

First phase stakeholder interviews: summary of main findings

January 2016

1. Introduction

A total of 10 stakeholders with involvement in the Time to Shine project (TTS hereafter) were interviewed to explore their experiences around developing and setting up the overall programme and specific delivery strands. This included three members of the programme team and seven representatives of project delivery organisations (either staff overseeing the project in a managerial role or staff involved in delivering the project). Some of the views discussed are shared by all stakeholders, but where particular points were made by either the programme team or delivery partners, this is made explicit. The following sections provide feedback based on the interviews carried out, broken down into four broad themes, including: the commissioning process; connections and capacity building; monitoring and evaluation; and achieving aims and objectives (including separate sub-sections on co-production and reaching beneficiaries). Each section considers what is perceived to be going well so far, potential challenges, and learning to date. As only half of the delivery organisations were interviewed, the information provided does not necessarily reflect the views of all TTS partners. It also needs to be borne in mind that project delivery organisations were at the inception stages of their respective projects. It is hoped that the discussion below can help to inform future commissioning and running of projects, alongside providing a guide to the experiences of current TTS projects

2. Commissioning

A member of the project team explained that the commissioning processes across the participating Ageing Better areas differed, for example some funded organisations were building capacity to deliver the programme 'in-house', whilst others were recruiting a relatively small number of delivery organisations. Though it was generally agreed by interviewees that recruiting a larger number of organisations to deliver projects was more time consuming, the consensus was that this was the most effective method of engaging relatively small/dispersed groups (i.e. LGBT, specific BAME communities) across the city. It was also viewed as a way to maximise utilisation of existing networks, and of injecting 'energy' to TTS, through providing a wider range of ideas. However, whilst the approach taken was preferred, it was suggested by a few interviewees that larger authorities may have been better able to cope with the relatively extensive monitoring and evaluation requirements. A few also felt that the commissioning process itself could have benefitted from more clarity, such as around resource allocation decisions, demonstrating 'equity of funding' across the different project strands (i.e. why are some strands apportioned larger sums than others). It was

also proposed that the next commissioning round should ensure that contingency plans are in place for 'unexpected' outcomes (i.e. how to reallocate funds in cases where outside organisations fund similar projects (such as CCG and social prescribing)), or agreeing a plan of action if a commissioned organisation pulls out (as happened in the digital strand).

Some interviewees expressed disappointment at the lack of interest from small local organisations/neighbourhood networks. A few potential reasons were provided, with suggestions that smaller organisations may have been discouraged by the evaluation requirements, or lacked capacity to get involved by attending regular meetings. It was also felt that organisations may have been led to believe TTS funding was aimed at larger organisations. This issue was acknowledged by the project team, and learning is being taken forward. One project team interviewee suggested that perhaps neighbourhood networks and smaller organisations could collaborate, though this was acknowledged as challenging due to the time and resources necessary to build partnerships. However, most who referred to this point felt that LOPF did all they could to promote TTS across the city. It was further suggested that the Time to Shine small funds scheme which is due to be rolled out may encourage smaller organisations to get involved by applying for smaller pots of money.

Some interviewees identified gaps in the initial funding round, including carers, people with dementia, and the West of Leeds. Again, it was felt by some that the small funds project may be more successful at targeting these groups, and could potentially encourage applicants from these organisations (and other, smaller organisations), to apply in the next commissioning round. It may also shed light on why these organisations had not applied in the first commissioning round (i.e. what is different about West Leeds, why less applications from this area?). When delivery partners were asked if they felt any particular group was missing, many felt unsure due to a lack of familiarity with all delivery partners; a greater understanding of the other TTS projects being run will likely develop over time.

Summary: Commissioning

- Whilst there are identified challenges of working with smaller organisations, overall, stakeholders felt this was the best way to commission services, particularly in terms of engaging hard to reach groups.
- The next commissioning round would benefit from more clarity around how the funding is allocated, and more thought around potential contingency plans in the event of unexpected outcomes.
- The lack of involvement from smaller organisations and underrepresentation by particular groups, such as carers and people with dementia was assessed as disappointing, but it was felt that the small funds project may have more success at targeting these organisations and groups, alongside potentially shedding light on why applications from these groups were lower than expected.

3. Connections and capacity building

Some interviewees had been involved in TTS since its inception, such as through the core partnership, thus forming links with local organisations prior to the funding being awarded. A few agreed that the partnerships which developed at this pre commissioning stage were especially important, with members bringing particular skills to ensure the bid was successful (i.e. members included academics and a variety of third sector organisations who had previous experience of working on BIG funding bids). This initial work was described as a 'real partnership', as contributors across the city had a 'shared vision, energy and excitement'. For one delivery partner the development of the TTS proposal to the Big Lottery was viewed as one of the most valuable elements of TTS, due to the wider benefit of securing money for Leeds as a city. A project team member (of a delivery organisation) felt that organisations involved at the inception stage valued being part of the steering group, and that the respect held for LOPF as an organisation assisted with this.

For all delivery partners, the TTS project they are running is part of a wider portfolio of activities delivered by the organisation for which they are employed. Whilst a few organisations are aimed exclusively at older people/or specific groups, others worked with a wide range of groups, of all ages. A few referred to how working on TTS could help to meet the broader aims and objectives of the organisations taking part (including local and national). For many, the wider organisation for which they were employed had experience of applying for funding for various projects, with a few planning to apply for additional funding to support areas of TTS (for example, to secure extra resources to link in with GPs, or to sustain projects less likely to become self sustaining, such as work with the very isolated/or housebound people). Having an existing infrastructure, such as through a volunteer base, producing newsletters and having existing partner networks, for example, were assessed as important conduits toward reaching the main aims and objectives set for TTS. Further, for organisations which had ran similar projects in the past, they felt able to apply the learning to TTS. Whilst it is positive that delivery partners are applying for funding to increase resources, it does suggest that, if unsuccessful, effective targeting may be hindered in some areas (i.e. GPS, whom partners felt required a significant amount of time to truly engage).

A few TTS projects involve coordinating and developing partnerships 'within' as well as 'between' projects (i.e. one project is providing support to a number of voluntary organisations providing services to target beneficiaries). A partner pointed out how their specific input, due to TTS funding provided, added value to the local communities involved, such as providing support around applying for funding/sponsorship to help sustain activities, and through carrying out audits of buildings. For TTS projects involved in coordinating other organisations and stakeholders to run projects, regular progress/support meetings between groups needs to take place alongside attendance at meetings around delivery partner/contract etc, which again, takes extra time.

Most delivery partners had some idea about how they might link in with each other, particularly those running similar projects (including exchanging ideas, having joint training sessions, working through practical issues, such as DBS checks for volunteers). Some also planned to refer existing service users to other organisations running a TTS project (such as those offering befriending based services, rather than providing set activities and vice versa). One project has two delivery partners involved, both are citywide providers, but one has a broad reach, whereas the other aims services at

a specific group. Each felt they would benefit from the links and contacts of the other to help build capacity within their own organisations. Another citywide provider hoped to benefit from the local knowledge of a geographical based delivery partner by attending a 'walkabout', as it was believed this particular area contained a large number of the citywide organisation's target population. It is felt this bottom up approach will be beneficial to delivery, as organisations with local knowledge can provide invaluable information to larger, citywide (or area wide) organisations who may not have sufficient resources at a smaller scale.

Whilst partners generally expressed an interest in working with each other, with one pointing to the broader shared interest of reducing social isolation, most expressed that time limitations would likely hinder development at a wider level (i.e. some relationships may develop where mutual benefit is identified, but not necessarily a closer link between all partners). A few also expressed concerns around potential conflicts in terms of how outcomes would be recorded, referring to a competitiveness/'threat to territory'. Yet whilst there are concerns, some promising partnerships are emerging, and it will be important to track how these develop, exploring the ways in which partners can support each other in achieving their respective aims and objectives.

All delivery partners are looking to develop partnerships with organisations outside of TTS, such as through neighbourhood networks, hospitality (restaurants, pubs), places of worship, health providers (such as GPs, nurses, physiotherapist, hospitals, CCGs), a mini bus organisation, care homes, schools (i.e. promoting volunteering to parents who may wish to gain experience ahead of returning to work) and smaller community organisations. A few plan to walk around target areas, with one stating they are due to visit all key places in a particular community, such as pharmacies, barbers, shops etc, to promote the project. The organisation which is targeting LGBT older people plan to visit a wide range of establishments across the city, utilising their wider experience of reaching people who do not access other networks. GPs were the most frequently referred to external organisation which need to be engaged with, with most believing that establishing links with GPs would facilitate access to the most hard to reach isolated older people. A number of partners are in the process of linking with GPs, but most agreed that doing so would take time/resources, and two had applied for additional funding to support this. It will be interesting to track the work partners are doing to in this area, as this can potentially help inform future commissioned projects.

Some delivery partners mentioned that they have experienced challenges linking to particular local organisations (who are providing services not funded by TTS), due to them being protective over their services and funding streams. This led to concerns around potential barriers as they attempt to promote TTS services, or as they try to gain information that may aid access to particular communities. For example one citywide organisation saw neighbourhood networks as central to achieving community engagement in specific areas, yet referred to difficulties in gaining support from a network she had got in touch with. It was suggested that this was perhaps due to the network having their own pressures and targets to meet. Another contacted an organisation that ran events aimed at her particular target group, but they refused to allow access to an event so that TTS could be promoted to participants. It was suggested that these types of initial barriers to access may improve over time, as organisations gain a better understanding of TTS, and how it may benefit the communities in which they work. Related to this a few expressed the view that face to face contact was important when trying to gain rapport with community organisations, with many recognising

the importance of creating promotional materials (such as leaflets, posters, postcards, beer mats), which could then be distributed.

As touched upon above the main identified challenge of developing partnerships with other delivery partners is having the time to do so alongside the day to day running of projects. Reviewing this and looking at how to best facilitate partnerships will be an ongoing process. A few referred to online communication tools, such as a forum to discuss challenges etc, particularly as these may be similar due to the shared broader outcomes related to reducing social isolation. Another avenue is the delivery partner meetings. Whilst most liked the opportunity to listen to the progress of others, one suggested partners may not necessarily feel comfortable talking about problems in a more structured setting. Another felt it would be beneficial if partners met 'informally' to have more unstructured meetings at each other's premises, with one suggesting people may feel more confident sharing progress this way (perhaps without members of the project team being present). However, it was felt that this type of regular contact would be difficult, given the limited time partners have to work on TTS. Tools to facilitate linkages between project deliverers is ongoing, with documents such as 'Give Get' (which provides information on what projects can give, and what they hope to gain) as well as an online chat forum.

A member of the project team felt it would be beneficial to develop a closer relationship with the other areas involved in the main Fulfilling Lives, Ageing Better project - such as meeting at various local authority areas to share ideas/issues/learning etc. However, whilst an online platform has been developed, no real discussions have taken place around potential face to face contact.

Summary: Connections and Capacity Building

- Members of the core partnership board (project team and delivery partners) valued the relationships built, skills utilised, and the time and commitment given, both at individual and sector level, when developing TTS, with one partner stating that they were driven by a wish to see an investment in Leeds as a city, rather than their own individual projects.
- For all delivery partners, TTS is being run as part of a wider portfolio of activities delivered by the organisation for which they are employed, meaning projects will benefit from learning through delivering other projects, having access to a range of facilities, and through being included in organisational led promotions. A few TTS projects involve coordinating and developing partnerships 'within' as well as 'between' projects, thus requiring the development of successful collaborations at both levels.
- All delivery partners are looking to develop partnerships with a wide range of organisations outside of TTS, coming up with ideas around how they will achieve this (such as through doing 'walkabouts' and applying for additional funding). A number of partners are in the process of linking with GPs, but most agreed that doing so would take time/resources, and two had applied for additional funding to support this.
- Some delivery partners mentioned that they have experienced challenges due to particular local organisations being protective over their services and funding streams, with some expressing concern around the potential barriers this may cause. However, it was suggested that these

initial barriers to access may improve over time, as organisations gain a better understanding of TTS, and how it may benefit the communities in which they work.

- Though still at formative stages, some promising partnerships are developing, both internally and in local communities. Most delivery partners had some idea about how they might link in with each other, particularly working together or sharing learning with those running similar projects, or as potential referral routes where provision is different (i.e. befrienders signposting to activities being run).
- Whilst some delivery partners recognised that had a broad shared interest with each other through the overarching aim of reducing social isolation, the main identified challenges were around having sufficient time to develop partnerships, and issues around competition/protectiveness, between organisations.
- Though time was frequently cited as an important factor, interviewees provided suggestions as to how partnerships between delivery organisations could be developed, including online communication tools, or opportunities for partners to meet 'informally' to have more unstructured meetings. LOPF are currently looking at various ways to help support partners to work together.
- A member of the project team felt it would be beneficial to develop a closer relationship with the other areas involved in the main Fulfilling Lives, Ageing Better project.

4. Monitoring and evaluation

All partners found LOPF to be both approachable and supportive, feeling able to discuss any emerging issues. For example one partner who had found the evaluation requirements 'confusing' felt the evaluation officer was able to package what was required in a way that ensured she was more confident in carrying out the evaluation. This was achieved by focusing on the individual requirements of the organisation, giving less regard to contextualising this in the broader framework (i.e. national and local evaluation requirements). Comments were also made around the skills and commitment of the project team working on TTS, with all feeling that they were doing a very good job of running such a complex and multilayered project.

As touched upon above, LOPF made the decision to fund a wide range of organisations, feeling this was the best way to approach the project aims, and perhaps the only way to ensure engagement of smaller/local level organisation. However, both the project team and delivery partners expressed concern around the level of monitoring and evaluation required, with a few suggesting it was 'out of proportion' to the funding allocated, and that smaller organisations, in particular, may struggle to satisfy its requirements. A few expressed confusion about how all the strands of monitoring and evaluation will work in practice (i.e. short, medium and long surveys, case studies etc.). Overall, interviewees had an understanding that whilst numerous, the evaluation requirements were set at a higher level (i.e. not by LOPF) and there was an appreciation that the process was necessary due to funding requirements. Another partner suggested that alongside assessing value for money in terms of delivery, it would also be valuable to measure the costs associated with evaluating and

monitoring the project, particularly as there are so many tiers involved. One interviewee expressed the importance of ensuring, particularly as some projects are only budgeted for part time workers, that meetings and monitoring/evaluation requirements do not get in the way of delivery partners carrying out their role (i.e. reaching and supporting socially isolated Older People). Despite these expressed challenges, no delivery organisation suggested they would be unable to satisfy the requirements.

Most concerns around the evaluation process related to the design of the survey. Comments included concerns that participants who do not complete the survey in English are excluded from the national survey. It was also felt that the nature of the questions may be particularly off putting to the most isolated, the illiterate and those less well off, who it was felt 'will be mystified' by its content. A few partners expressed concern around how completing surveys would fit in with their frontline environment, particularly the appropriateness of asking sensitive questions in particular settings (i.e. at a pub). It was suggested that these issues may potentially impact on both the quality and quantity of data obtained. As all interviewees had some reservations around the national evaluation, it will be important to monitor this. It may be that once the process is underway, initial concerns (particularly around its overall complexity), will be lessened, such as for one partner who expressed relief after completing the form with a beneficiary, stating it was not as difficult as they thought it would be. Finally, a project partner pointed out that the survey can only measure change, but not the reasons for this, thus stressing the importance of the local evaluation in assessing the potential barriers and triggers which may impact on participation.

With specific regard to anticipated challenges in gathering the required information, one project team member iterated that 'test and learn' was an important mechanism for which to record and feedback on ongoing problems, particularly if there are concerns around data quality. Overall, interviewees appreciated the test and learn approach and felt optimistic about how it would work in practice, with a few stating they felt confident that they could adapt their project in the event of unintended outcomes (i.e. a rural based project had adapted their target localities due to practical constraints).

With regard to the local evaluation, in a few cases two members of the delivery organisation (usually the person managing the project and the project worker) provided information to the researcher. This was because some interviewees had been specifically recruited to run the TTS, so had limited information around how it had developed, others had been involved from the start, such as through being part of the core partnership. For example one interviewee brought in a colleague to discuss particular points, in another two were present for the whole interview, another felt the researcher should speak to her colleague to clarify a few areas she was less sure on. Seeking the views of two people proved a valuable way of gaining a more rounded picture of the development and early stages of the project. It may be more appropriate to interview the project worker during follow up.

Summary: Monitoring and Evaluation

- All partners found LOPF to be both approachable and supportive, feeling able to discuss any emerging issues. Whilst some felt the evaluation and monitoring requirements were confusing, all felt supported by the Evaluation Officer, with a few reporting that their confidence had increased due to help and guidance offered by LOPF. Comments were also made around the

skills and commitment of the project team working on TTS, with all feeling that they were doing a very good job of running such a complex and multilayered project.

- Interviewees expressed concern around the level of monitoring and evaluation required, with a few suggesting it was 'out of proportion' to the funding allocated, and that smaller organisations, in particular, may struggle to satisfy its requirements. Overall, interviewees had an understanding that, the evaluation requirements were set at a higher level. Furthermore, all delivery partners felt able to satisfy the monitoring and evaluation criteria.
- It was suggested that alongside assessing value for money in terms of delivery, it would also be valuable to measure the costs associated with evaluating and monitoring the project, particularly as there are so many tiers involved.
- Most concerns around the evaluation process related to the design of the survey, particularly its length, inclusivity and appropriateness of questions asked (particularly in specific project settings, such as a pub, for example). It was suggested that these issues may potentially impact on both the quality and quantity of data obtained, with a programme worker iterating the importance of qualitative, local level data to provide a contextual understanding of TTS outcomes. As all interviewees had some reservations around the national evaluation, it will be important to monitor this.
- The 'test and learn' approach was viewed as an important mechanism for which to record and feedback on ongoing problems, particularly if there are concerns around data quality. Overall, interviewees felt optimistic about how test and learn would work in practice, with a few stating they felt confident that they could adapt their project in the event of unintended outcomes.

5. Achieving aims and objectives

A member of the project team hoped that TTS would be successful at reaching the 'grassroots' of Leeds communities, to give a voice to all older people. The chief aims of individual projects included bringing communities together to reduce social isolation, improving wellbeing, accessing hard to reach groups and increasing capacity within the wider organisation for which the TTS project is embedded. Alongside the specific target groups (i.e. LGBT, BAME groups), partners were hoping to engage men, the bereaved, those who are housebound due to a lack of confidence/a fall, and younger volunteers, to foster intergenerational engagement. Whilst interviewees pointed out the importance of ensuring that the voices of a broad range of older people are heard, it was recognised that reaching all voices would be challenging. It was also pointed out that the range of voices (i.e. BAME, LGBT) should not just refer to service users, but also core partnership and LOPF board members, and delivery partners themselves.

Some partners had ambitious aims and objectives that they hoped to achieve through TTS, such as achieving greater cohesion within their own communities, or rolling local level projects out so they lead to citywide impact. A few were already considering ways to sustain projects after the funding period ends (such as applying for additional resources). An organisation running a project in the dinner dates strand hope to facilitate culture change within the neighbourhood they are working,

where the presence of older people eating out and socialising at night is viewed as normal, which the partner did not feel was presently the case. It was felt that this could lead to restaurants changing menus to reflect the tastes of older people, or reserving tables for single people to be able to come and share each other's company. Of course, only time will tell how this develops, but if successful, can potentially contribute to the sustainability and perhaps learning across wider areas in Leeds.

Some delivery partners felt the targets for new older people reached by their organisation was going to be challenging, but most felt it could feasibly be achieved. Whilst partners pointed out that it was still early days, a few felt they may encounter difficulties recruiting and retaining volunteers. Most had some level of intergenerational focus, with many recruiting volunteers from a range of ages (i.e. students, the younger old). The part time nature of the role of workers was identified as a potential barrier to the type of volunteers accessed. For example one partner could only employ a worker one day a week, and whilst the person could be flexible (through spreading the hours across the week), this still proved difficult when recruiting students who may have particular curriculum commitments. Another concern for a few was ensuring the ratio of volunteers to older people was right, thus avoiding the use of a waiting list.

Whilst early days, all delivery partners interviewed were able to report at least a few examples of how they had positively impacted on someone's life. This ranged from encouraging a housebound older person to attend an event through building up trust, to helping people link with each other through arranging a group based activity (with e.g.s. provided of older people making connections and arranging to meet up again through attending TTS activities and events). Positive examples of how volunteers are benefiting from the project were also provided, such as one recently retired and bereaved volunteer who had valued the experience of befriending an isolated older person.

Co-production

Members of the core partnership board (project team and delivery partners) valued the relationships built, skills utilised, and the time and commitment given, both at individual and sector level, when developing TTS, with one partner stating that they were driven by a wish to see an investment in Leeds as a city, rather than their own individual projects.

The active and 'real' engagement of older people throughout the running of TTS is assessed as important by the project team. All partners interviewed were involving older people in their respective projects in some way, with most reporting that older people had inputted into the initial bid, such as through having a say over commissioning of delivery partners, sitting on interview panels when staff were employed to work on individual projects, and providing ideas for the project itself at the application stage.

Yet whilst all projects incorporated the views of older people in some way when designing their projects, it is yet to be seen whether this momentum will continue as projects are rolled out. Though most partners aimed to continue ensuring that older people remained involved, what this was expected to entail varied between partners. For example one organisation expected that older people would be the primary driver of how their project developed through directing steering groups. Yet others aimed to engage service users in smaller ways, such as through setting up an online blog that they could contribute to, or having a chat to beneficiaries to gain their views during

activities. Whilst some partners are in the process of setting up steering groups which will be led by older people, a few felt their project was too small to justify setting one up, though one suggested they may set up a service user focus group at an organisational level. Yet others stated that seeking the views of service users was embedded within the wider organisation for which they worked, and that this 'culture of consultation' would be present for TTS. Whilst informal mechanisms of involving older people are no doubt welcome, it may be hard to record this as active involvement in shaping how projects are run.

So whilst partners aimed to ensure the views of older beneficiaries are sought, it was not always clear how this might happen. Therefore, it will be important to assess the extent to which co-production is embedded within individual projects.

Reaching beneficiaries

Most interviewees recognised that reaching the very isolated will be challenging, referring to the importance of word of mouth and spreading the word through local community networks (particularly GPs, whom it was felt were trusted by older people). The need to build in time to ensure development of trust was also frequently referred to when thinking about how to engage beneficiaries once they are reached. This was particularly so for housebound older people, which is perceived as resource intensive due to the need for one to one attention and home visits. Other considerations are for organisations who work with beneficiaries where English is not their first language, and one referred to the extra time involved in interpreting information, such as the survey.

One partner pointed out that some older people, such as those who live with family, may not identify themselves as isolated, but may be so due to lack of peer networks. Others identified challenges due to a lack of events available at weekends, and also evenings. A few projects are specifically aiming to provide events 'outside of office hours', so it will be interesting to assess how these develop over time. For example the project which is providing shared tables in public eateries is interested in expanding this over time, thus increasing availability of activities at weekends. Another organisation is hoping to apply learning to younger people in rural communities, who also experience a shortage of things to do.

Some interviewees referred to how beneficiaries should be labelled, with a few feeling that some will not identify with the term 'older' or 'old' and may not participate in activities if it is marketed as being for 'old people'. For a few TTS could be an invaluable way of attempting to reduce the stigma attached to isolation and loneliness, and around older people using public spaces, such as a pub, at an evening or weekend. One of the valuable perceived potential outcomes of the latter was that older people can go out alone for a meal, without having to say "I feel lonely", once they get there.

Summary: Achieving aims and objectives

- The chief aims of individual projects include bringing communities together to reduce social isolation, improving wellbeing, accessing hard to reach groups and increasing capacity within the wider organisation for which the TTS project is embedded. Some partners had ambitious aims and objectives that they hoped to achieve through TTS, such as achieving greater cohesion within their own communities, or rolling local level projects out so they lead to citywide impact.

A few were already considering ways to sustain projects after the funding period ends (such as applying for additional resources).

- Alongside specific target groups, partners were hoping to engage men, the bereaved, those who are housebound due to a lack of confidence/a fall, and younger volunteers, to foster intergenerational engagement. It was iterated that ensuring a range of voices are heard (i.e. BAME, LGBT) should not just refer to service users, but also core partnership and LOPF board members, and delivery partners themselves.
- Some delivery partners felt the targets they had set for reaching new older people and volunteers was going to be challenging, but most felt it could feasibly be achieved. The part time nature of the role of workers was identified as a potential barrier to the type of volunteers accessed. Another concern for a few was ensuring the ratio of volunteers to older people was right, thus avoiding the use of a waiting list. However, all agreed that it was early days, and they would have a better feel for these issues once projects are underway.
- All delivery partners were able to report at least a few early examples of how they had positively impacted on someone's life, both volunteers and older beneficiaries.
- The active and 'real' engagement of older people throughout the running of TTS is assessed as important by the project team. All partners interviewed were involving older people in their respective projects in some way, with most reporting that older people had inputted into the initial bid. It is yet to be seen whether this momentum will continue as projects are rolled out, as whilst partners aimed to ensure the views of older beneficiaries are sought, it was not always clear how this might happen, with some suggesting they will adopt more 'informal' mechanisms of seeking the views of older service users. Therefore, it will be important to assess the extent to which co-production is embedded within individual projects.
- Most interviewees recognised that reaching the very isolated will be challenging, with the need to build in time to ensure development of trust frequently referred to when thinking about how to engage beneficiaries once they are reached. This was particularly so for housebound older people, or those who work with beneficiaries where English is not their first language.
- Some partners identified challenges due to a lack of events available at weekends, and also evenings. A few projects are specifically aiming to provide events 'outside of office hours', so it will be interesting to assess how these develop over time.
- Some interviewees referred to how beneficiaries should be labelled, with a few feeling that some will not identify with the term 'older' or 'old' and may not participate in activities if it is marketed as being for 'old people'.

6. Conclusion

Overall, the main positives at this early stage related to the overall aims and objectives of TTS in giving Leeds as a city the opportunity to work with a broad range of groups at risk of, or experiencing, social isolation. Delivery partners have a range of ideas around how they might do this, and most are forming partnerships with each other, and a broad range of stakeholders in the wider

community, to help achieve their aims. Each partner reported early successes, with innovative and ambitious plans being put forward to ensure the sustainability of individual projects. However, there are some assessed challenges, particularly around achieving ambitious targets, carrying out the monitoring and evaluation requirements effectively, and having the time to form potentially fruitful partnerships with particular organisations, such as GPS. There were also concerns around competitiveness both between and within community led organisations. However, all agreed that it was early days.