

Empowerment & Engagement



Continued engagement of people using Living Well services through peer support and networking

Introduction to Living Well

The Living Well Approach is a partnership of 4 different organisations in the voluntary sector, Age UK Isle of Wight, Carers IW, People Matter IW and The Way Forward Programme.

The Living Well approach aims to support people to lead fulfilling lives and maintain independence through early prevention, self-help and by empowering people to take positive steps to manage their own health and well-being. There is no one size solution to living well, no one action plan or path to follow that will get you there. Everyone's idea of living well will be individual to them; it will depend on their general health, their current circumstances. Each Living Well assessment and subsequent action plan is completely individual and personalised. Working together with the person to build confidence and to achieve goals.

The Living Well approach will help the person to get the right care or support, at the right time and from the right people. It is designed to support anyone aged 18 and over who may have multiple low-level needs requiring support or advice, but who do not meet eligibility criteria to receive adult social care services.

The Living Well approach includes specialised support for older people, people living with learning disabilities, people living with mental health conditions and carers.

Project goals

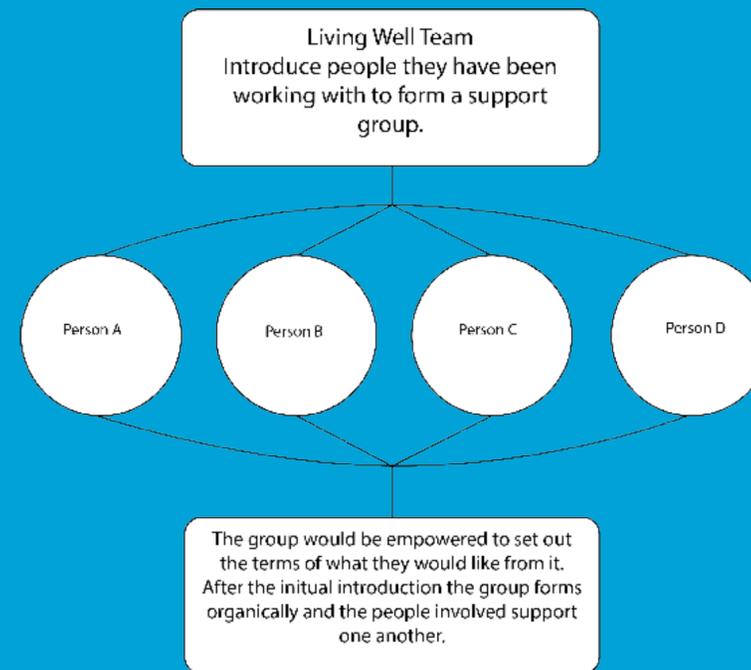
- Prevention and early help, putting action plans in place before things get worse and avoiding crisis.
- Person centred support to increase well-being, encouraging and empowering self-help.
- Being accessible, anyone who needs help can be referred, but with a particular focus on those ineligible for adult social care services.
- Finding out what 'living well' means to the person, what goals they would like to achieve.

How do we engage people who have worked with the Living Well team, to support one another post intervention?

We have been told by the people we work with that the support offered through the living well team is invaluable at helping people to access the things that will increase well-being and help them to remain independent. However, some of these people would like more support when the intervention with living well ends. This would need to be sustainable, but also free up the living well team to support others as required.

This project will build a self sustaining model where the people we have worked with are empowered to gain ongoing support from other in the community, but can link back in with Living Well team if needs increase or change.

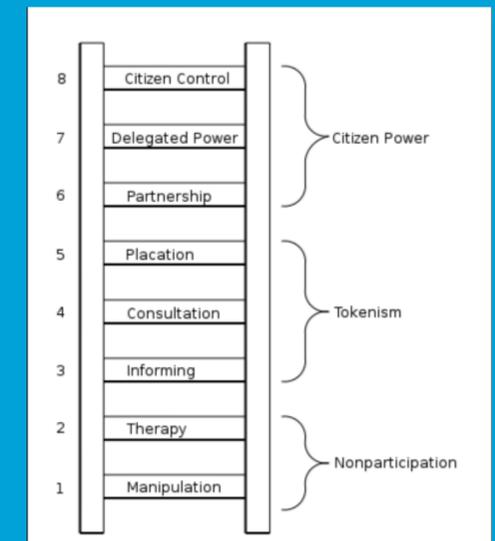
- After completing action plan to enable them to access additional support as required the person would be asked if they would like to form a small support group with others who have also worked with the living well team.
- The Living Well team would facilitate no more than 4-6 people meeting initially in their local community to form a support group.
- The group would be empowered to set out the terms of that they would like from it. For example it could be social activity, peer support, practical support such as going to the supermarket together.
- The aim is to build community, resilience and increase social networks of people - they ask one another for support if required.
- The group would decide if they would like one person to lead/organise or if they would like to take it in turns to meet in cafés or when comfortable, in each others houses.
- After the initial introductions the group forms organically and the people involved in the group support one another. The Living Well team would withdraw from being actively involved but would remain in contact with the groups via bi monthly phone calls. The group would have contact within the Living Well team should needs change and any of them require additional support.



Key learning from the programme

- The Living Well approach was designed with service user engagement and involvement. Leading by example in terms of service design and delivery to empower and engage the person.
- Validation that Living Well is in a strong position to help support statutory services to gain the views of the person.
- Living Well needs to be more vocal and increase awareness of professional approach, best practice and importance of recognising the value of participant engagement.
- Great new links have been identified through integrated working.
- Greater understanding of commissioning process and how the persons voice can influence change.
- Engaging with people is giving them the real power need to effect change.

Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation



References:

Arnstein, S. 1969. Ladder of citizen Participation available at: <https://lithgow-schmidt.dk/sherry-arnstein/ladder-of-citizen-participation.html>

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Contact:

For further information please contact: charlotte.price@ageukiw.org.uk