



Community Matters Summary

Contents

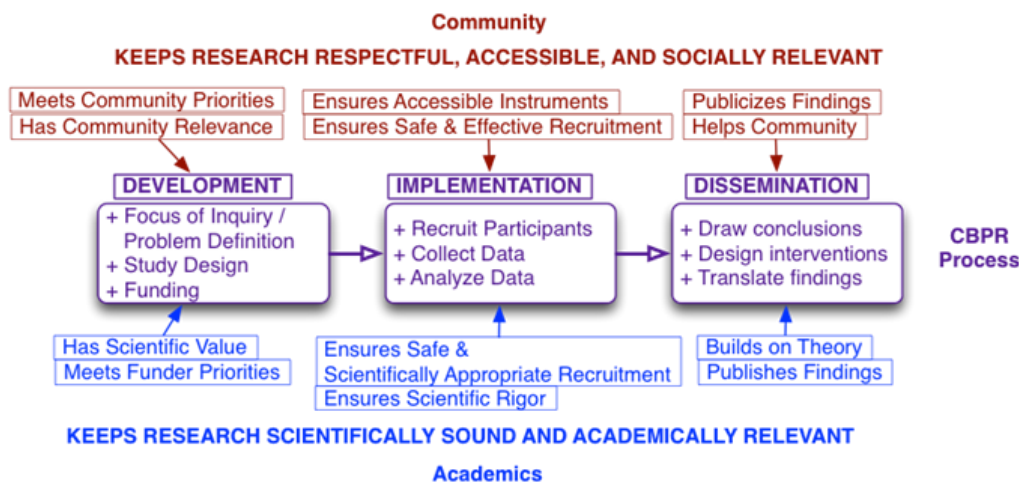
Background and context	2
The application process	5
Project timeline.....	6
Five projects funded	1
Black Families Education Support Group: How do young people who attend supplementary school contribute to the community?.....	1
Creativity Works: Being Creative: A research project that explores the impact of arts-based peer-led support groups.....	3
Transition Larkhall: How do parents take their children to school and why do they choose to travel that way?	4
Triumph over Phobia: Investigating the factors that affect whether people with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) seek therapy or not.....	6
Wansdyke Play: In what way does Wansdyke Play Association's (WPA's) Outdoor, Outreach Play Services impact on the alleviation of play deprivation across the Somer Valley communities?.....	7
What was achieved?	9
References	11

Background and context

In 2016, the University of Bath's Public Engagement Unit partnered with the South West Foundation to conduct 'Community Matters', a pilot programme of community-based participatory research. The Community Matters pilot involved small SEED funding for five voluntary organisations in Bath and North East Somerset (BANES) to undertake a Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) project of their choice, in partnership with university researchers.

Many individual researchers at the University of Bath conduct research in and with local communities and have been doing so for some time. This is the first time, however, that the University of Bath, at an institutional level, has supported a research partnership with local community organisations. The impetus for this has come from several directions including the University's commitment to the NCCPE Manifesto regarding public engagement and the Public Engagement Unit's recognition that CBPR was missing from the portfolio of work supported since 2012; the University's 50th anniversary celebrations which had a strong focus on engagement with communities in the BANES region; and the strategic benefits of placing the University at the forefront of developing responsible and engaged research practice in the United Kingdom.

The Community Matters project proposal explicitly describes the proposed research programme as Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR). The CBPR approach sits alongside a number of longstanding traditions for conducting collaborative research in and /or with communities including responsible innovation and public engagement through to participatory action research (Facer & Enright, 2016). These traditions have distinct foundations. Some are concerned with improving the quality of research; within this frame communities are regarded as valuable resources for the production and validation of knowledge (Martin, 2010; Ostrom, 1996; Owen et al., 2013; Stephens, Ryan-Collins, & Boyle, 2008). Others are concerned with questions of equity and democracy and the right of communities to produce knowledge; here the emphasis is on partnership and empowerment (Benneworth, Charles, Conway, & Younger, 2009; Benneworth & Jongbloed, 2010; Brydon-Miller, 1997; Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014; Cook & Nation, 2016; Hart & Wolff, 2006; Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). The Community Matters conceptualisation of CBPR appears to straddle both. This rests on the assumption that collaboration (or partnership) between academics and non-academics fosters knowledge exchange and co-production to the benefit of all involved. Thus, the input of non-academics is regarded as valuable to keeping the research socially relevant and accessible, whilst the involvement of academics ensures that the research is scientifically sound and academically relevant.



Source: Academic Autistic Spectrum Partnership in Research and Education - <http://aaspire.org/?p=about&c=cbpr>

Advocates of this broad conceptualisation of CBPR and more general efforts to involve community in the co-production of knowledge, propose a few normative beliefs. These include (a) the research should not reproduce knowledge hierarchies of the expert versus the layperson; (b) the integrity of the research process should be protected; and (c) the research should be relevant and have useful outcomes (Durose, Beebejaun, Rees, Richardson, & Richardson, 2011; Martin, 2010). Thus, a central tenet of CBPR is the importance of co-creating a shared project based on the identification of shared values and goals, whilst recognizing and respecting the values and interests entailed in the distinct identities. The Community Matters Programme was carefully designed to facilitate these processes. Critical to this was partnering with the South West Foundation in the design and implementation of the programme.

Community partner - South West Foundation (SWF)

The South West Foundation (as of Jan 2020 [South West Community Matters](#)) is a charity that has community empowerment through research as a core value. The SWF has been running community researcher training since 2007, in some of the most deprived communities in the South West Region. It has trained over 400 community members, both individuals and members of 'under the radar' community groups, to undertake research and communicate research findings to key influencers. This research has contributed to increased activities and community resources (e.g. the development of play facilities and activities for young people; the establishment of community shops and community hubs; and the rescuing of land for community use). The partnership with the University of Bath is the first time that the SWF has worked in collaboration with a university on the CBPR model and brought their experience from community research into the academic environment.

Partnering with the South West Foundation was seen to confer several benefits. First, the SWF had the ability to reach local & community groups who the University would not normally collaborate with and in so doing extend the University's research and relationships. Second, the SWF had expertise in the delivery of research training to community organisations and

in the translation of research findings into local influence. Third, the SWF had trust and influence within the community and so was in a position to broker and manage relationships between the University and community organisations.

Funding

At the commencement of the Community Matters programme, a grant pot totalling £15,000 was made available to voluntary and community sector organisations across BANES. Organisations were invited to apply for a support grant of up to £3,000 to design and deliver their own locally relevant CBPR project. The grants awarded varied between £1,623 and £3000; and were for the purposes of material costs, travel costs, venue costs, additional staff time, and publicity costs. At the end of the programme, all five organisations applied for and received an additional £600 for impact activities.

At the end of the programme, the entire costs totalled £30,600. Of this, £25,600 was invested by the Public Engagement Unit over 3 years and £15,000 was provided in grants direct to the community organisations. It is important to note that some of the costs associated with this pilot programme were not (and possibly could not) have been anticipated at the start. The Public Engagement Unit was in the fortunate position to have flexibility in their budget and so were able to respond to emerging opportunities and needs. The Public Engagement Unit committed £10,000 from its 2015/16 budget: This included a first instalment of £6000 in grants for the organisations, £2,700 for event & training costs, and £1200 in grant management costs paid to South West Foundation. From its 2016/17 budget, the Public Engagement Unit committed £9600, including £6000 for the 2nd instalment of grants, £2,500 for South West Foundation services and £1,100 for training and events. From its 2017/18 budget, the Public Engagement Unit committed £6000 comprising £3000 (£600 per organisation) for follow up, practical projects designed to extend the impact from the research and £3000 for devising a community research toolkit for use by University of Bath researchers. In addition to the above costs, £5000 was provided by the Bath@50 project which was used for the showcase event at the Guildhall.

The application process

The University's Public Engagement Unit and the South West Foundation developed an agreed set of criteria for the recruitment of community organisations and disseminated, through their networks, a call for applications (see Appendix B: FINAL Criteria Community Matters.pdf). The decision to have community groups bid for funds to answer questions of their choosing was taken to ensure that the community groups were setting the direction from the outset. As part of the call, interested community organisations were encouraged to seek assistance from the South West Foundation in the development of their proposals.

The review panel comprised: Dr Jan Crawley (CEO, South West Foundation), Dr John Troyer (academic champion for Community Matters), Mr Ben Hutchinson (Trusts & Foundations Manager), Dr Helen Featherstone and Mr Ed Stevens (Public Engagement Unit). The key considerations in selecting community organisations were as follows:

1. The community organisations needed to have a research topic that matched one or more of the University's broad research areas.
2. The community organisations needed to demonstrate in their application a commitment to work in partnership with their allocated University researcher and to play an active role in the research process. It was expected that at least one representative of participating groups would attend each of the activity days including planning, training and presentations.
3. The final selection depended on the ability to match research topics with researchers at the University of Bath who had expressed an interest in being involved and who were prepared to make a time commitment both to their community organisation and to wider Community Matters activities (i.e., planning, training and presentation days).

Note: The South West Foundation typically works with 'under-the-radar' groups with incomes of less £10,000 per year and staffed primarily by volunteers. These groups often have difficulty taking advantage of funding calls and so it was decided to not be prescriptive about size.

Pairing with academic researchers:

The programme proposal suggested targeting early career researchers and / or prize fellows from departments across the University for involvement in the programme. Whilst interdisciplinarity was not mandated it was encouraged to overcome what was perceived as the historical siloing of community research within disciplines. The expectation was that the projects would give researchers real-life experience of managing collaborations; experience that would be transferable to future projects whether these involved collaborations with



UNIVERSITY OF BATH

Study | Research | Faculties & Departments | Business | About

SEARCH BOX

Research

Unique research collaboration to benefit grassroots community organisations

Voluntary and community organisations based in Bath & North East Somerset are being invited to apply to take part in a unique collaborative research programme with researchers from our University and South West Foundation that could help benefit their local area.

Applications for projects – which could range from anything from the redesign of a local community space to a drive to increase volunteering – will see community groups working alongside academics in the design and delivery of locally-relevant research, to developing their own research capabilities.

The Community Matters Programme has been developed by the University's Public Engagement Unit in part to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the University. It will offer successful applicants the opportunity to take part in a 6-day community-researcher training programme at the start of the summer before the actual research takes place from autumn 2016.

In addition to the opportunity to partner with researchers from right across the University, there is a grant of up to £3,000 available to help organisations with research-related costs.

Dr Helen Featherstone, Head of the Public Engagement at the University explained: "The Community Matters Programme is a truly unique research collaboration through which local organisations can not only tap into funding but also combine their own knowledge and expertise with that of academics to help shape their research projects."

"This might range from anything from exploring why a particular public space is underused – perhaps drawing on expertise in architecture and design from the University – to investigating how to encourage people to get more active – which could involve researchers from the University's Department for Health. By bringing together academics with community organisations in this way we are hoping to see innovative collaborative projects."

Chief Executive at South West Foundation, Jan Crawley, added: "With just over a month to go, I would actively encourage all local organisations in the area to consider applying to take part in the Community Matters Programme. By working together and researching an issue alongside academics from the University, there are really exciting potentials in this initiative."

• To find out more and apply to take part, please contact Jan Crawley at South West Foundation via j.crawley@southwestfoundation.org.uk or Ed Stevens from the Public Engagement Team E.Stevens@bath.ac.uk.

• Deadline to apply, Friday 11 March.

other researchers or with other non-academic partners. Moreover, by building a cohort approach across the programme, researchers would have the opportunity to make links with like-minded colleagues that could lead to interdisciplinary research collaborations in the future.

Anticipated outcomes of involvement

The programme proposal articulated the expected outcomes of benefits for participation in the programme for both community group participants and for academic researchers. Specifically, the suggested benefits for community organisations were to:

- Receive training in research so that they are empowered to undertake their own research in the future;
- Identify and tackle local issues / priorities relevant to their needs;
- Bridge gaps in understanding, knowledge and trust with the University;
- Influence key local stakeholders to bring about change;
- Build sustainable relationships with researchers / departments;
- Access specialist resources, training, and opportunities;
- Have a say in research, rather than having research done on or about them.

...for academic researchers, the suggested benefits were to:

- Gain first-hand experience of managing a CBPR project and all that is associated with this (e.g. project and people management), within a supportive environment;
- Undertake applied research that builds on theory and that has significant local impact;
- Attend a range of professional development sessions and draw on the support of both individuals (e.g. the academic champion, the Public Engagement Unit) and resources throughout the programme;
- Collect higher quality and more useful data through the efficacy of local networks;
- Develop their experience of collaborative research and how to research effectively with 'under-the-radar' groups;
- Raise awareness of their research and its impact amongst local groups;
- Enhance their mandate for turning research findings into action;
- Publish, either in relation to the CBPR process itself or the research project;
- Experience how to translate their research for differing groups;
- Develop research networks for the future;
- Use their research project as a pilot to inform future, larger-scale research grant proposals

Project timeline

Before the research commenced, preparatory workshops were conducted with academic and community groups separately with the objective of helping each group to learn about the other and reflect on what might be some of the challenges in working together. Thus, academic researchers had the opportunity to attend three workshops designed to prepare them for working collaboratively with their community partners. Professor John Diamond conducted a workshop on CBPR as a framework for conducting research and the challenges

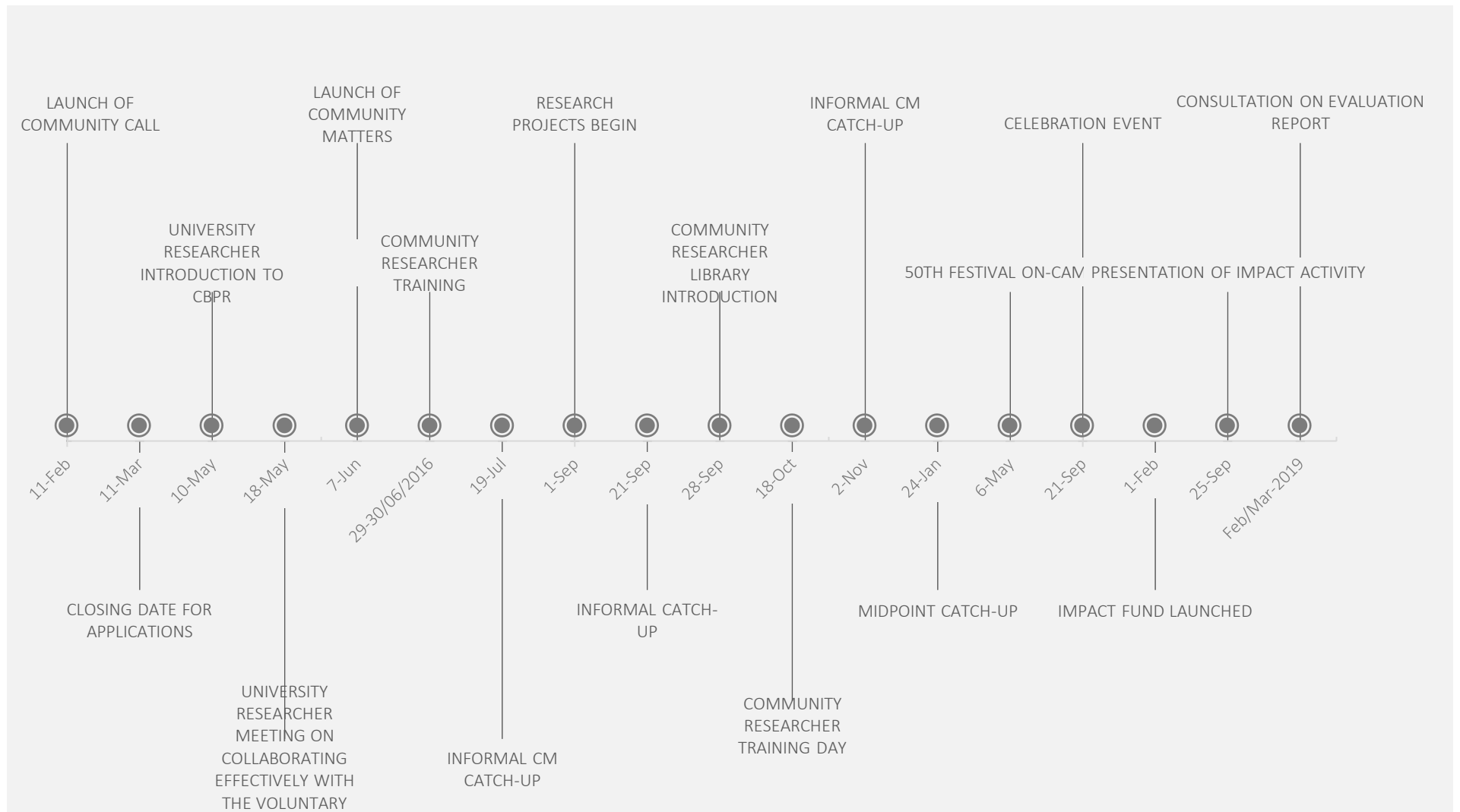
faced from an academic perspective. The South West Foundation conducted a version of their community research training and a workshop on the community sector and how to work effectively with community organisations. Here academics could learn about the funding context within which the community organisations are situated and how this might affect expectations and the ability to engage with the research. In addition, across the period of the programme some University researchers met informally to share their experiences and discuss issues of concern.

Running alongside the above programme of activities, members of voluntary and community sector organisations received training from South West Foundation. At the beginning of the programme this was focussed on understanding the academic context and on the development of research method skills and understanding (e.g., regarding ethical issues). The workshops evolved in response to the needs of the community researchers; for instance, training was provided in dissemination and communication of findings.

Mid-way through the programme, the academic and community researchers were again brought together for a one-day workshop. The morning session was an opportunity to share progress and experiences and to reflect on how to move forward. The afternoon session involved planning for the remainder of the project and a focus on mechanisms for the communication and dissemination of the research.

A celebration event was held in the Bath Guildhall on 21st September 2017. Each project team held a stall and gave a presentation on their research outcomes to an audience comprising those key figures in the community who groups wanted to influence. This was a well-attended event including the Mayor and councillors from BANES as well as policy makers, charities, community group members, and members of the public.

In the final stage, each community organisation applied for and received an additional impact grant. The grant provided funding for focused activities that maximized learning from research projects, or that helped create change for organizations and / or their beneficiaries by testing findings from research. The money was not for additional research and their projects did not re-engage with the academics for their activities.



Key events / activities

- 10th May 2016: Prof John Diamond and Katy Goldstraw (Edge Hill University) conduct a workshop on CBPR with university researchers. This workshop provides CBPR examples, and an opportunity to examine both the benefits to researchers and community and well as the challenges and dilemmas associated with CBPR.
- 18th May 2016: The South West Foundation and the Public Engagement Unit conduct a workshop with university researchers on community perspectives on how to conduct 'collaborative' research. This workshop provides contextual background for the voluntary and community sector and how this can affect partnership working.
- 7th June 2016: The Community Matters programme is launched at The Edge. Voluntary organisation members and university researchers get together over drinks and light snacks. The purpose is to provide an informal opportunity for all involved to meet one another and find out more about each other's motivations for involvement and their proposed projects.
- 29th and 30th June 2016: The South West Foundation delivers the first part of a package of training to support voluntary organisation members. This includes training in research skills and methods; understanding ethics in a community research setting; and contextual background on the university sector and how this can affect partnership working.
- 28th September 2016: Peter Bradley (Social & Policy Sciences librarian) gives Visiting Research Fellows an introductory session to the Library and e-resources.
- 18th October 2016: The South West Foundation provides community training at Southdown Methodist Church. Following consultation with community organisations the day includes facilitated discussions about each group's proposed research methods and challenges; and training by Jenny Wildblood and Leda Blackwood respectively on research methods and ethics.
- 24th January 2017: A mid-point catch-up of all community and academic researchers is held at The Edge. This provides an opportunity for projects to update each other on their progress; share experiences of the process; and discuss plans and a 'wish list' for the remainder of their projects.
- March 2017: Clarity CIC, a non-profit company working with social purpose organisations, provides community training on how to create attention grabbing, data rich, infographics.
- 8th May 2017: The South West Foundation conducts a workshop on data analysis for the community organisations. This provides a practical opportunity for community organisations to get support in understanding how best to analyse their data.
- 24th May 2017: Clarity CIC provides community training on generating and capturing social impact from community research.
- 21 September 2017: The Community Matters Celebration event is held at the Guildhall in Bath. Community and academic researchers showcased their research at an event involving participants from local communities as well as community authorities including BANES and major charity funders. The event provided an

opportunity to present project outcomes, illustrating the benefit of community collaborations for addressing local issues.

- February 2018: Impact fund is launched with 25 April deadline for applications (scheduled to complete by 31 August). The grant provided funding for focused activities that maximized learning from research projects, or that helped create change for organizations and / or their beneficiaries by testing findings from research. The money was NOT for additional research and community organisations were not required to re-engage with the academics for their activities.
- 25 September 2018: Community organisations presented results of their impact grants at a meeting with the South West Foundation and the Public Engagement Unit.
- April / May 2019: Draft evaluation presented to university and community partner organisations for comment.

Five projects funded

Thirteen proposals were received from which five organisations were funded: Black Families Education Support Group; Creativity Works; Transition Larkhall; Triumph over Phobia; and Wansdyke Play Association. According to the NCVO's annual Civil Society Almanac, one organisation was under-the radar (i.e., income less than £10k), two were small (i.e. income between £10k and £100k per year) and two were medium (income between £100k & £500k per year).

Black Families Education Support Group: How do young people who attend supplementary school contribute to the community?

www.educationequals.org.uk

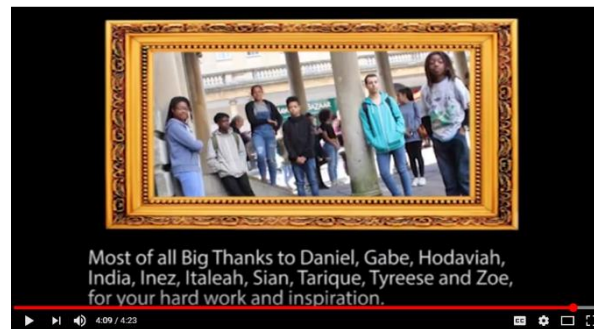
The Research Team: Jason Pegg (Manager), Mark De'Lisser and Emma Milsom (Supplementary School Co-ordinators) from Black Families Education Support Group; and Caroline Hickman (Department of Social & Policy Sciences) and Ioannis Costas Batlle (Department of Education) from University of Bath:

The Black Families Education Support Group is a Supplementary school operating in BANES. Supplementary schools are community-led, 'out of school' education programmes for Black and Minority Ethnic pupils. They offer a wide range of learning activities including core curriculum support, language classes, and cultural and other enrichment activities.

The BFESG's application arose from an established relationship with the University (e.g., providing placements) and was initially viewed as an opportunity to develop a more collaborative research partnership. The BFESG initially described their research objective as to better understand the impact of their programme on students' academic attainment in mainstream school and on students' development of 'character', identity and self-esteem.

This was considered important to improving their own provision and their ability to inform practice in the local education system. It was also hoped that the research would provide evidence for the value and impact of the school to share with key stakeholders.

In keeping with the participatory research principles, the BFESG staff and researchers discussed the initial focus of the project with the young people. After considering a range of questions and perspectives, the initial focus – to understand the impact of the Supplementary School on students' lives – changed. The young people wanted to pursue a different line of thinking; they were tired of being asked 'what does the Supplementary School do for you?' Instead, they wanted to explore 'what do we do for our community?' *The question the students wanted to explore was not what the school does for them, but rather, how young people such as themselves contribute to their community.*



The project used qualitative research methods and collected data through interviews with a small sample of participants (community members); a local authority equality officer, heritage officer, parent and former student. All the interviews were conducted and recorded by young people on film. The data was analysed using thematic analysis and the research findings are documented in a short film.

<https://youtu.be/5ltsxZJWFBc>

As an organisation we have developed new research skills and gained valuable experience which will allow us to continue to develop our organisation's approach to research and evaluation and support others to carry out their own research, whether this is: supporting young people to carry out research; mentoring other organisations thinking about research; or working to help develop the way we evaluate impact across our sector with funders and other stakeholders. (Jason Pegg, Manager, BFESG)

The Community Matters research highlighted a relatively hidden outcome of the Supplementary School – its role in supporting young people to have a positive impact in the local community. Based on the research, the BFESG decided to make supporting young people to become active citizens a specific aim of their Supplementary School. The follow-up grant was used for the purpose of running a sports week and residential trip as a part of a new Young Leaders' programme in support of the BFESG's new focus.

Creativity Works: Being Creative: A research project that explores the impact of arts-based peer-led support groups.

<http://www.creativityworks.org.uk/>

The Research Team: Tom Cook (Writing Space Volunteer and Group member), Lynda Tweedie (Creative Perspectives Volunteer and Group member), Oliver Jones (Director), and Philippa Forsey (Creative Wellbeing Manager) from Creativity Works; and Justin Rogers and Megan Robb (Department of Social Work), and Stefanie Gustafsson, (School of Management) from University of Bath.



Creativity Works provides a range of creative activities and courses for people living with mental health challenges or facing difficulties in their lives. It works from the premise that creativity can be empowering and life-changing. Creativity Works emerged from the Wansdyke Arts Council in the 1980s and the North East Somerset Arts in the 1990s. It has been operating in the BANES region in its current form since 2010.

The aim of the project was to collect evidence on the impact of creative peer-led support groups, to explore what influences their impact, and to find areas for improvement to ensure that they can continue to provide a quality service.

The Creativity Works application identified three broad objectives. First, ensuring that the creative and social practices they use are and continue to be cutting edge; second, providing participants ('experts with lived experience') with the skills to work alongside staff in evaluating the service; and third, clarifying the impact of the service and articulating this to commissioners, funders, and the wider community.

The research team decided to use creative methods combined with interviews in their research. Volunteers from Creative Perspectives (a visual art peer support group) asked peer group members to create a piece of work expressing what the group meant to them. Similarly, volunteers from Writing Space asked peer group members to produce a written piece of work. Volunteers then explored these creative works and the experience of participating in the peer groups through interviews with group members. This data was then analysed by the wider team; each of the art works and interviews was coded, and then together, the team identified key themes.



The research found that there were four aspects of the peer support groups that service users valued and considered important to the success of these groups. These were engaging in the creative process, establishing social connections, the creation of a valued space and place, and the promotion of self-empowerment.

The research has given us confidence in articulating the outcomes and benefits of supporting creative peer support groups and in how we work at Creativity Works supporting new ventures with other organisations and funders (Philippa Forsey, Creative Wellbeing Manager, CW)

The Creativity Works project members have produced a short film <https://vimeo.com/233988064> and a project report. They have also presented their findings at the Community Matters event; an International Conference on culture, health and wellbeing; and the Annual Qualitative Research Symposium at University of Bath. Creativity Works are continuing to work with their academic research partners; they are planning a podcast that explains the project and social work students are undertaking a research project with young people in the organisation.

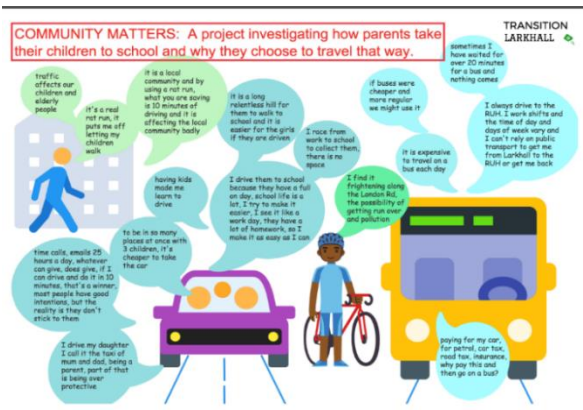
The follow-on grant was used to produce a toolkit which communicates the benefits of the peer support groups; this was designed to be used with both service users and potential funders and commissioners. Creativity Works have also been promoting the involvement of community members and service users in research, to their partner organisations. One of the changes they hope to see is community organisations producing reports on research in a language that is accessible to community members.

Transition Larkhall: How do parents take their children to school and why do they choose to travel that way?

<http://transitionlarkhall.uk/>

The Research Team: Joanna Wright, Ros Hough, Emma Hooper, Miranda Bonham Carter, and Bryn Jones from Transition Larkhall; and Ian Walker (Department of Psychology) from University of Bath; and Shannen Twomey, a film maker from Bath Spa University.

Transition Larkhall was formed in 2009; it is part of the Transition movement which works for a post-oil economy through local communities. Transition Larkhall aims to initiate and promote non-carbon and sustainable living for residents and businesses in and around the Lambridge ward of Bath.



The Transition Larkhall application had a clear outcome in mind; to identify the kinds of drivers who might switch from vehicles to less polluting forms of transport, and to identify the factors that might persuade them to change. By focussing on a particular group (parents transporting children to school) it was hoped that a clearly targeted communication strategy could be devised. Thus, the initial aim of the research was to explore the school run and how best to

encourage parents and children to use more sustainable forms of transport. In discussion with their academic research partner, this initial question was subsequently modified to: How do parents take their children to school and why do they choose to travel that way?

The project used a mixed-methods approach. First, school-related traffic was measured through counting cars both during school term times for schools in the area and outside of school term times. Data collection involved twenty volunteers over a total period of 126 hours. This was followed by 34 semi-structured interviews examining residents' experiences of living in Larkhall. In addition, two community meetings were held at the New Oriel Hall, Larkhall at which findings regarding the level of traffic were presented and community members were invited to comment.

Findings: The research found that traffic during term time was significantly higher than traffic outside term time and that residents perceive traffic and limited transport options to be an issue. Residents spoke of the lack of a reliable and frequent bus service on the East of Bath as a contributing factor to decisions to drive. The research also identified gaps in BANES Council's collection of data that could inform policy making on schooling-related transport.

The community benefits in Lambridge ward have been remarkable in that the interest generated by the research (and community involvement afterward the project was completed) in school transport, choices made by parents, and the associated environmental costs, raised awareness of local political issues to such an extent that Joanna decided to stand for Councillor, was elected, and is now Joint Cabinet Member for Transport Issues for B&NES. (Ros Hough, TL)

Information sheets and a short film have been produced and are hosted on the Transition Larkhall website.



<http://transitionlarkhall.uk/estimates/community-matters/>.

In addition, Dr Ian Walker and Dr Nick McCullen are conducting a related piece of work using real-time traffic data to estimate the impact of school terms and holidays on actual journey times within Bath.

The follow-up grant was used to develop an art installation communicating the research findings; this installation has been displayed in a number of visible locations across Bath including Milsom Place and Bath Fringe Arts and has attracted considerable local interest (<https://www.somersetlive.co.uk/news/bath-woman-collecting-25000-toy-1445391>).

On the strength of this research-led campaign, Joanna Wright was interviewed by Wera Hobhouse MP for the Political Slot on Channel4 (6th Dec 2018); selected as the Liberal Democrat candidate for Lambridge Ward in B&NES, which she won; and is now Joint Cabinet member for Transport in B&NES.

Triumph over Phobia: Investigating the factors that affect whether people with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) seek therapy or not.

<http://www.topuk.org/>

The Research Team: Trilby Breckman, National Director, TOP U.K; Fran Griffin, Trainee Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner, Wiltshire IAPT Service; and Rebecca Read and Paul Salkovskis, Department of Psychology, University of Bath.

TOP UK runs a network of self-help therapy groups across the UK for sufferers of phobias, OCD (obsessive compulsive disorder) and other related anxiety disorders. Triumph over Phobia developed their application with Prof Paul Salkovskis (University of Bath) who had previously acted as advisor to the charity. The outcomes they hoped for were: first, to better understand why people delay accessing help from TOP (and other agencies); second, to improve the evaluation and communication of the effectiveness of their service; and third, to strengthen the relationship with the University and develop further research ideas.

The researchers used questionnaires and interviews to gather data. Participants were recruited from TOP UK groups, anxiety conferences and via the University of Bath website. In total, 77 people with OCD and other anxiety problems participated; 29 were TOP members and 48 were non-TOP members. The results show that in general people who attend TOP UK groups are more satisfied with their treatment when compared with NHS treatments. The results also show that whilst most people prefer individual therapy, most TOP UK members were more positive towards group therapy.



Working with University of Bath and Professor Salkovskis as part of the Community Matters Project has enriched and inspired all those involved with the charity. The research has given a voice to the service users of TOP UK. Being heard is so important and can help shape the organisation's direction and policy. [Trilby Breckman, National Director, Triumph Over Phobia]

Following presentation of the research results at the Showcase event in September 2017, TOP were approached by a BANES commissioner and encouraged to join the commissioning process. The follow-up grant was used to create a brochure outlining the benefits of TOP's self-help therapy groups as an alternative to NHS services. This brochure is expected to be used extensively as TOP joins the local commissioning process.

Wansdyke Play: In what way does Wansdyke Play Association's (WPA's) Outdoor, Outreach Play Services impact on the alleviation of play deprivation across the Somer Valley communities?

<http://www.wpa-play.com/>

The Research Team: Stacey Pottinger (Business Development), Stuart Rouse (Play worker), and Will Whisstock (Play worker), from Wansdyke Play Association; and Cathy Randle-Phillips (Department of Psychology) and Anthony Bush, Jessica Francombe-Webb, and Thomas Curran (Department for Health) from University of Bath; and residents (parents/carers and children) living in an area of deprivation in the Somer Valley.

The Wansdyke Play Association was formed in 1993. It works across North East Somerset and Frome, providing free community play events as well as one-on-one family inclusion and play work in targeted areas of disadvantage and deprivation. The WPA's outreach play services aim to support children to be physically active and develop social, emotional and problem-solving skills.

The WPA's application identified three broad objectives. The first was achieving a deeper understanding of social isolation to strengthen existing services and better target potential

service users. The second was having ‘credible’ research that could be used with policy makers and funders. Finally, the third was providing voice to their service users through participation in the research.

The research investigated how families, children and play workers understand the benefits of play as well as the barriers to play. More specifically, the research was interested in how play can provide a valuable developmental opportunity for children in a deprived area and the role of Play Workers in facilitating this process. The research was conducted in Somer

Overcoming isolation via social interaction

By the end of the sessions the community had moved from low engagement amongst themselves to discussing how they might make changes to their own community.

“Dad joined in more and led Hockey game with rules set by the children and had at least 12 children playing.” “Some adults noticeably looking for support for themselves and struggling to actively engage with own children. Adults forming a group now – great for social support.” Week 8, Reflective Diary

“The community would like to take ownership over the park and inject a new life into it. Updated equipment, better surface and a bench or two.” Families were “Positively and more engaged with children and staff than have previously been. Building relationships with staff and other parents.” Weeks 9&10 Reflective Diary

Valley with children, parents / guardians and play workers participating in WPA activities. Particularly innovative was the use of ‘go along’ interviews with the young people whilst engaged in play; this was combined with exploring young peoples’ experiences of play through drawing, telling stories and role

plays as well as just talking and playing. In addition, observation of how outdoor spaces were being used were conducted before, during, and after the play intervention; questionnaires, interviews and focus groups were conducted with parents and guardians; and Play Workers kept reflective diaries in which they recorded their experiences and thoughts.

The research found that the WPA’s Outdoor, Outreach Play Services were able to help alleviate play deprivation in this particular Somer Valley community through providing an opportunity for outdoor, active play as well as craft activities which the children wouldn’t otherwise be able to access. Importantly, the play intervention was also found to strengthen relationships within families and within the local community. The barriers to play included both lack of properly managed facilities and spaces (e.g., being unable to access woodlands due to animal faeces) and perceived competition for public spaces (e.g., from older children and for activities such as alcohol and drug consumption).

“This really gives us an opportunity to have a voice out there because that’s one of the things that we’ve lost. We were trail blazers going back not even that long and then we’ve been so engulfed in local authority contracts. We’ve sort of lost that external voice, we’ve been very embedded in local authority.” (Stacey Pottinger, Business Development Officer, WPA)

WPA have produced two presentations for different audiences and a short film based on the conclusions <https://youtu.be/vj4w5AO4NAQ>. The follow-up grant was used to work with children to produce a comic strip leaflet about their experiences of play. This comic strip gives voice to children’s experiences and will be used in funding proposals and communications with stakeholders. The project team plan to produce a peer reviewed

academic article showcasing the project. WPA hope to have a blog or article published by Play England and/or other relevant stakeholders.

What was achieved?

Reflecting on the outcomes against what was anticipated (see p. 5 for full list of anticipated outcomes), the community organisations did receive training in research methods, the resources and opportunity to decide what was researched, and the opportunity to have voice in how the research was conducted. At the conclusion, community organisations reported greater confidence in directing and conducting their own research and some anticipated doing so in the future either alone or in collaboration with academic partners. For their part, academic researchers had the opportunity to learn about CBPR both through formal professional development events and hands-on experience, investigate new research questions and methods, increase their networks in the community and the university, and conduct applied research with local impact.

At the time of writing, members of four community partner organisations continue to have a relationship with the University of Bath, including through membership of departmental advisory bodies, contributions to teaching conducted in the University, hosting placement students in the community, and ongoing dissemination and development of research. As well as the hoped for outcomes of the programme, there have been some unexpected outcomes with some community researchers making substantial changes in their lives. One community researcher has taken up study, another has started a business, and another is now working for a different partner organisation following closure of her own organisation. Perhaps the most unexpected outcome is Joanna Wright from the Transition Larkhall project entering politics and now occupying the position of Joint Cabinet Member for Transport Issues in B&NES.

A fellow community researcher offered this reflection on what the program has meant to her:

I am very glad to have been a part of the research project - delighted when I see relevant changes, however small, being made in the community and by the bus companies, and also very proud of what Joanna has subsequently achieved. (C1)

What remains to be seen is the extent to which relationships are sustained beyond the Community Matters programme and the research itself informs local change and future publications and research. The following section provides a summary of the tangible outputs of the Community Matter programme thus far. We then provide details about what each research project achieved; this information is provided by the community organisations and supplemented by their academic researcher collaborators.

Research project reports

Black Families Education Support Group (2018). Community Matters Research Project: Final Report.

Creativity Works (2018). Being Creative: A research project that explores the impact of arts-based peer-led support group.

Wansdyke Play Association (2018). Community Matters Final Report.

Transition Larkhall (2018). Community Matters 2016-2017: How do parents take their children to school and why they choose to travel that way.

Triumph Over Phobia: Seeking Help: A comparison between the NHS and mental health charity.

Links to additional materials

BFESG: <https://youtu.be/5ltsxZJWFBc>

Creativity Works: <https://vimeo.com/233988064>

Transition Larkhall: <http://transitionlarkhall.uk/estimates/community-matters/>

Wansdyke Play Association: <https://youtu.be/vj4w5AO4NAQ>

Conference papers and engagement activities

Costas Batlle, I., Blackwood, L., & Stevens, E. (2018). Celebrating the imperfections of community-based research. Abstract from Living Knowledge, Budapest, Hungary.

Rogers, J., Robb, M., Gustafsson, S., Forsey, P., Jones, O., Tweedie, L. and Cook, T., (2018) 'Minding the Gap: Reflections on Relationality and Positionality in Community Based Participatory Research' South West Qualitative Research Symposium, Bath, United Kingdom

Rogers, J., Robb, M., Gustafsson, S., Forsey, P., Jones, O., Tweedie, L. and Cook, T., (2017) 'Co-production and progression opportunities in Mental Health Creative Support Services', International Conference on Culture, health and wellbeing, Bristol City Hall, United Kingdom

References

- Benneworth, P., Charles, D., Conway, C., & Younger, P. (2009). Characterising modes of university engagement with wider society, A literature review and survey of best practice.
- Benneworth, P., & Jongbloed, B. W. (2010). Who matters to universities? A stakeholder perspective on humanities, arts and social sciences valorisation. *Higher Education*, 59(5), 567-588.
- Brydon-Miller, M. (1997). Participatory action research: Psychology and social change. *Journal of Social Issues*, 53(4), 657-666.
- Coghlan, D., & Brydon-Miller, M. (2014). *The SAGE encyclopedia of action research*: Sage.
- Cook, J. R., & Nation, M. (2016). Community engagement: Universities' roles in building communities and strengthening democracy. *Community Development*, 47(5), 718-731. doi:10.1080/15575330.2016.1226912
- Durose, C., Beebeejaun, Y., Rees, J., Richardson, J., & Richardson, L. (2011). Towards co-production in research with communities. AHRC Connected Communities Programme Scoping Studies.
- Facer, K., & Enright, B. (2016). *Creating Living Knowledge: The Connected Communities Programme, community-university relationships and the participatory turn in the production of knowledge*: University of Bristol.
- Hart, A., & Wolff, D. (2006). Developing local 'communities of practice' through local community – university partnerships. *Planning Practice & Research*, 21(1), 121-138. doi:10.1080/02697450600901616
- Martin, S. (2010). Co-production of social research: strategies for engaged scholarship. *Public Money & Management*, 30(4), 211-218. doi:10.1080/09540962.2010.492180
- Ostrom, E. (1996). Crossing the great divide: Coproduction, synergy, and development. *World Development*, 24(6), 1073-1087. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/0305-750X(96)00023-X
- Owen, R., Stilgoe, J., Macnaghten, P., Gorman, M., Fisher, E., & Guston, D. (2013). A framework for responsible innovation. *Responsible innovation: managing the responsible emergence of science and innovation in society*, 31, 27-50.
- Stephens, L., Ryan-Collins, J., & Boyle, D. (2008). *Co-production. A manifesto for growing the core economy*. London: new economics foundation.
- Wenger, E., McDermott, R., & Snyder, W. M. (2002). *Cultivating Communities of Practice: A Guide to Managing Knowledge* (Vol. null).