South West Villages – Phase 3 Reporting Form  
December 2019  
Reporting on activity and outcomes 07/01/19 – 30/11/19

Deadline: December 2019  
Organisation: Eric Liddell Centre  
Case Study: South West Villages Project

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Why South West Villages?

The South West Villages face particular challenges in terms of population and geography. The population profile for the area shows a higher proportion of older people than the Edinburgh average (19% of population is aged 65+ compared to 14% average for Edinburgh\(^1\) and this is even higher if taking account of permanent residents only as population figures for Currie include students living at the Heriot Watt Riccarton campus, accounting for around 2,000 students/young adults). The older population brings benefits such as a wealth of retired volunteers who support the many and varied activities and groups in the area. It also poses challenges however, both now and into the future, in terms of increasing demand for health and social care services. Hospital admission rates in the area are higher than average, a reflection of the older population, with approximately 2,500 admissions per year, of which around 1,000 are unscheduled admissions\(^2\).

Many issues linked to ageing such as access to care and support and social isolation, are compounded by the relative ‘rurality’ of the villages. Transport is a priority issue for the local community and is also a key factor in the challenges faced by health and social care and voluntary organisations which struggle to recruit paid carers and volunteers that are local or willing to travel from elsewhere in the city. This means that many ‘city wide’ services are not available to people living in the South West Villages, resulting in reduced choice, people going without or having to pay for private services.

The area is often overlooked in development work which tends to focus on areas of multiple deprivation; the Locality Improvement Plan for South West Edinburgh\(^3\) makes little reference to any specific actions being taken forward in the villages.

The area also has no medium to large voluntary organisations that focus on supporting older people that are based in the villages. The very small organisations based in the area do fantastic work but are limited in their capacity to develop services and attract funding. Local residents with higher level or specialist needs are required to travel to other services such as Canalside at Westerhailes, the Broomhouse Centre or Eric Liddell Centre. The Eric Liddell Centre has been well placed to lead the South West Villages Project, it is a well-known organisation with a positive reputation amongst many of the local population and can be reached directly on the 45 bus to Holy Corner, which is a popular route for many older people coming into the city but avoiding the busy city centre. The strong sense of identity and community within the villages requires any ‘external’ service or organisation to develop targeted work on the ground with local people, organisations and volunteers in order to be recognised as offering something for them. Simply parachuting or extending existing services is unlikely to work, as has been demonstrated by many organisations struggling to find local volunteers.

Vision

The vision for the South West Villages Project has been to build on the assets within the community in order to address some of the challenges outlined above in order to improve the health and wellbeing of local older people.

The project has taken a community development approach, working with existing organisations and local people to identify issues and develop solutions for the future. The project was initially part of the wider LOOPs (Local Opportunities for Older People) initiative and worked with other LOOPs projects where appropriate, but a focus on the South West Villages has allowed for a more targeted approach, developing close links with very small local groups and organisations. The other elements of LOOPs ended in March 2019 due to the discontinuation of funding, resulting in the loss of the Community Navigator who had a regular presence in Currie Library and the

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\(^1\) Source: 2011 Census, Parish statistics [www.churchofscotland.org.uk](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk) Total population of SWV = 17,875

\(^2\) Source: D White, EHSCP

\(^3\) [http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/10244/south_west_locality_improvement_plan](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/10244/south_west_locality_improvement_plan)
focussed one-to-one assessment and signposting for frail older people provided by the LOOPs Hospital Discharge Support Service.

ACTIVITIES: WHAT YOU ACTUALLY DID

Phase 1

The first phase of the South West Villages Project took place in 2017 and involved the mapping of existing services and activities along with consultation with local people to identify priorities and improvements for the future.

Key issues identified through the Phase 1 work included:

- Availability and awareness of social opportunities
- Transport
- Bank closures
- Volunteers
- Befriending
- Physical activity classes
- Links between and within third sector and community groups and statutory services

Many of these themes were continued in Phases 2 and 3 of the project, however the issues of public transport and bank closures were not addressed specifically as part of the project.

The issue of transport is key in the area, primarily the lack of a direct route from the villages to St John’s Hospital in Livingston and secondly, a direct service to the Gyle Shopping Centre, were consistently raised as having a significant impact, especially for older people. Examples were given of older people spending 3 hours each way travelling to hospital appointments or visiting loved ones by bus, since the previous direct route to St John’s was removed. Whilst the journey by road is only 10 miles each way, taxi fares are not affordable for many, particularly if appointments or visits are frequent. This issue is high on the agenda for local politicians and it was agreed that given the scope and resources of the project, we were unlikely to be able to add anything, therefore it was not a focus of activity for phases 2 and 3.


Phase 2

The second phase of the project took place from June to December 2018, building on the findings of Phase 1, delivered activities to address four key issues:

1) Raising awareness of local support and activities
2) Promotion of the (limited) befriending and companionship services that are, or could be, active in the area
3) Development of links between services and organisations
4) Development of ideas and options for sustainable future arrangements.


Phase 3

Phase 3 of the project aimed to build further on the earlier work, with an effort to develop tangible and longer term solutions for the South West Villages. The activity focused on the following areas:
1) Development of plans for a local, flexible befriending/ buddying/ companionship service

Consultation and engagement with the local community has been a key element of both the South West Villages Project (looking at the needs of older people in the community) and Dementia Friendly Pentlands (through consultation events looking at the needs of people living with dementia and their carers)\(^4\). A clear need arising from this work is for a local, flexible service that can support people with practical tasks such as shopping and attending appointments and companionship. There is a gap in the provision of such services that ‘go to’ people, as other similar ‘city wide’ services do not cover the three villages due to the difficulty in recruiting volunteers that are willing to travel. There is a strong need for a local service to recruit local volunteers, through being embedded in the local community. Whilst the area is well served by volunteer-led groups for older people held in public venues, transport is an issue for many people who would benefit from a service that could ‘buddy’ them along to activities.

The opportunity for the Eric Liddell Centre and Dementia Friendly Pentlands to work in partnership has arisen through the work of the South West Villages Project. The organisations would bring very different strengths to a potential partnership; Dementia Friendly Pentlands is embedded within the community and has the reputation and links that would be required to recruit volunteers and to establish the service locally, whilst the Eric Liddell Centre brings the experience of delivering befriending services, the track record and budget history required by many funders.

There are two options for any future service to be developed in the three villages:

a) Develop a Befriending service, similar to the service provided for carers by the Eric Liddell Centre
b) Develop a more flexible ‘Good Neighbours’ service that would provide practical support and companionship

Option ‘a’ could be easily be replicated with a focus on the South West Villages, whilst ‘b’ would provide the opportunity to address particular issues such as transport and rurality faced by the villages. The decision on which option is to be developed will likely be based on the criteria of any potential funding streams and agreement between the partner organisations in the future.

Plans for a Good Neighbours service have been developed as part of the Phase 3 work, learning from other examples. There are few of these type of services operating in Edinburgh, however the Royal Voluntary Service (RVS) run such as service in East Lothian. The service would respond to the person’s need and could include, for example:

- Buddying to activities or groups
- Support with shopping – this could be an online order, buddying to the shops or picking up and delivering some items to the person
- Practical tasks eg changing a light bulb, walking the dog, small, one-off tasks in the home or garden
- Assistance to attend appointments eg by walking, using the bus or driving
- Picking up a prescription
- Meeting for a coffee

As part of this work, the use of technology to facilitate a Good Neighbours service was also investigated. Existing services, including the RVS service, require a significant amount of administration in processing requests for assistance and matching with available volunteers. There are ‘off the shelf’ apps available that could assist with this process, including Jointly, Cura or Wunderlist. An example of ‘Compassionate Inverclyde’ was also found that uses Facebook to match requests for help with volunteers. Incorporating technology as part of a service could reduce the amount of administration required but the option for more traditional ‘matching’ would likely exist for some service users and volunteers who are less able and/or willing to adopt the technology. (For example, discussions with the Co-ordinator of Volunteer Net found that despite being based around an online platform, significant support is still required to liaise between carers and volunteers.) A further positive factor of

\(^4\) https://dementiafriendypentlands.org.uk/consultation/
embedding technology within a service would be that it opens opportunities for funding applications that require an element of ‘innovation’ or incorporation of technology.

During Phase 3 of the project, funding proposals to develop a Befriending or Good Neighbours service were submitted to the following:

- Building Collaboration Fund (CCPS and Scottish Government) - unsuccessful
- Ecclesiastic (Movement for Good) - unsuccessful
- Investing in Communities Fund – unsuccessful
- Digital Charter Fund (see 3c below) – unsuccessful.

A meeting is taking place on 2 December with the National Lottery Community Fund to discuss opportunities within the South West Villages. It is hoped that the work developed as part of phase 3 will continue to be utilised by both the Eric Liddell Centre and Dementia Friendly Pentlands in future funding applications.

2) Building capacity and sharing skills and experience between small voluntary organisations in the area

There are many organisations working with older people in the South West Villages including church groups, social clubs, exercise and interest classes, coffee mornings, cafes and day services. Many of these organisations are very small and are often run by volunteers, many of whom are themselves getting older, facing ill health and issues that limit their capacity to support the organisations. A number of organisations are facing challenges in recruiting new Board Members, particularly in ‘back office’ roles. Alongside challenges of sustainable income within a very competitive funding environment, these other issues leave many small organisations in a very vulnerable position. The retirement of just one or two key members could cause groups to fold, which would leave significant gaps in local provision.

By developing links between organisations the project aimed to increase awareness of opportunities and support for older people in the area, improve referral pathways, increase capacity and facilitate the sharing of information, knowledge and expertise.

This work has taken time, in developing trust and relationships with and between organisations, many of which have existed for a long time and are used to being very self-sufficient.

Phase 3 of the project has facilitated the following:

a) Bringing together co-ordinators to discuss shared issues – “forum meetings”

Meetings were held in February and September 2019 with Co-ordinators from 9 local groups for older people. In addition to hearing updates from each of the groups and allowing time for networking, the meetings also focused on:

- Planning the Volunteer Celebration event in June 2019
- Planning the Living Well Event in November 2019
- Julie Duncan from City of Edinburgh Council’s Property Services attended to discuss the consultation around the new Currie High School development, facilitating input of the views of the local older population
- Elaine Black, Community Link Worker attended to introduce her role and make links with key groups to which she can signpost isolated individuals

b) Development of links with the Registered Day Care Service for this area - Canalside

The groups in the villages support older people with varying levels of need, but there is no Care Inspectorate registered day service in the immediate area – individuals needing support with higher levels of care needs can attend Canalside (transport is provided). It is therefore important that strong links exist between the local groups, particularly Currie Day Centre and the Harlaw Monday Group which often support people following a referral from a health professional, and Canalside. The local groups need to feel confident that when someone’s
needs become too great for them to continue to provide support, a smooth process is in place to move the person on to a service that can better meet their increasing needs. Clear communication and positive relationships can really help the process as moving on can be difficult for the individual, their families and carers and the local service, especially when someone has been attending a group for a long time and has developed strong links with staff, volunteers and fellow service users.

A meeting was held at Canalside and co-ordinators were subsequently invited to an information sharing meeting about Social Security Scotland hosted by Canalside. Referral processes were discussed and clarified along with opportunities for introductory visits to be made by the individual along with the co-ordinator of the local service to assist the moving on process.

c) Networking opportunities and other links made

The two Living Well Events and the Volunteer Celebration event provided opportunities for networking between local groups and other relevant organisations. The feedback from groups and organisations that have taken part has been very positive.

An example of this came from Tap into IT attending the first Living Well Event. A need for digital skills support in the area was identified and partnership funding bids were developed for the Digital Charter Fund (unsuccessful) and the South West Villages have been included in a bid made to CGI (result pending).

Another example was the Pentlands Mens’ Shed who attended the second Living Well Event. The group was relatively new, established earlier in 2019, and attendees from the organisation were very positive about the opportunity the event gave them to meet local older people and network with other groups that support older people in the area.

3) Further awareness raising of support and activities for older people and work to reach the most isolated individuals

Phase 3 of the project continued to build on the work undertaken in previous phases and included:

a) Events – Living Well and Volunteer Celebration events were open to the public. Efforts were made to advertise the events as widely as possible and to reach isolated individuals, this included:
   - Half page adverts placed in the Currie and Balerno News prior to events
   - Listings in the ‘What’s On’ section of the Currie and Balerno News and Konnect magazine
   - Posters displayed in public venues eg libraries, cafes, community notice boards,
   - Flyers distributed to 9 older people’s groups (with a reach of approx. 200 older people)
   - Flyers distributed at a flu clinic 5 days prior to the Living Well event in November 2019 (over 300 flyers handed out in 1.5 hours)
   - Social media shared on relevant local pages

The project also tried to increase publicity before and after events by writing articles and press releases for the Currie and Balerno News (circulation of 3,000 and widely referred to as a key source of information by local older people). Whilst inclusion of content is at the discretion of the Editor/ Board, the Volunteer Celebration featured in the July/August 2019 edition, with a front page photograph and full page article.

b) Leaflets – The suite of leaflets listing local opportunities and activities has continued to be circulated at events and key venues across the villages. The leaflets are available on the Eric Liddell Centre’s website at https://www.ericliddell.org/services/community-services/. The information has also been shared with the Volunteer Centre’s Signposting Phoneline and updates made to EVOC’s Red Book online directory.

c) Community Link Worker – a Link Worker role was established in June 2019, covering three GP Practices of Colinton, Ratho and Pentlands and is part of a pilot for 12 months focusing on people aged 65+ who are isolated and lonely. This role will provide a fantastic opportunity to reach some of the most isolated older people in the villages. The resources and links developed as part of the South West Villages Project will

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hopefully be invaluable to signposting and supporting people to access the opportunities and activities available.

**OUTPUTS (THE NUMBERS) AND OUTCOMES (EVIDENCE OF IMPACT)**

**Celebration of Volunteering**

A Celebration of Volunteering event was held on Thursday 6th June. This event was linked in with a series of 5 ‘Health and Wellbeing’ events supported by the South West Locality and was arranged by the South West Villages Project and Dementia Friendly Pentlands.

The event coincided with Volunteers’ Week which was established to celebrate and say thank you for the fantastic contribution millions of volunteers make across the UK. The event also featured the “Voice of Volunteers” through film, stories, quotes and photographs documenting the voices of people that volunteer with local groups.

**Event Programme:**

Certificates were awarded to recognise the amazing contribution made by volunteers that support local groups/organisations working with older people, including:

- Currie Day Centre
- Beacon Club
- Harlaw Monday Group
- Palm Café
- Tea and Tunes
- Currie Senior Citizens Club
- Juniper Green Senior Citizens Social Group
- Young at Heart
Balerno Monday Club
Mill Café
Currie High School Youth Philanthropic Initiative winners

A ‘Have Your Say’ Board was facilitated by Sarah Neal (Lifelong Learning Development Officer – Health and Well Being) and Kate Barlow (Public Health Practitioner).

A summary of feedback from discussions will be used to inform locality planning and included:

**Strengths** – community, friendly, access to city and countryside, green spaces and parks, volunteers, groups

**What could be improved** – transport - links to St John’s and Gyle, limited bus services (ie two routes, only one at weekends), road congestion with new housing, banking, accessibility for disabled people, access to shops and supermarket.

It is estimated that 60-80 people attended the day and feedback from those that attended was very positive. The event was featured on the front page of the July-August edition of the Currie and Balerno News along with a full page article on p6.

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**Living Well Event**

A Living Well Event was held at the Gibson Craig Halls on Thursday 7th November 2019. This followed on from the successful event held in November 2018, and feedback suggested that it would be useful to have an annual event.

A total of 26 stalls were hosted by a wide range of organisations that support the health and wellbeing of older people in the local area. It is estimated that around 80-100 people attended the event. Entertainment was provided by instrumentalists from Nether Currie Primary School and a local Community Choir.

32 Evaluation forms were completed by attendees, the results are summarised below.
100% of respondents rated the event as 4 or 5 out of 5

97% of respondents said that they found useful information

94% of respondents found out about a service or organisation they were previously not aware of

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**Overall rating of event**

- **Number of responses (total = 32)**

**Did you find useful information?**

- **Number of responses (total = 32)**

**Did you find out about a service or organisation you were previously not aware of?**

- **Number of responses (total = 32)**
Longer-term outcomes from the project include:

**Identification of need**
The project has worked to identify service gaps, raise awareness of the issues and develop proposals for how unmet needs could be met in the future. It is hoped that the work of the project will continue to be used to try to identify funding in order to address the gaps in the longer term.

**Mapping of services**
The leaflets and resources developed by the project will continue to be made available in local public venues and on the Eric Liddell Centre website.

**Links and networks**
It is hoped that the links made through the forum of Co-ordinators of local groups will continue to develop. The contacts from the Living Well event ie stall holders, catering, entertainment and other supporters will be retained by the Eric Liddell Centre and similar events could be arranged again in the future with minimal input in terms of organisation and funding (approx. £100 for venue hire and £100 for advertising).

**Longer term partnership opportunities**
The project has successfully developed relationships with and between local groups and organisations which will hopefully lead to future opportunities. For example between the Eric Liddell Centre and Dementia Friendly Pentlands, and links between local organisations and Tap into IT in relation to interest in a local computer club.

**REACH: HOW FAR INTO THE COMMUNITY DID YOU REACH?**

Establishing links with older people’s groups in the area was an effective way to reach large numbers of local older people, who could then share information with their own wider networks or friends, family, neighbours and other groups that they are part of. The core network developed was with 9 key groups/ organisations which reach approximately 200 people directly.

The reach of some of the key local groups involved is shown in the diagram below:

In addition to the key groups above, there are many more groups in the area attended by older people that were engaged through the project including membership groups such as Church Guilds, Probus and the Rotary Club,
hobby and interest groups, exercise classes including Movement for All and Move it or Lose it and café events such as the Old Boys Coffee Club, Currie Snack Lunches and the Mill Café.

**Printed Media**
Reach of articles in local newspapers with a circulation of: Currie and Balerno News = 3,000, Konect = 7,500, along with Church news and locally displayed posters and leaflets.

**Events**
Volunteer Celebration June 2019 – approx. 60-80 attendees
Living Well Event Nov 2019 – approx. 80-100 attendees

**LEARNING FOR THE FUTURE**

**Events**
Lessons learned from the Living Well event in 2018 were taken on board in the planning for the 2019 event. For example advertising was paid for in two editions of the Currie and Balerno News prior to the event as this was shown to be the only way to guarantee coverage in this important local communication. Feedback also suggested focusing on local rather than city wide groups to host stalls.

**Importance of local networks**
Local links and networks are important in any community-based project, but are perhaps particularly important in more rural areas where support is provided by very small voluntary groups. The need to develop relationships and use existing networks is key to success and appreciating the nuances of working with the community, and not being seen as trying to take over or parachute in ideas are paramount. The project has reinforced my view that the challenges faces by city wide service in recruiting local volunteers in the SWV area can be best met by working with existing groups and organisations who are better placed to identify and recruit volunteers, and by supporting them to do so. Similarly, any service developments are likely to be more successful if affiliated with existing and trusted local projects, hence the idea of a partnership with Dementia Friendly Pentlands.

**CHALLENGES AND CHANGES**
The South West Villages face a number of challenges related to population and geography. Older people contribute to and benefit from a strong community spirit, but issues include transport difficulties and few services that ‘go to’ people who are less mobile or prefer one to one support.

Challenges for the project included:
- Reaching isolated older people and those most in need. This is a persistent challenge and different channels need to be identified and used, for example GPs, pharmacy, local newspapers and word of mouth. The Community Link Worker post brings an opportunity to engage with some of the most isolated people identified by local GPs.
- A number of the groups are overwhelmingly female – this is likely to be partially due to life expectancy, but also that men don’t want to engage in the activities that are available or are put off by groups being predominately female. There are however a number of groups in the area that many men attend eg Rotary Club, Probus, Bowling Clubs etc. and the establishment of a Men’s Shed in Spring 2019 is a much needed addition.
- Many groups have a long summer break, the main reason given is to give volunteers a break, but it leaves a gap in activities for many. Responses to this include Currie Snack lunches that set up a Summer Pop-Up Café. 
- Working with small voluntary organisations means that it is difficult to arrange meetings – volunteers and part-time workers don’t have the time or capacity to attend meetings and are already giving a lot.
• Changes within wider context of meetings, networks and structures. For example, a number of local organisations had previously attended SW LOOP forum meetings which provided them with the opportunity to network with other organisations and hear about wider initiatives, but these meetings have now ceased.
• Change in staffing, for example at Canalside day service where good links were developing between the manager and the leads of local groups. The manager then moved to another area and new links will need to be developed. This requires constant work and effort which is difficult for very small organisations without some external facilitation.
• Transport is a priority for many people in the area and efforts to address the issue are high on the agenda for local Councillors and politicians. For a small number of people, this led to challenges in engaging with the South West Villages Project - if the project wasn’t able to resolve this issue, they were not interested.
• Some work was carried out to engage with people about testing an app to help arrange their informal care networks, but despite promotion no one came forward. The difficulty was that without testing as part of a service being delivered it was quite an abstract request. It would really need to be done as part of rolling out a new service which requires dedicated funding.
• Meeting funding criteria can be a challenge as the South West Villages is not an area of deprivation and many funding streams require this.

A note about timing of project – initially the proposal was for 9 months but this was spread over 12 months due to reduced activity over summer months when most of the groups do not run, along with flexible working of the Development Officer and other work commitments in late summer/ early autumn.

WHAT’S NEXT?

The South West Villages Project has provided an opportunity to focus on a part of Edinburgh with particular strengths and challenges in relation to support for older people. The project has consolidated a wide range of information and views and has identified particular areas of need for older people’s services in the future:

• Befriending/ Good Neighbours service
• Continued collaboration between existing older people’s groups

Discussions are planned with the National Lottery Community Fund and the search for funding will continue to address the needs of the local area.
Appendix 1 – images and leaflets

Living Well Event 7 November 2019
SWVP leaflets

Available at https://www.ericliddell.org/services/community-services/