



Supporting Community Contributions in Later Life

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Our vision

A society where everyone enjoys
a good later life

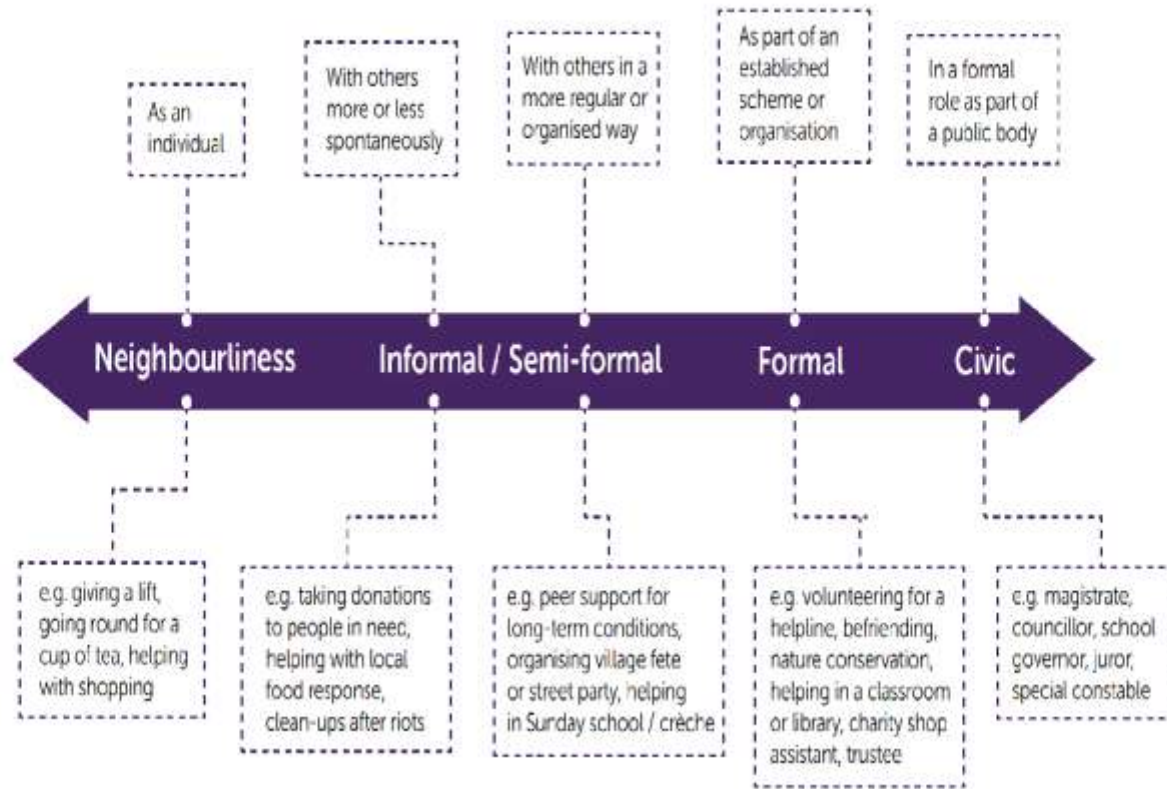
Our aim

To make sustainable, long-term changes
in society that will make a real difference
to people's later lives



Community contributions review

- Review of the existing evidence on benefits of community contributions to people in later life
- Over 200 responses to call for evidence and over 30 to call for practice
- Seven roundtable meetings (over 100 participants from different sectors – local government, funders)
- Focus groups with people in later life (including volunteers) in Hackney & Stockport etc
- Qualitative community research in four localities (Bristol, Leeds, Settle & Scarborough) to understand patterns of informal contributions in later life





What we know now

- Making a contribution in later life is good for us. It:
 - increases quality and quantity of social connections
 - enhances sense of purpose and self-esteem
 - improves life satisfaction, happiness and wellbeing
- Health and socioeconomic status are a more important determinant than age (formal)
- Small but consistent gap in rates of contribution by BAME groups (formal)



What we know now

- Many people who could benefit most are currently missing out
- The challenge is to keep people involved
- People face barriers that stop them from contributing
- Life events and transitions can affect people's ability to contribute

Informal contributions

“If you can do something, you do. You don't ask yourself, ‘shall I help?’, you just do something.”

- Looking in on neighbours
- Bins out/ parcels in
- Giving lifts
- Doing the shopping
- Looking after children
- Helping a neighbour to wash their hair



Enablers and motivators

“I get a sense of community, especially when it’s right next door. Belonging ... friendship ...”

- Wanting to ‘give back’ or ‘be a good neighbour’
- Long-standing contact, friendship and share experience
- Faith
- Reciprocity
- Desire to stay active and engaged



Barriers

- Practical – travel, access, time
- Structural – inflexible offers, lack of resources, bureaucracy
- Emotional – lack of confidence, stigma, stereotype





Barriers

- Few of these barriers are specific to older people so opportunities need to be age-friendly (not age-specific) and inclusive



Principles

- Flexible and responsive
- Enabled and supported
- Sociable and connected
- Valued and appreciated
- Meaningful and purposeful
- Makes good use of my strengths

Supporting community contributions in later life

- Recognise and value all contributions – from the most formal to the most informal or neighbourly
- Ensure opportunities are age-friendly and inclusive
- Nurture and support places, spaces and organisations
- Make it easy to start, stop and change contributions to smooth transitions
- Ensure people with additional needs are enabled

- Transforming later lives strategy
- Becoming an age-friendly community
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