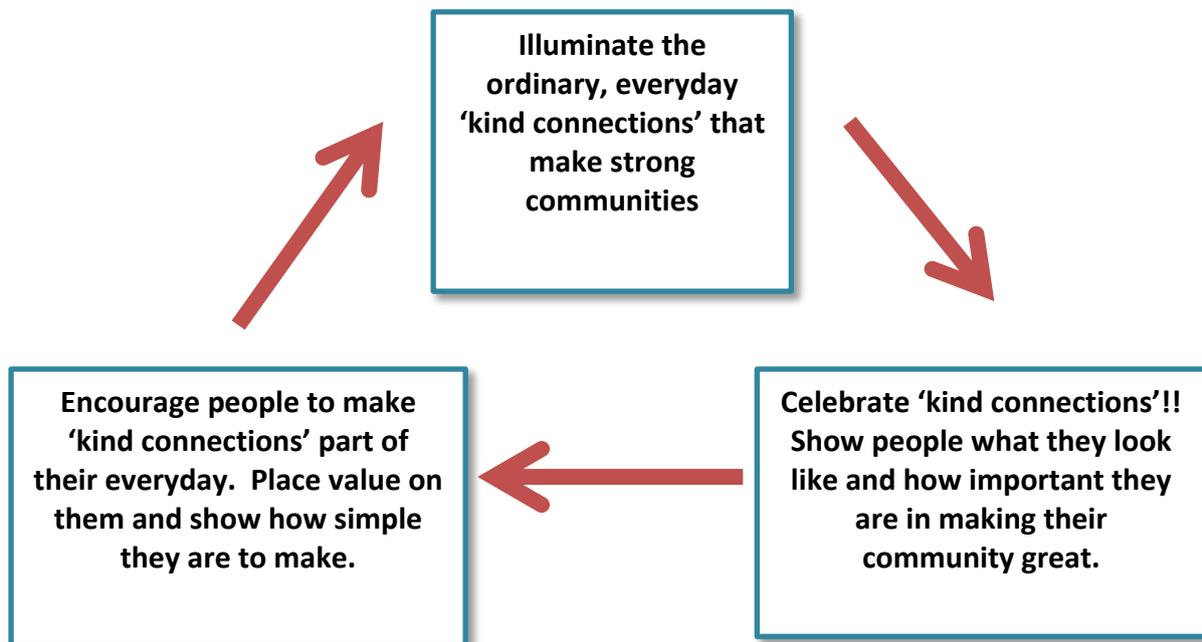
- freedom and independence
- a sense of purpose and meaning
- everyday connections with people in your community

It also shows that every member of the community can contribute in some way to ensuring that everyone is able to have a good life of their choosing. People just need to take notice of each other, make small actions to make others feel 'seen' and valued and encourage the contribution of all community members. The connections don't cost anything as they already exist and even small interactions are shown to have real value in making people feel more accepted and less lonely. This can have a positive effect on all community members' wellbeing and is of particular importance to people who may find themselves isolated due to age and disability, which will include mental health issues, physical and learning disability as well as sensory issues.

The intention with this work is to create a **whole community movement for change**. The key themes identified in this report will be translated into a graphic which will be used in a social media campaign (using #goodlife and #makesomeonewelcome) and as part of a roadshow, illustrating how easy it is to make communities kind and how everyone can play their part.

We want to grow kind communities by identifying the excellent examples of everyday kindness, celebrating and promoting it and encouraging others to take part. This can be done in cycles, with regular opportunities to celebrate and promote the kindness within the community.

Tidworth Community Area Good Life Project Growing your community using the 'kind connection' cycle



The Good Life Roadshow

Growing TCA into the Kindness Capital of Wiltshire

We have created a graphic to illustrate what we have found in TCA. We want to use this graphic in conversations with all local people:

- Your community is really great, full of people supporting each other
- Sometimes things 'break' for people. This can be for 1000's of reasons here are a few: they become ill, they have just moved here, they care for someone, a loved one dies. This is when people need reaching out to.
- Everyone has something to give, everyone wants something to get up for in the morning. When things break people can lose this sense of purpose and that makes life really tough
- It's easy to be kind, to support people so they once again feel part of their community and have a purpose. (And what is really great is that this then gives you a real 'buzz' in return!)

Now you know this.....

What commitment can you make to contribute to TCA being the Kindness Capital of Wiltshire?

Examples we have found can be MASSIVE – starting a new community group to SMALL saying hello at the bus stop, sending a neighbour a Christmas card, taking someone's bins out, checking in on a friend.

Important to remember:

All have REAL value and all make a contribution to TCA being the Kindness Capital of Wiltshire!

The TCA Kindness award

We will be recognising and showing our appreciation for the people identified in this project as people who make kind connections with others. By highlighting and appreciating what is good we hope that people will renew their efforts to continue to act in this way and encourage others to do so.

Award Winners to include:

- Mr Taylor(interviewee)
- Paul (interviewee)
- The Co-Op, Ludgershall

- The local corner shop – Pernham Down
- Hairdressers in Ludgershall
- The Queens Head Ludgershall
- The Swan and the Hub in Enford (including its organisers)
- Ann at the Over 60's Club
- Mike at the Tidworth Titan's Inline Hockey Club
- Liam and Bernie at Showoff Dance

We will also share within our national networks, to influence change on a wider scale e.g:

- Think Local, Act Personal Building Community Capacity group
- Local Area Co-ordination Network
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation/ Carnegie Trust authors of the Kindness report
- Asset Based Community Development Network

#MakeSomeoneWelcome

We will continue to use the Make Someone Welcome Campaign to encourage a culture of positive inclusion amongst community groups in TCA.

Working with professionals

We will work with professionals who support people in the community to identify ways in which their practice can be adapted to best support people to live a good life:

Working in communities

- Fostering kindness through identifying and promoting simple acts that reinforce this
- Working with what's there and valuing the unseen work already taking place in communities
- Improving accessibility in places where people can naturally meet and build connections e.g. dog walking, bus journeys – people will do the rest
- Celebrating, supporting and publicising community groups that are already reaching out to people and being inclusive
- Acknowledging that this is a movement for change and a professional's role isn't to control it but encourage and facilitate

Working with individuals

- Providing support in the context of people's life, taking into account their strength, skills and outlook on life
- Positively exploring what people have already, shedding light on the 'taken for granted' relationships that make up the everyday and then building on this foundation.
- Supporting people to maintain and grow their naturally occurring relationships. e.g. trips to the local shops, hairdresser visits, phone calls with grandchildren
- Working with the person to identify new connections that would have meaning to a person, e.g. mentoring a young person to pass knowledge down, and setting up a knitting group.
- Identifying and working with people at point of crisis, helping them find meaningful ways to navigate themselves forward.

