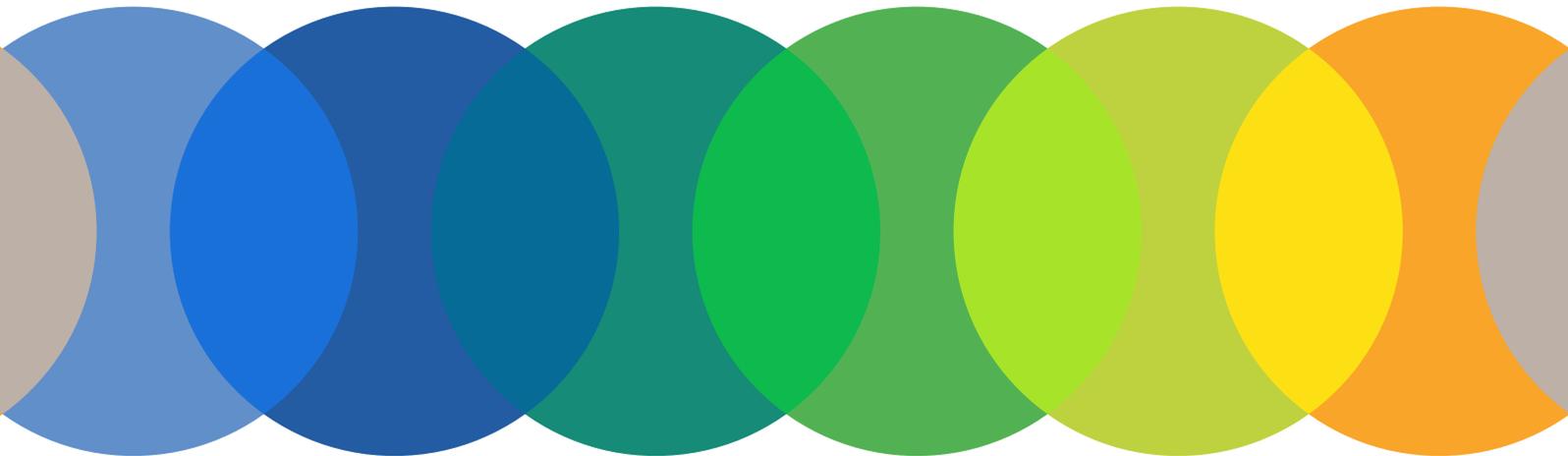


research
in practice
for adults



06
KEY ISSUES

building community capacity



building community capacity

introduction

No society has the money to buy, at market prices, what it takes to raise children, make a neighbourhood safe, care for the elderly, make democracy work or address systemic injustices... The only way the world is going to address social problems is by enlisting the very people who are now classified as 'clients' and 'consumers' and converting them into co-workers, partners and rebuilders of the core economy.

Professor Edgar Cahn, US-based civil rights lawyer and inventor of Timebanks

This Key Issue is aimed at social care practitioners and managers. It explains what we mean by *social capital* and its importance as part of social care transformation. It brings together some of the key learning from the Building Community Capacity project, part of the *Think Local Act Personal* Partnership, and gives examples of best practice from across the country in supporting strong communities.

Think Local Act Personal

Public services have been geared towards need and eligibility for a very long time, and for obvious reasons. However, public services are changing. Personalisation means we need to move away from the traditional one-size-fits-all approach to meeting varying care and support needs. *Think Local Act Personal* calls for a, 'genuine shift in attitudes and culture', to ensure that people have more choice and control over their care and support and that, 'as many people as possible are enabled to stay healthy and actively involved in their communities for longer, delaying or avoiding the need for targeted services.' (Think Local Act Personal, 2010)

This means that some services need to be redesigned or rethought, in partnership with the people who use them. In some instances, we need to move away from thinking about care and support in terms of services altogether. Public bodies need to work with older and disabled people within their communities to find out what they want for themselves and what they can and want to contribute.

Increasing social capital opens up opportunities for stretched public resources to be better used by tapping into and releasing the skills, talent and nascent energy of local people and groups. However, it can also provide a mechanism for local authorities, in partnership with communities, to strive for more ambitious goals that might otherwise seem unrealistic in this era of spending cuts – realising stronger, happier, more functional communities in which everyone is valued and can contribute as a full and equal citizen.

building community capacity

background and policy context

All political parties agree on the need to empower people and communities.

The Government's vision for adult social care, (DH 2010) put personalised services centre stage and was accompanied by *Practical approaches to Improving the Lives of Disabled and Older People through Building Stronger Communities* (Wilton and Routledge, 2010) which set out the arguments for supporting strong communities and an overview of the approaches that work. The policy paper, *Building the Big Society*, described how this would be done, by, 'devolving power and providing more support for community initiatives, encouraging social action by fostering and supporting a new culture of community involvement, and reforming public service'. (Cabinet Office, 2010)

Putting People First, published by the previous Government, was a shared vision and commitment to independent living for all adults and transforming adult social care through personalisation. Social capital was one of the four key elements of *Putting People First*, (along with choice and control, prevention and universal services). In 2009, the Cabinet Office produced the discussion paper *Co-production in public services* which it defined as, 'a partnership between citizens and government to tackle a social problem'. (Cabinet Office, 2009)

The *Think Local Act Personal* (TLAP) partnership was formed in January 2011 drawing on learning from *Putting People First* across England during the previous three years. TLAP is a partnership of over 30 leading and umbrella organisations and represents a sector-wide commitment to transforming adult social care through personalisation and community-based support. Partners include leaders of people who use social care and family carers, central and local government, provider organisations, voluntary and community sector organisations and sector leaders like the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS). The TLAP partnership agreement states that councils and their partners should aim to:

- > build and release social capital and connect people together
- > focus on prevention through joint working, making the most of universal services and investing in community capacity
- > change workforce culture and practices to ensure that staff promote greater community connections for older and disabled people
- > encourage more community-based, niche support, focussing on people's natural communities. (TLAP, 2011)

background and policy context continued

One of TLAP's key workstreams is the *Building Community Capacity* project. The project began as part of *Putting People First* in 2009 and aims to share learning and best practice around social capital and community connections. It has a learning network of over twenty councils and their community partners, and has produced many practical tools and products to help councils take the community agenda forward in social care. The learning from this work is shared in this Key Issue.

Making it Real

Developed by the National Co-production Advisory Group of people who use social care for TLAP, Making it Real is a tool to support those working towards personalisation. It is a series of 'I' statements, based around TLAP themes, that shows what 'good' looks like. For example:

- > I can decide the kind of support I need and when, where and how to receive it.
- > I have access to a range of support that helps me to live the life I want and remain a contributing member of my community
- > I feel welcomed and included in my local community.
- > I am supported by people who help me to make links in my local community.

building community capacity

definitions

What do we mean by building community capacity?

TLAP uses the term 'building community capacity' to describe a broad range of approaches that sustain strong, supportive communities and grow and release local social capital.

The key elements are:

- > personal and social support networks: of family, friends, neighbours
- > membership of groups: as we know that the act of association alone has a tremendous effect on health and happiness
- > a welcoming and inclusive local community: in which older and disabled people are able to get out and about to use universal services and feel safe and included
- > making a contribution: where everyone is valued for their unique talents, skills and gifts and has the opportunity to have a say, to influence and to participate.

What is social capital?

Social capital is the shared values and sense of belonging that people have as part of their network, group or community. It has been described as, 'the glue that holds individuals together as a community'. (Muir and Khan, 2006)

What is co-production?

Professor Elinor Ostrom coined the term *co-production* in the 1970s to describe why crime rates increased when local police started driving around in patrol cars instead of walking the beat. The police had lost the opportunity to co-operate and collaborate with local people that was the essential ingredient in maintaining a safe community.

Co-production in Social Care is about broadening and deepening public services so that they are no longer the preserve of professionals and commissioners, but a shared responsibility (Hoodless in Stevens, 2008). Co-production is not about consulting people as consumers, it is a genuine partnership between publicly-funded services and those who use them.

In *Joining the Dots*, Lucie Stevens of the new economics foundation (nef) writes:

Co-production is an asset-based approach which starts first and foremost with people's energy, skills, interests, knowledge and life experience. Co-production connects public services with valuable community-based resources and opens up opportunities for improving outcomes without increasing costs.

why focus on building community capacity?

Community development is not a new concept and many councils have been employing or funding community development workers for a long time. However, times are tough and non-statutory services have always been vulnerable when money is tight. What follows are a number of evidence-informed arguments that support the need to mainstream community capacity building and make collaboration and co-production an intrinsic part of everyday practice.

Better lives

Good lives for people needing support depend on whether they are actually recognised as members of the networks and associations that constitute community. People excluded from this risk loneliness, isolation and powerlessness.

John O'Brien and Connie Lyle O'Brien, leading thinkers and advocates of person-centred planning

The idea of empowering people and building community connections has gained prominence in recent years due, in part, to the emergence of person-centred approaches and personalisation. Making and sustaining friendships is something that many of us may take for granted but there is evidence that people lose friends after becoming disabled (Williams and Porter, 2011). Helen Sanderson and Jaimee Lewis write, 'For most of us, relationships are the basis of our lives...We need to belong, to be a part of other people's lives and have them be a part of ours.' It does not just benefit those with care and support needs. They add, 'Communities that are more diverse and create more opportunities for people to help each other directly are better places for everyone to live'. (Sanderson and Lewis, 2011)

Better health and social care outcomes

Strong social networks can have a positive and preventative effect on health. Renowned political scientist Robert Putnam found, for example, that while people are becoming increasingly disconnected from family, friends, neighbours and democratic structures, just joining and participating in one group could cut in half your chances of dying next year (Putnam, 2000). Joining two cuts the chances by 75 per cent. There is therefore a strong argument that the public sector should be doing more to promote community connections in tough financial times, not less.

The Health Empowerment Leverage Project (HELP) has produced a literature review on community development, and the findings are not surprising - loneliness and low social integration both significantly increase mortality, while people with stronger networks are healthier and happier. (Bennett, 2002)

Several studies have demonstrated reduced infant mortality, increased life expectancy and lower deaths from specific causes in individuals and communities in areas of high social capital. (Kawachi, 1997; Berkman, 2000; Lynch 2001) There is strong evidence to suggest that social relationships can reduce the risk of depression (Morgan and Swann, 2004) and a number of studies are consistent with the idea that areas with poor social capital have higher rates of cardiovascular disease. (Augustin, 2008) Others have shown that social networks and social participation appear to act as a protective factor against dementia or cognitive decline in people over the age of 65. (Fabrigoule et al, 1995; Bassuk et al, 1999)

building community capacity

why focus on building community capacity? continued

Better outcomes for everybody – and across all public services

Building social capital can improve outcomes in all areas of public services but sometimes people need to understand the positive benefits for their particular area of responsibility. For example:

- > Within education, social capital has been strongly linked to increased educational attainment. (Putham, 2000)
- > Neighbourhood Watch has been proved to reduce crime and fear of crime.
- > 'Friends of' schemes in libraries and parks can help bring in valuable volunteer resources as well as developing new friendships within the volunteers.
- > Schemes such as Speedwatch support communities. Local volunteers use speed cameras to monitor speeding drivers. It reduces speeding on the roads and brings communities together in the process.
- > Sport Reading has programmes to increase the participation of disabled and older people in physical activity; this also has the added benefit of increased leisure centre use and new friendships and support networks developing within the groups.

Better, more efficient services

Encouraging people and public services to work in a complementary way leads to services that people actually want and makes the most of what people can contribute themselves.

Timebanking

Paxton Green GP surgery has started a timebank. Timebanking is a system that allows people to give and receive time and skills to benefit themselves and others in the community. Using a currency of time, each hour given is credited and can be spent getting help in return. Everyone's time is valued equally, meaning that everyone in the community is valued and able to make a contribution. NESTA and nef's *Public Services Inside Out* points out, 'At Paxton Green the paid staff aren't responsible for getting people to take part in predetermined activities that are seen to be 'good for them' but that they may not want. The ideas for activities come from the members, and if none of them want to organise them, they just don't happen'. (Boyle et al, 2010)

Better for the public purse

Perhaps one of the most persuasive arguments for building community capacity is the financial one. As part of the *Building Community Capacity* project, Professor Martin Knapp and colleagues at the London School of Economics (LSE) investigated community building initiatives and found that they could be cost effective. (Knapp et al, 2011) The research aimed to investigate whether investment in community initiatives has the potential to prevent or delay the need for social care and generate cost savings. It suggested the following economic impacts:

Timebanks

The cost per Timebank member averages less than £450 per annum but could result in savings and other economic pay-offs of over £1,300 per member. The researchers add, 'this is a conservative estimate of the net economic benefit, since Timebanks can achieve a wider range of impacts than those we have been able to quantify and value'.

Community Navigators

Community navigators work with hard-to-reach individuals to provide signposting, support and information. Schemes cost on average less than £300 per annum per person but the economic benefits from less time lost at work, savings in benefits payments, contributions to productivity and fewer GP visits could amount to £900 per person in the first year.

Befriending

Befriending services, which are often run by voluntary and community organisations, aim to reduce social isolation, loneliness and depression particularly amongst older people. The costs are estimated to be around £80 per person, with savings of £35 in the first year alone due to reduced need for treatment and support for mental health needs and probable future savings of £300 per person per year. (TLAP, 2010)

The *Building Community Capacity* project has also sought to unearth other studies that have tried to quantify the economic benefits of community initiatives. A whole section of the website is dedicated to evidence for cost-effectiveness.

A Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis of community development showed that investing £1 in community development delivers £3 of social value. The *Partnership for Older People Projects* (POPP) report found that for every extra £1 spent on the POPP services, there was approximately £1.20 in savings on emergency bed days. A wide range of projects resulted in improved quality of life for participants and better local working relationships. An SROI analysis of the *Expert Patient Programme* in the Wirral showed that for every £1 spent on these programmes, £6.09 of social return was created, in addition to the health benefits for participants.

building community capacity

approaches that work – examples and case studies

The Building Community Capacity learning network has been sharing examples of successful approaches to building and releasing community capacity over the past few years. Many of the following examples can be found on the TLAP website.

Developing a shared vision with local people

A shared vision that has been developed with citizens can bring real change and positive outcomes to whole communities. Commissioning that involves and takes account of local skills and wishes is also really important.

Open-brief commissioning

Within the commissioning process for its Mental Health Day Services contract, commissioners in Camden did not set out in great detail the activities which had to be delivered by potential services providers. Instead, they made clear the total financial value of the contract and explicitly set out its intention to procure services that are co-designed and co-produced. This allowed potential providers to work with local people and local resources to shape activities that were important to them and would result in the outcomes set out. The winning tender was a consortium of Camden based third sector organisations. The consortium advocated a co-production approach to running the service, which uses time banking and peer support approaches to create a mutually supportive network of people in and around the providers. (Stevens, 2011)

It is helpful if building and releasing social capital can be included among the strategic priorities of a council and its partners. Health and Wellbeing Boards present a major opportunity to integrate approaches to community development.

Health and Wellbeing board involvement

Cambridgeshire County Council, supported by the LGA's Ageing Well Programme, is holding a series of workshops in its various districts on what matters to older people around strong communities and health and wellbeing. Older people and health and wellbeing board members will then participate in a county-wide event to develop strategic priorities for the board around the ageing agenda.

Enabling people and front-line staff to work together on things that are important to them

When communities and front-line workers are given the opportunity and freedom to work together and solve issues of mutual concern the possibilities are huge.

Asset-based community development

In 1995, the Beacon Estate in Cornwall was a community in crisis, blighted by violence, intimidation and drug dealing and people felt isolated, abandoned and helpless. Two health visitors began working to engage the community and local front-line staff to address the identified challenges. Several listening events were held and eventually a community-led, multi-agency partnership was formed. This has had a positive impact on reversing the health and social decline of the community. Crime and unemployment rates have dropped, as have teenage pregnancies and rates of post-natal depression. Educational attainment has soared.

Community skills development

As part of the community skills development work being undertaken by *Skills for Care, Keyring Living Support Networks* in Rotherham will be working with the town's *Speak Up* group to explore how they can help to develop the skills of people who work in local banks, transport and leisure services so that people with learning disabilities can use these services more independently with less need for paid support.

People are, of course, more likely to get involved in their communities if there is an event happening or if they can do something they are interested in. Providing small amounts of funding to enable community events

and projects to happen without being obsessively prescriptive about outcomes other than connecting people is important.

Street parties

The city of Oxford holds more street parties per capita than anywhere else (at least 54 in 2010). Oxford Civic Society worked with the council to remove some bureaucratic barriers, such as costs to close roads, and provided publicity, co-ordination and support.

The street parties enabled about 4,000 people to meet their neighbours. Residents reported that social barriers between neighbours had been broken down. Vulnerable people were more easily identified and support and a sense of community began to emerge. There were intentions to continue residents' street parties on an annual basis.

Pub lunch club project

Aimed at tackling social exclusion in the over 50s, Community Impact Bucks set up a Pub Lunch Club scheme that encourages people to meet once a month in a village pub. A dozen Pub Lunch Clubs have been established over the last year, each attracting between 20 and 50 people. Groups like these can be self-sustaining after a short amount of input from the co-ordinator.

building community capacity

approaches that work – examples and case studies continued

Co-ordinating activity and creating a two-way street for people and organisations

Making it Real calls for flexible and integrated care and support so that people who use services would be able to say, 'My support is co-ordinated, co-operative, works well together and I know who to contact to get things changed'. The following approaches can both support co-ordination at a local level and provide a vital link between local citizens and commissioners which drives positive change in the system.

Local Area Co-ordination (LAC) is an innovative approach that involves local co-ordinators working on the ground with individuals, families, communities and local services. Co-ordinators support people to contribute to their communities, strengthen the capacity of communities to welcome and include people, identify gaps in services and support organisations to work better together.

Community Navigation schemes work in a similar way. Community Navigators (sometimes called Wayfarers, Agents or Facilitators) link people to services, provide information and advice and promote health and independence. They also act as the eyes and ears on the ground for commissioners and local service providers to enable them to shape better services.

Connected Care

A community audit showed that residents wanted joined-up services, a local workforce with knowledge of local resources and issues and the opportunity to decide what outcomes were important to their quality of life. Connected Care uses a team of navigators with local knowledge, complemented by a range of preventative and support resources to develop a bespoke service that addresses the needs of individuals. Feedback from the Connected Care model has been overwhelmingly positive with people commenting that the support they receive has enabled them to live independently and retain control. Significantly, many of those supported have since taken on a volunteering role in the community.

Supporting and encouraging the growth of timebanks

Timebanking was first devised by Dr Edgar Cahn in the 1980s as a way in which people can exchange time and skills with each other as part of a community. It is of particular benefit to older and disabled people as it can provide access to practical help to maintain independence as well as providing a mechanism to promote friendships and connections between people.

Newsome Ward Timebanking

Newsome Ward Timebanking is Huddersfield's first timebanking project. It was started by people in Newsome with the support of United Response, as a means of giving everybody the opportunity to participate in their community. David was asked if he could help a lady who had just come out of hospital by cutting her hedge. It was growing out of control which prevented her from seeing out. David was supported to help her and has now become more involved with Timebanking. During the autumn, together with other Timebanking members, he kept a local churchyard free from fallen leaves. At Christmas he helped the community forum with their children's party. He has also helped to brighten up the local charity shop by helping the shop managers to decorate. He plans to use some of his time credits to receive cooking lessons.

Organisations can also participate in timebanking. *Spice* is a social enterprise that develops agency timebanking systems for communities and public services that engage and empower the many rather than the few. *Spice* develops time credits systems for communities and public services.

Taff Housing Association

Taff Housing Association in Cardiff piloted its Timebanking project with young women from supported housing projects. The women were encouraged to earn time credits by contributing to the running of the hostel and participating in projects. For each hour contributed, the women earned one time credit that could be spent attending house events, such as parties, BBQs and picnics. Following the success of the pilot, Taff Housing Association rolled out the Timebank to the rest of its tenants and, with the support of *Spice*, engaged partners in the city to contribute to the project. Now tenants are able to spend their time credits at local arts centres, theatres and sports and leisure clubs.

building community capacity

approaches that work – examples and case studies continued

Working with the community to utilise skills and grow capacity

While many community activities, groups and networks exist independently of public services, some people and communities may need some support to grow and flourish.

One example of this is around micro-social enterprises. These are small organisations that operate independently of local authorities, and often without their explicit knowledge, but who offer niche, tailored support including day services, meals, support to people living in their own homes, short breaks and befriending.

Personalised care

Cathy and Jean used to work for a big domiciliary care organisation. They didn't like the way they had to work and so set up a co-operative which supports about 15 older people in their own home. The co-operative has been joined by other like-minded people who are equally passionate about personalised, flexible services shaped round the people they support.

Small enterprises like these often need support to start up and sustain themselves in the early years. The organisation Community Catalysts, a social enterprise wholly owned by Shared Lives Plus, is being commissioned by Councils and others across the country to stimulate and support local enterprises.

Local meals

Walsall Council has found an innovative way to tap into resources in the local community, support local businesses, build community connections, achieve highly personalised services and save money – through decommissioning the meals on wheels contract.

Most people have taken up the option of a meals budget, which is spent with the help of a voluntary sector brokerage organisation. The brokerage organisation helps the individual to identify a local café or food business and arranges for their meal to be purchased and either delivered to them or for the individual to eat at the establishment, as they prefer. The arrangement saves money, builds community connections and establishes a relationship between older people and local businesses, in a way that the old system could not achieve.

The London Borough of Lambeth is developing its *co-operative council* model in social care by developing a network of sustainable community services across the Borough which are owned and controlled by local communities. A team of council entrepreneurs help organisations get up and running and develop local third sector markets. The council has transferred £3.5m in assets to community providers over the past three years. So far this approach has delivered £2.4m in efficiency savings whilst increasing external investment into the borough by £5.5m.

The Gateway Consortium

The Gateway Consortium in Lambeth provides a network of neighbourhood luncheon clubs and has created an Older People's & Carers Resource Centre, owned, managed and delivered by older people for older people. It has 40 volunteers providing 5,000 placements per year to older people, alongside a purpose built resource centre to support a network of 2,000 Lambeth carers who needed a simplified route to access services.

On a smaller scale, many councils have adopted the *Small Sparks* initiative that originated in Seattle. Small grants of between £50 and £500 are made available to people to encourage them to use their personal interest and creativity to do something fun and beneficial in the local community.

Magazine sharing scheme

A lady who had learning disabilities loved magazines; she applied for some *Small Sparks* money to set up a magazine sharing scheme for her local community. People now come to her house to swap magazines and she takes them to other people. Strong friendships have since developed within the group.

building community capacity

summary

This Key Issue describes the role of building community capacity as a key part of social care transformation. Produced in collaboration with the *Think Local Act Personal* Partnership, it gives an overview of the arguments for a focus on social capital, why councils should be paying more attention to harnessing and releasing the skills, knowledge and talents in local communities, and examples of approaches that work in growing and nurturing strong and inclusive communities.

practical tools and resources

Think Local Act Personal has produced these tools and resources to support councils and their partners in building community capacity and delivering personalisation. All are available at:
www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk

Are we there yet?

A practical planning tool and checklist for building community connections.

Does it work?

A guide to evaluating initiatives for their impact on social capital and community capacity.

Making it Real

Developed by the National Co-production Advisory Group for Think Local Act Personal, to support those working towards personalisation and community based support.
www.nationalcareforum.org.uk/content/MakingItReal1.pdf

The Building Community Capacity website

This comprehensive resource has sections on evidence, evaluation, over 50 case studies, and access to the learning network.
www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk/BCC

Other useful resources from research in practice *for adults* include:

Strategic briefing and Councillor's briefing on *Building Social Capital* (2012)

Key Issues briefings on *User-led organisations* (2011) and *Social firms* (2010)

Change Cards:
www.changeCards.org.uk

Research Evaluation and Analysis Support Network (REASON) www.reason-network.org.uk

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www.puttingpeoplefirst.org.uk/_library/Resources/BCC/CaseStudies/NEF_Joining_the_Dots.doc

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Projects and case studies

SharedLivesPlus: a UK network for family-based and small-scale ways of supporting adults
www.SharedLivesPlus.org.uk

Speed Watch: an initiative promoting safer driving in communities
www.speed-watch.org

Everybody Active: activity programme for adults with disabilities
www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk/BCC/Latest/resourceOverview/?cid=8307

Health Empowerment Leverage Project (HELP): exploring the business case for community development to improve health
www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk/BCC/BuildingTheBigSociety/CommunityDevelopment/?parent=7819&child=8535

Neighbourhood Workforce Planning and Community Skills Development project
http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/workforce_strategy/neighbourhood_and_community_skills/online_learning_community.aspx

National Organisation for timebanking
www.timebanking.org

Spice: a social enterprise that develops agency timebanking systems for communities
www.justaddspice.org

Community Catalysts harness the talents of people and communities to provide imaginative solutions to complex social issues and care needs
www.communitycatalysts.co.uk

Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council offers a program to encourage community members to use their creativity to do something beneficial in the neighbourhood
<http://www2.walsall.gov.uk/CMISWebPublic/Binary.ashx?Document=2337>

Community Impact Bucks: an independent charity which provides support services to other charities and community groups
www.communityimpactbucks.org

Written by Catherine Wilton and Sarah Rowland for **research in practice *for adults*** on behalf of Think Local Act Personal

key issues

This is one in a series of publications on Key Issues published by **research in practice *for adults***. The series is designed to provide ready access to relevant policy, available evidence and emerging practice on topics of current importance.

research in practice *for adults* is a partnership organisation promoting the use of evidence-informed policy and practice in adult social care. It provides a range of resources for Partner agencies, including learning events, publications, network opportunities, a website and the opportunity to participate in practice development Change Projects

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