

The Age of Inclusion

Lessons from social action innovations developing age-inclusive and age-friendly practice



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Introduction

Between 2016 and 2020, Nesta and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) supported 36 organisations to develop more age-inclusive and age-friendly practice for their social action innovations. Approximately 25,000 people participated in social action to support the innovations to impact the lives of thousands of people. This also saw a 78 per cent increase of involvement of older adults. Together, their practice offers great insights on how other organisations may also be more inclusive.

How to use this guide

This guide is designed to share these learnings with civil society organisations and public sector organisations who design and deliver social action programmes and are seeking to be more age-inclusive and age-friendly. It outlines some of the tactics and practical approaches that worked well for the innovations we backed.

It is important to note that this is not a comprehensive end-to-end guide on volunteering or volunteer management, and other resources will be better suited to this need. Whilst this guidance focuses on attracting more older adults to share their skills, knowledge and experience to have an impact on a particular issue, many of the mechanisms that enable a good inclusive experience for older adults are in many respects universal. These lessons and insights may therefore help organisations seeking to be inclusive in their practice more generally.

The practical case studies and insights aim to help other social action organisations engage more older adults in their work, regardless of whether this age group is currently a core part of their volunteer makeup or not.



A quick note on language

The language used in this guide reflects the language organisations already use in their work, and also draws from the research and evidence from a number of organisations including **NCVO**, the **Centre for Ageing Better** and

our partners at the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. These definitions may help you navigate the information found in this guide.

Older adults

In this instance, 'older adults' refers to people aged 50 and over.

Social action

DCMS defines social action as: *"... people coming together to help improve their lives and solve the problems that are important in their communities. It can broadly be defined as practical action in the service of others, which is (i) carried out by individuals or groups of people working together, (ii) not mandated and not for profit, (iii) done for the good of others – individuals, communities and/or society, and (iv) bringing about social change and or value".¹* We use this term to describe the range of activities outlined in our Typology of People-Powered Action on page 6.

Volunteer

'Volunteer' is a term used to outline a range of roles. This term is not universally used by the innovations we backed – people may recognise themselves as volunteering, but they could also be neighbours simply 'helping out' or people supporting each other as peers or mentors. We will use the term 'volunteer' as a uniting concept for the different roles that people may play or participate in.

Beneficiary

'Beneficiary' is used to describe the person or people who benefit from the work of the organisation and who it is designed to impact. However, the innovations we backed benefit a much wider group: people who are volunteering may be also benefiting. Some organisations subsequently feel uncomfortable with the power dynamics of the term, and see everyone as neighbours, participants, or just people taking part in their work.

Age-inclusive and age-friendly

An age-inclusive and age-friendly organisation or initiative works to enable people of all ages to live healthy and active later lives. In this context they value different people's perspectives and experiences, help people participate in the activities that they value, and contribute to their communities for as long as they would like to.

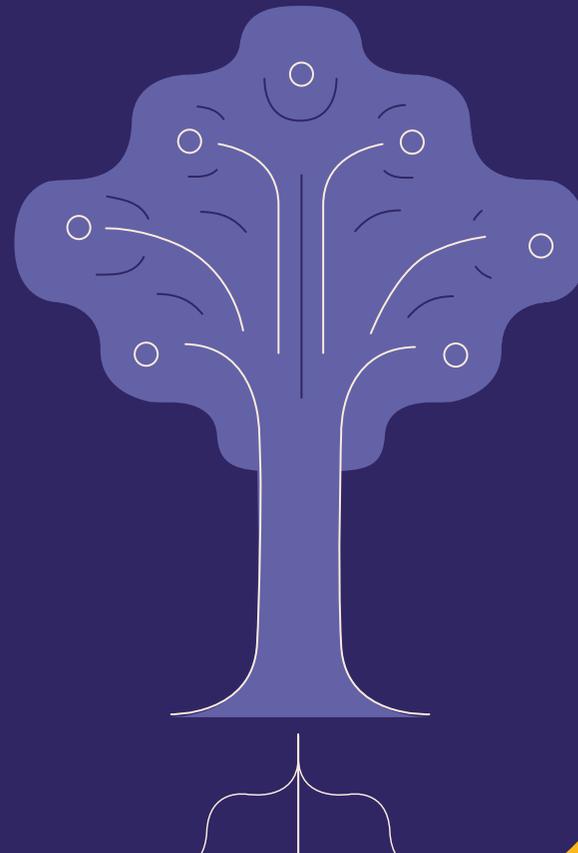
Successful projects

This term suggests an organisation that may have been successful at one tactic or approach mentioned – for example those that aligned their motivations for age-inclusivity with clear outcomes, those that worked to co-create with older adults or those that looked to create more inclusive communications.

1. www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-action-harnessing-the-potential

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Context: Why does age-inclusive and age-friendly social action matter?



Age-inclusive and age-friendly social action

We are living longer than ever before,² on average ten years longer than our parents' generation and **nearly two decades longer than our grandparents**.³ This is a startling achievement: our ageing society is set to transform every aspect of our lives from welfare and employment to family and community life.

Although for decades this has been heralded as a prompt for innovation, opening up a wealth of opportunity for us as individuals and as a society, without a radical rethink we will fail to realise the gift of longer lives.

One area in need of further innovation is our community life – the relationships that surround and support us as our lives change. Whilst we often hear of the need for innovative healthcare solutions or new retirement savings models in bold policy initiatives such as the UK government's **Grand Ageing Challenge**, we hear much less about how we may reimagine our connections, relationships and the way we use our time.

Across our lifetime, most of us contribute in some way to improving the lives of others in **our communities**. Whether we call it formal or informal volunteering, giving, social action or simply 'people helping people', caring for others is a deeply ingrained part of our culture. Picking up shopping for a neighbour, running a community sports team or being a school governor: we participate in a tapestry of activities across our lives, giving time or other resources for the common good. See Figure 1 – Typology of People-Powered Action.

Figure 1: Typology of People-Powered Action



2. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections>

3. Ibid

Not only do these activities make a difference to our lives and neighbourhoods, there is also a large and growing body of evidence on the benefits that people get by voluntarily helping others. The Centre for Ageing Better's evidence review **The benefits of making a contribution to your community in later life** identifies that older adults engaged in voluntary activity experience increases in: the quantity and quality of their social connections, their sense of purpose and self esteem, and their life satisfaction, happiness and wellbeing.

But not all people find it easy to participate, especially those with long-term health conditions or those with less money and resources. We also know that a 'civic core' – a small group of highly engaged, typically older

adults – **gives over 50 per cent**⁴ of all volunteering hours in the UK. There is a real risk that we will not be able to sustain such contributions into the future.

With longer working lives, higher caring demands, and more people living in communities with non-traditional family structures, more needs to be done to remove the barriers for inclusion of older adults to participate in social action. In doing this, we also need to make opportunities that work for people's lives, communities and neighbourhoods, helping them make the biggest differences to the challenges and opportunities we face as society. And in an increasingly segregated and atomised society, we also need to build these opportunities across generations.



The Reader, Shared Reading session

4. https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-social-sciences/social-policy/tsrc/working-papers/working-paper-73.pdf?utm_medium=twitter&utm_source=twitter-fri-heroes&utm_content=&utm_campaign=

Learning to be more age-inclusive and age-friendly: the programme approach

Over the years there have been a number of attempts to support increased volunteering amongst older adults. Modelled on one US approach, **Experience Corps** launched in the UK in 2001 with the aim of recruiting 250,000 older volunteers within three years. Before this, The Home Office's **Older Volunteers Initiative** in 1999 aimed to improve the quality and quantity of volunteering for those aged 50 and over.

In more recent years there has been huge interest and focus on youth social action with the development of a **National Citizen Service** and campaigns such as **#iwill**. In 2015, the government wanted to refocus attention, building on the learning from youth social action and other **campaigns** to support more social action across the lifecycle, particularly for those aged over fifty.

An experimental approach was adopted to understand how civil society organisations can create more opportunities for people aged fifty and above to volunteer. As a result, between 2016 and 2020 Nesta and DCMS supported 36 organisations across a number of funds to learn how to be more age-inclusive and age-friendly

in their social action work. Organisations were not necessarily age focused, with work across a whole variety of subsectors, as can be seen in Figure 2.

With a growing interest from the government, DCMS also commissioned an **evidence review** from the Centre for Ageing Better to support this work.

The work involved civil society organisations particularly where there was a compelling case for why older adults would want to get involved in their initiative, where they were seeking to provide a better experience for older adults, and/or where older adults were underrepresented.

Many of the funded innovations were seeking to grow their work to impact more people or test out new areas of work. For example, **Neighbourhood Watch Network** developed a new approach to community fraud prevention. To do this the organisations had to consciously consider and learn how to be age-inclusive and age-friendly in their approach.



Figure 2: Outline of the work of the age-inclusive and age-friendly initiatives

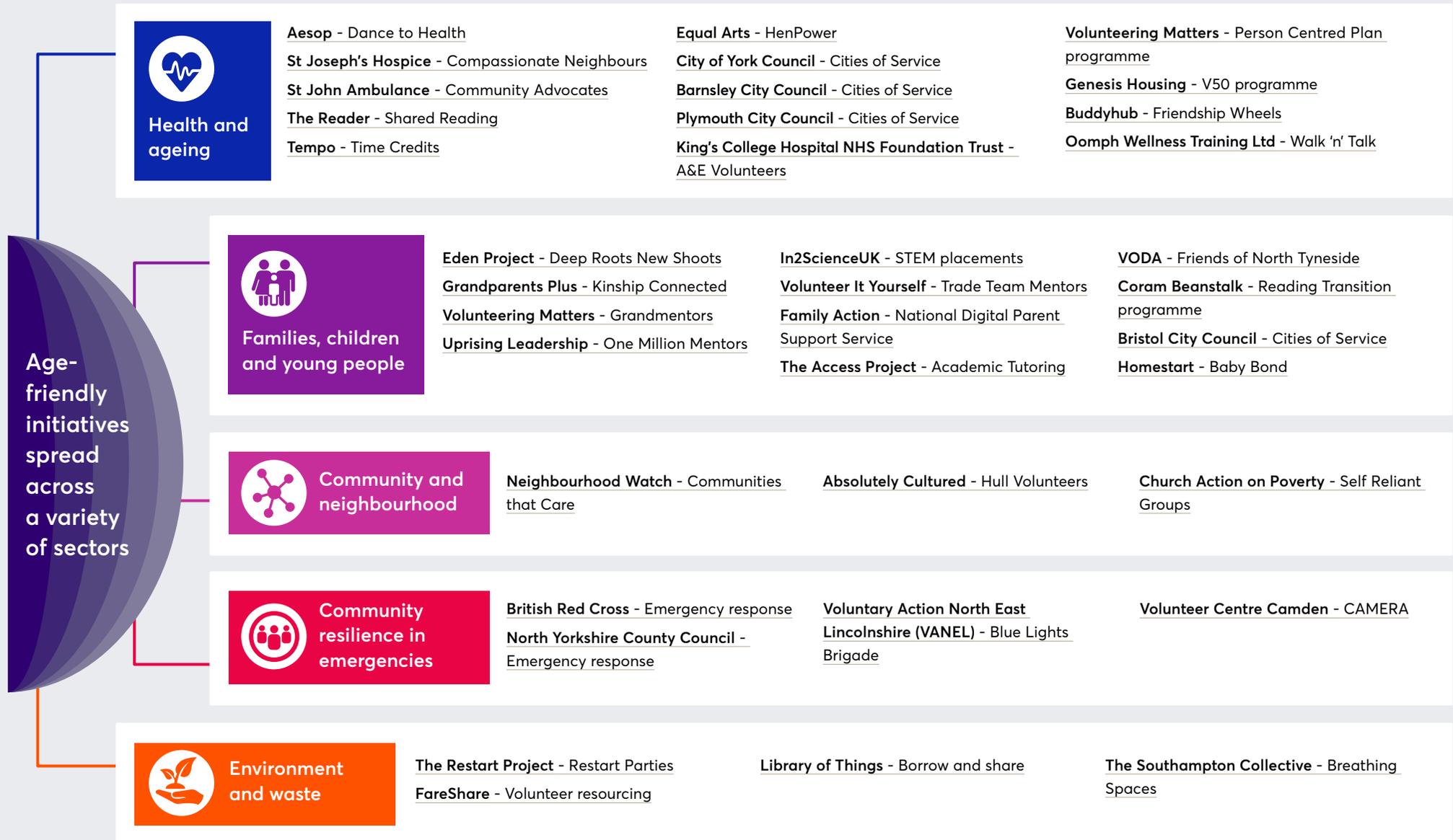


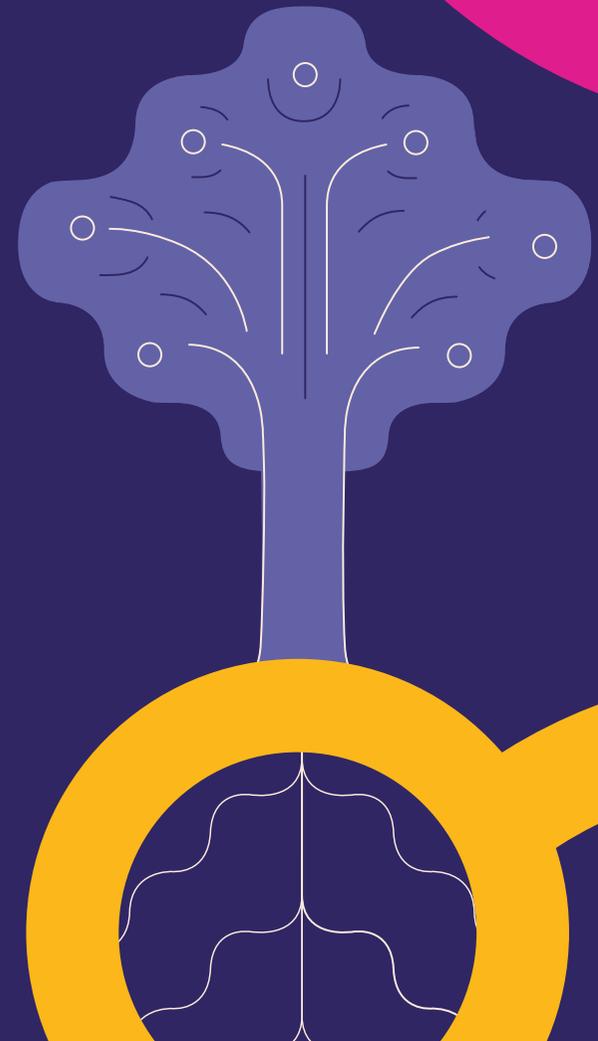
Figure 3: The social action innovations learning to be more age-inclusive and age-friendly in numbers

Figure 3 demonstrates just some of the impact of the 36 organisations funded by Nesta and DCMS that sought to develop and grow more age-inclusive and age-friendly social action innovations.



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How did organisations create more age-inclusive and age-friendly social action?

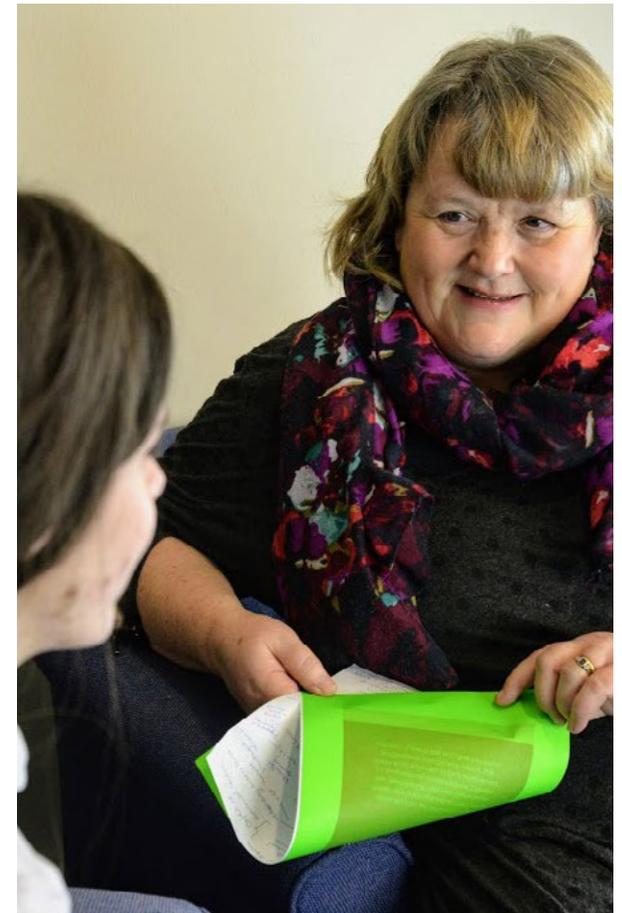


There are many ways of working and approaches that organisations can adopt to be more age-inclusive and age-friendly. Whilst the initiatives focused particularly on appealing to older adults, defined in this case as people aged 50 and over, in many respects the practical learnings are relevant for all ages involvement.

Across the volunteer journey, we have drawn together experiences, approaches and tips from the different organisations experimenting with ways to increase age-inclusive and age-friendly practices. Whilst no single organisation created the perfect solution, we hope that civil society organisations and public services looking to support more inclusive social action will be able to adopt and adapt the insights to their own contexts.

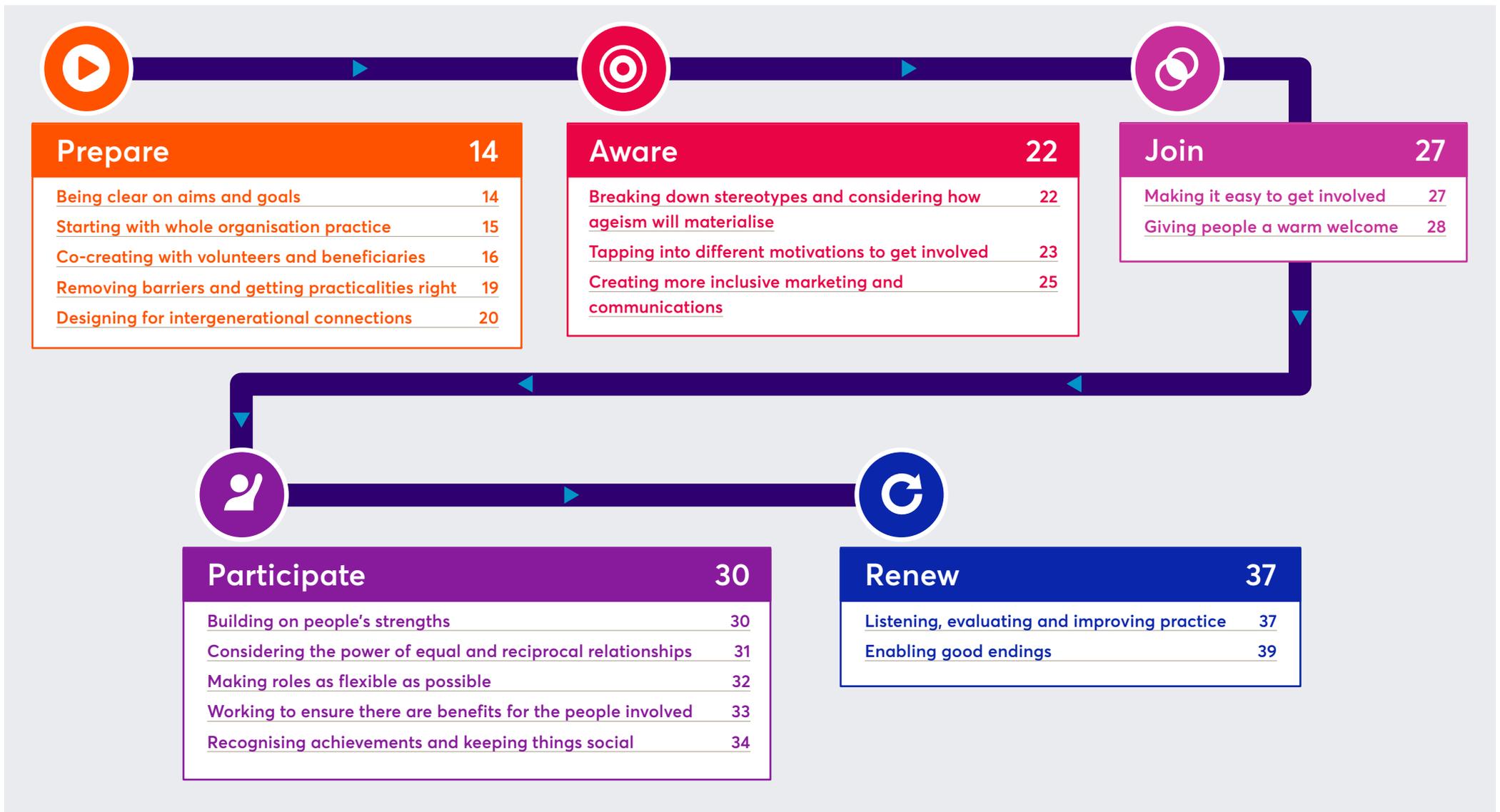
The most successful organisations found that to be more age-inclusive and age-friendly in their approaches they needed to:

-  **Prepare:** set clear goals and the right organisational conditions
-  **Make aware:** be inclusive in their marketing and outreach
-  **Make joining easy:** create welcoming approaches and draw from individual strengths
-  **Participate:** create a good experience that allowed people to grow and develop
-  **Renew:** enable people to finish their involvement well and continuously improve the experience.



Grandmentors

Figure 4: Age-inclusive and age-friendly practices





Prepare

While it is easy to rush into recruitment or delivery for exciting initiatives or projects, the most successful started from first principles, reviewing end-to-end practice and including the basic conditions, functions and methods required to be more age-inclusive and age-friendly.

Organisations recommended:

- ▶ Being clear on aims and goals
- ▶ Starting with whole organisation practice
- ▶ Co-creating opportunities with volunteers and beneficiaries
- ▶ Removing barriers and getting practicalities right
- ▶ Designing for intergenerational connections

▶ Being clear on aims and goals

There were both pragmatic and strategic reasons organisations chose to focus on age-inclusive and age-friendly social action.

The most successful innovations we backed aligned their motivations for age-inclusivity with clear outcomes. Whether they felt their work directly appealed to the interests of older adults or were wishing to engage people they hadn't previously worked with, they spent time thinking about why this made sense for their organisational goals.

- **VANEL's Blue Lights Brigade** wanted to work with retiring and retired emergency service personnel to design community volunteering initiatives that particularly support community safety and community resilience for emergencies.
- **St Joseph's Hospices' Compassionate Neighbours programme**, which focuses on matching neighbours to support people with life-limiting illness and **The Reader**, an organisation that supports shared reading groups for increased connection and wellbeing, both found the roles and issues naturally attracted older adults and knew it would be impactful to continue to target this audience.
- **St Johns Ambulance**, who ran workshops with vulnerable communities to increase people's knowledge and skills of first aid, wanted to better reflect the communities they worked with.



In focus: The Eden Project helping grandparents connect

The Eden Project identified an increase in intergenerational groups visiting their site, prompting them to seek to understand what it meant for their work. Their research revealed that more than 1.6 million grandparents provide care for their grandchildren, saving £11bn in childcare and enabling more than 2 million parents to stay in work or fit in other responsibilities. With shifting family lives, many grandparents' roles are changing, yet there is little provision of clubs, activities or support aimed specifically for the time grandparents spend with their grandchildren.

The Eden Project therefore created **Deep Roots New Shoots** to help grandparents and grandchildren learn together, supported by volunteers many of whom were grandparents themselves. They wanted to create peer connections where older people could model

activities and experiences, co-create an inclusive atmosphere, and build rapport with participants through their own experiences as grandparents.



eden project

▶ Starting with whole organisation practice

The most successful organisations realised that if they were going to become more age-inclusive and age-friendly, they would need to look at all aspects of their organisational practice – not just marketing.

St Joseph's Hospices' Compassionate Neighbours programme was designed from the start to be inclusive of people of different cultures, religions, and ages. They spent time in communities with people with different experiences and backgrounds, understanding what would help make the approach truly inclusive; this insight then helped define the values and principles of the project.

They also looked at what capabilities and support structures were needed for the adopter hospices to ensure that mindsets were in line with the programme's ethos. This thorough review meant that inclusion was core to their culture as well as their practice.



In focus: VIY and organisational practice

VIY works with tradespeople to teach young people skills through fixing up community buildings. The UK construction industry is ageing, there was a **13 per cent increase**⁵ in the number of workers aged 45 years and over between 1991 and 2011.

Yet when VIY did analysis in 2017, only 20 per cent of their mentors were aged 50 and above.

To grow their model successfully, they recognised that they would need to reach many more experienced tradespeople. The organisation as a whole understood the opportunity.

VIY believed their flexible volunteering offer could be attractive to the high proportion of tradespeople aged fifty and over who were self-employed or semi-retired and had the capabilities they were looking for.

They therefore reviewed their support structures, particularly when on project sites, and also looked at how lead mentors would support a more inclusive culture. Learning and insights came



VIY project

from existing mentors, who were able to share and influence what a successful inclusive culture needed to look and feel like.

They also developed new methods on how to approach future mentors using their existing (and vast) networks in the DIY industry, offering flexible opportunities to fit around mentors' work and life patterns. VIY also recruited a Mentor Manager at the start of the process, who helped support the increased number of mentors in the organisation.

This pre-planning helped VIY become more age-inclusive and age-friendly when developing their programme – and also influenced their strategy.

▶ Co-creating with volunteers and beneficiaries

“We have engaged kinship carers in the conversation around volunteering right from the start in order to ensure our proposition accurately meets and reflects their needs. This has helped build trust with carers, so they're clear what the project will involve and is not just a tick box exercise. They feel part of the conversation and the journey from the outset.”

Project Lead, Grandparents Plus

The most successful social action innovations worked to co-create with older adults. By designing with people rather than about them, organisations accelerated their learning, challenging their stereotypes and assumptions and recognised the agency and assets of older adults and beneficiaries.

5. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/articles/migrantlabourforcewithinthetheconstructionindustry/2018-06-19>

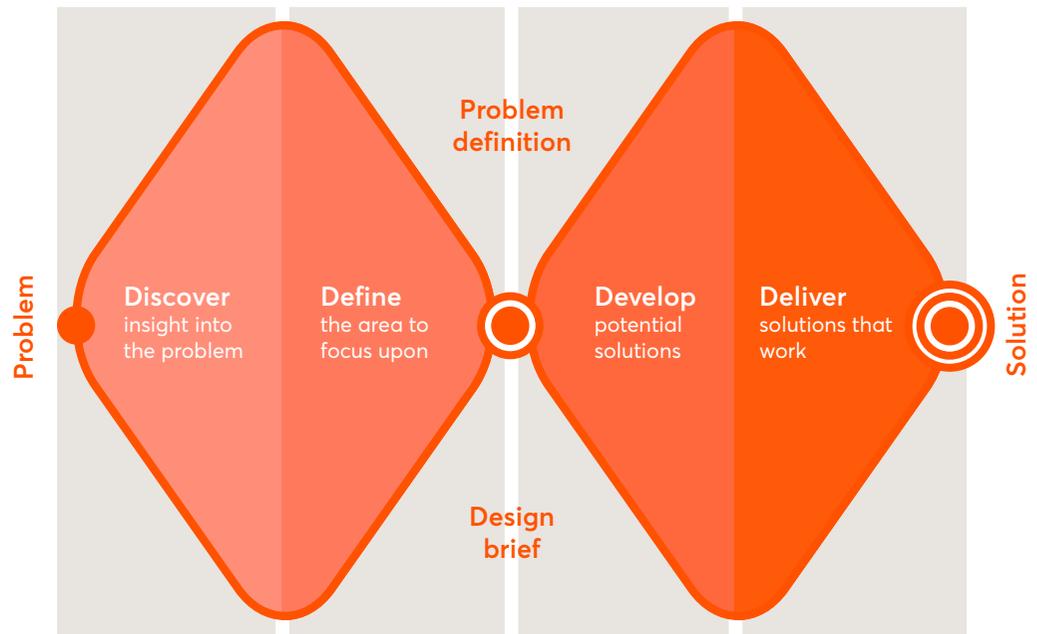
First, all organisations were encouraged by Nesta to identify target audiences through tools such as a **People and Connection Map**, allowing them to develop a clearer picture of how people and organisations relate both to the work and each other.

A number of organisations found it useful to use a process of discovery and design alongside people they worked with, following common steps to discover, define, develop and deliver new approaches – as shown in Figure 5.

The Nesta team also held workshops and supported organisations by helping them to develop and journey through these process stages.

- **Discover:** Grant recipients began by examining the nature of the problem by looking in new ways and gathering insights as they did so.
- **Define:** Once organisations had generated these insights, they narrowed down and defined an area to focus on to help them become more age-inclusive and age-friendly.
- **Develop:** Next they moved on to generating ideas, exploring potential solutions and testing out multiple possible solutions.
- **Deliver:** Once they had identified the best solution, they started to plan how to deliver it.

Figure 5: Discover and design process based on the Design Council's Double Diamond Design Process



This is not always a linear sequence of steps, and the innovations we backed frequently found themselves jumping back and forth between the stages. **Neighbourhood Watch**, for example, co-produced their Communities that Care approach with volunteers to design an end-to-end process for community engagement and fraud prevention. As the Neighbourhood Watch association is run in each local area by the community, it was essential that network members were involved in every phase.

Their members were involved in workshops to define the problem locally and in developing the fraud prevention toolkit. They also looked at the forms of community engagement the programme should include, enabling them to be clear about what they felt able and willing to do and what support and tools they needed. Members were also empowered to take a leading role in the testing phase in order to be able to deliver their goal of supporting people in their communities on fraud prevention. Ownership of the project by volunteers throughout the process was core to the success.



In focus: Coram Beanstalk's intensive volunteering model

Coram Beanstalk recruit, train and support volunteers to give one-to-one reading support to children in primary schools across England. They wanted to build on their success to date, expanding their volunteering programme to reach many more young readers – especially those needing more intensive help as they approached transition to secondary education

Whilst they worked with a wide range of volunteers of all ages, Coram Beanstalk had frequently found that year-long commitments hadn't appealed as strongly to older adults. They therefore tested a programme with a condensed amount of hours over one term to see if more people would want to get involved.

They then went through a co-creation process to develop, prototype and deliver the new one term intensive volunteering offer for older adults. The team found the most helpful aspect of the co-creation approach was the initial interview



Coram Beanstalks reading support

work done with prospective volunteers, which they felt gave them real insight into the possible motivations of those who want to volunteer intensively. Most importantly, it helped them understand what would need to be different from their previous volunteer offering.

"The key thing for us was to not make assumptions. We are often guilty of assuming that we know best - but the prototyping period helped us let go of this and think about the need and solution from the perspective of many different stakeholders." – Project Lead, Coram Beanstalk

▶ Removing barriers and getting practicalities right

Projects found a range of practical questions asked in the early stages of a programme helped set the best way forward. **In their evidence review**, the Centre for Ageing Better identified three main types of barriers to formal volunteering that can stop older people giving their time: practical, structural and emotional, as seen in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Three main barriers to formal volunteering



Source: The Centre for Ageing Better

The most successful organisations considered and developed solutions to overcome barriers from the start.

- **The Reader** worked with experienced and newer volunteers to understand the barriers they were facing. As a result, the organisation offered flexible training in the communities where volunteers led groups, creating a simpler set of accessible resources and centralising volunteer recruitment and management functions.
- **The Eden Project** needed to consider the physical setting of their activities for grandparents as both volunteers and attendees: Little Eden is set in a vast outside space, so adequate footwear and waterproofs are needed. Feedback from prospective grandparent volunteers and attendees meant they held activities close to facilities and adapted spaces to create additional seating suitable for a wide range of people. This allowed a great bonding activity of sharing stories, songs and toasting marshmallows by the campfire to be completely age-inclusive.
- **Grandparents Plus**, who set up Kinship Connected to support kinship carers through one-to-one and peer-led support groups, ensured that support group leaders were provided with the relevant digital skills training through external providers, enabling them to feel more confident in their role. Group leaders were also supported to apply for local grants to purchase digital equipment such as laptops and printers which enhanced their ability to facilitate group meetings and events for kinship families.

🎥 Designing for intergenerational connections

Where possible, innovations recognised the opportunity to bring people together to connect, belong, find purpose and reduce the gaps across generational divides. **The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Social Integration**, in examining the generational divide and the role of intergenerational connections, outlined the extent of our disconnection and explored ways to overcome this. At the forefront of this, the APPG noted that intergenerational connections are not formed by governments but in communities, whether through clubs and activities, at schools or care homes, or in neighbourhoods designed for all ages. It was important to reflect on Jo Cox's famous quote: "We have far more in common than that which divides us."

Whilst some innovations are intergenerational by their very nature – such as **Coram Beanstalk**, **Eden Projects Deep Roots New Shoots**, and **VIY** – others, like **The Reader**, melded community connections across the generations into their work. The **Compassionate Neighbours** programme expected to reach older volunteers through life experiences, but found they actually attracted many young volunteers to support community members at the end of life, offering a further intergenerational dimension to a friendship.

"Our experience indicates that this programme also meets a need of isolated young people who want to connect with their local community. It has helped to change perceptions of younger people from both community members as well as other older Compassionate Neighbours. By acknowledging the diversity of what a Compassionate Neighbour could be upfront, they were able to engage people of all ages. Our youngest Compassionate Neighbour is 19 and the oldest is 85."

Programme Lead, **Compassionate Neighbours**



In focus: Grandmentors' intergenerational practice

Volunteering Matters' Grandmentors programme is an intergenerational mentoring programme, connecting young care leavers with a mentor aged over 50 to create a grandparent-style relationship. The Grandmentors are able to offer necessary guidance and life skills to support, encourage and nurture young care leavers to find their feet as they leave the care system.

The intergenerational element of the programme creates a relationship that is different to many the young people will have experienced. *"It's a supportive relationship, but it's about helping him to achieve his goals himself,"* said one Grandmentor.

Feedback from young people suggests they value both the age gap and having a reliable older adult in their lives. Many care leavers have to navigate interactions with lots of different statutory professionals and agencies each week: having an independent relationship with someone whose sole focus is to help them grow is therefore incredibly important. Having someone to turn to who isn't a paid professional, who believes in you, who doesn't have an agenda and who won't judge



you is something most of us take for granted. For a young person leaving care, it can be life-changing.

As Filman, a mentee, tells us: *"I just used to think, why would what I'm thinking matter to other people? But my perspective after this last year has changed."* His social worker suggested he looked for a Grandmentor. *"I'm glad I did because Jeremy's such a nice guy...I usually have something I need help with and Jeremy's always got something to offer."*

And the Grandmentors understand the power of the relationship, too. *"Some Grandmentors work extremely hard ... to build a trusting relationship,"* says Filmon's mentor, Jeremy, *"which itself is often the most valuable gift to a mentee."*



Checklist: Prepare

- Are you clear on your aims and goals for being more age-inclusive and age-friendly?
- Have you identified your key audiences? How will you co-create the approach with your target audiences?
- How will you review your end-to-end organisational practice including culture, environment, approaches and tools?
- What practical, structural and emotional barriers might people face? How will you help people overcome them?
- Could your project aims be met through working intergenerationally? How might you bring people together to achieve greater impact?

Notes



2.2 Aware

Many of the organisations that applied for funding unintentionally leapt to ageing stereotypes, including caricatures of what was considered 'older'. Even in the design of the funds, with a focus on social action involving older adults, age was overemphasized as a defining experience, ignoring the variation between people and their life experiences. Nesta worked with organisations as part of the application process and where successful in delivery, helping them refine who they were targeting to participate in social action initiatives and the assumptions this was based on.

The most successful organisations designed age-inclusive marketing and communications and thought carefully about how to reach people without resorting to stereotypes. Organisations recommended:

- ② Breaking down stereotypes and considering how ageism may materialise
- ② Tapping into different motivations to get involved
- ② Creating more inclusive marketing and communications.

② Breaking down stereotypes and considering how ageism will materialise

"The more grandparents we spoke to, the more diverse we found them to be. Their ages, situations, circumstances and life experiences varied vastly. To date, the youngest grandparent we have met is 38, the eldest in their 80s."

Emma Tolley, Programme Manager, Deep Roots New Shoots, Eden Project

There is no typical volunteer: all come from different backgrounds and have different amounts of time, skills and expertise available. Initially, some organisations believed older adults would be retired and have lots of time on their hands; some felt there was no point in trying social media recruitment for this demographic; some felt that older people's primary motivation would be to give back to the younger generation; and some had ideas that older adults could not do physical work. There were also positive stereotypes: for example a number of applicants to the fund assumed that older adults would be more reliable and committed over prolonged periods of time.

These stereotypes are deeply entrenched. A **2010 study** by Williams, Wadleigh, and Ylänne reviewed images of older people in UK magazine advertising and found four common portrayals that draw on both positive and negative stereotypes:

1. Portrayals of older people as frail and vulnerable
2. Portrayals of older people as mentors who are wise and experienced
3. Portrayals of older people as happy and affluent
4. Portrayals of older people as active and leisure-oriented.

These representations fail to reflect the diversity of experiences and circumstances experienced by older people – and to challenge this, workshops were used to help uncover stereotypes and encourage co-creation with target audiences.

The Access Project, a project that supports students from disadvantaged backgrounds access top universities through tuition and in-school mentoring, anticipated that older adults attracted to volunteer with them as tutors would be retired. However, this assumption was proven wrong when they analysed people's backgrounds: in fact, they were frequently in senior roles. This was not only helpful for future marketing, but also came with an added bonus, the project lead reported. *"This is exciting: their seniority, and the respect this cultivates, could offer us 'nudge' opportunities to recruit and retain other volunteers,"* they said.

🎯 Tapping into different motivations to get involved

People of all ages have their own reasons for taking part in social action – a personal passion about the cause, a wish to share skills and experience, wanting to meet new people or wanting to develop new skills. The most successful innovations we backed did not assume that simply because older adults were likely to have greater life experience their motivation would be primarily about 'giving back'.

- **Dance to Health**, a falls prevention programme, found many of their volunteers were motivated to join due to an interest in dance and keeping active.
- Some of the **Compassionate Neighbours** shared experiences of getting involved because of losing someone in their lives: they wanted to be able to make friends in their community and be there for someone who may be going through a similar experience.
- **VIY** found that just being asked to join in a community project was a great motivation, as potential volunteers could see a way to use their skills and make a difference.
- **The Restart Project** aims to prevent electronic waste and change the way people consume electronics by hosting 'Restart Parties', where volunteers repair electronic devices and train others at the same time. They found that along with the desire to fix things, volunteers were also keen to meet people who connected to their environmental cause.

"I was looking for a volunteer activity where I could use my skills and a Restart Party is definitely the one. I've also got a very deep sense of community and as I come from Italy I was in need of an activity that allowed me to connect with others. Sharing skills, repairing items together is a good way to make a connection with another human being."

Stefiana, Volunteer, The Restart Project



In focus: Volunteer motivations with FareShare

FareShare is a national network of 17 independent charitable food redistributors, who take good quality surplus food from right across the food industry and get it to almost 11,000 frontline charities and community groups to help fight hunger. Whilst FareShare already attracted a huge number of volunteers from a variety of backgrounds, they were keen to reach more older adults passionate about food waste who could act as peer leaders and support less experienced volunteers. They worked with different centres around the country to experiment and learn from different approaches to target older adults.

One of the tactics the FareShare team used was to attend local events aimed at older adults near FareShare centres. Frank met the FareShare team at a festival and began volunteering the next month as a warehouse assistant and more recently as a driver. Frank was attracted to FareShare's mission but also the role, which he felt would keep him busy during retirement.



"I volunteer at FareShare because I like the dual mission of fighting hunger and tackling food waste and I enjoy helping those who are not as fortunate as me. It maintains my fitness levels for sure. It gives me a great sense of belonging and contributing towards the cause. I get satisfaction by helping those in need and being part of a hardworking team." – Frank, Volunteer, FareShare



Creating more inclusive marketing and communications

The most successful innovations we backed looked to create more inclusive communications – including using more inclusive imagery, testing messaging with different audiences, and using targeted communication channels.

Organisations that led on age in their marketing frequently found it wasn't how people identified themselves for volunteering. Many organisations found in reviews that their images were not age-inclusive, and in some cases also lacked racial diversity. There were many examples of good practice to challenge this.

FareShare invested in an **organisational-wide volunteer campaign** called 'You've got the time, we've got the food. Let's get together'. They wanted to make people laugh and generate intrigue, accurately reflecting and representing the wide range of FareShare volunteers and attracting a range of people to their work.

Equal Arts' HenPower project creatively engaged older people, especially those in residential and care homes, in arts activities and hen-keeping to promote health and wellbeing and reduce loneliness. Whilst aimed at older adults, Equal Arts wanted to make sure all imagery and communications reflected the interests and experiences of the people they worked with rather than stereotypical images of older people and care homes. This has helped create a vibrancy and creative energy around the work, and helped build a community whilst doing so.

The Eden Project's Deep Roots New Shoots also used branding and imagery to help grandparents, grandchildren, and volunteers really understand this was for them. *"Branding was important; it was important that grandparents felt that this service was for them"* – Emma Tolley, Programme Manager, Deep Roots New Shoots, Eden Project.

The most successful also spent time thinking about where to find people to join in with their work and how to reach them. **Equal Arts** worked with

existing 'hensioners' to reach into communities. Partnering with residential care homes, families, and surrounding communities helped develop connections to the people who could benefit most.

Some innovators, such as **King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust's** A&E hospital volunteers, used a variety of tactics including outreach in local shopping centres, but also found targeted press in local newspapers was successful. **VIY** identified that they could recruit via partnerships with local **Men in Sheds** networks and national DIY retailers such as Wickes.

The Reader developed profiles of what possible interests and drivers their Volunteer Reader Leaders might have, and had successful outreach in local bookshops, libraries, cinemas and art galleries.

Social media, particularly Facebook, was a key communications channel for engaging older adults for **The Reader** and **Grandparents Plus**. A small amount of paid advertising really helped reach new people who may otherwise have not discovered them.



FareShare's volunteer campaign



Henpower, Equal Arts



Deep Roots New Shoots, Eden Project

Checklist: Aware

- How have you tested your assumptions and avoided age-related stereotypes?
- How will you ensure your communications and marketing are age-inclusive?
- What new channels could help you connect with new audiences? What partnerships could help you reach out to new people? Could social media help you connect with new people?
- How might existing volunteers and people involved with your work act as ambassadors and advocates to reach new people?

Notes



Steve Tanner

Deep Roots New Shoots, Eden Project



Join

The most successful organisations made it easy to join in. Whilst some required specific skills and experience in order to deliver their work well, they still challenged themselves to design as simply as possible, avoiding barriers to getting involved.

Organisations recommended:

- Making it as easy as possible to get involved
- Giving people a warm welcome.

• Making it easy to get involved

“Volunteering can be an intimidating word in that it implies stepping forward to take the lead on some cause or action, when all you want to do is give a bit of time and effort to help others and hopefully make a difference.”

Volunteer, Give More Get More Fund

- Some of the innovations we backed quickly found that their application processes and requirements put people off. **St John Ambulance**, an experienced volunteer involving organisation, found their typical volunteering application and induction processes were too onerous and slow. Inspired by the **Behavioural Insights Teams EAST framework**, they reviewed how to make the process easy, attractive, social and timely. This led them to completely redesign their application, training, development and support structures to remove as many barriers as possible, making roles more open and inclusive so people from all backgrounds were able to spread more first aid skills in their communities.
- **VIY** wanted to make their scheme as easy as possible to join so they always had a paid and skilled member of staff on site with the relevant checks for working with young people. This allowed some mentors to turn up on the day if they had the time to spare. Through their partnership with DIY retailer Wickes, VIY also encouraged staff to volunteer.

“It’s great that my employer can help support local VIY projects by providing tools and materials and I would definitely encourage other store colleagues and tradespeople who shop with us to get involved. You get to develop your own skills and gain new experiences at the same time as helping to inspire the next generation of tradespeople, which the country really needs.”

Alistair, Volunteer Mentor recruited through DIY retailer Wickes, VIY

🌀 Giving people a warm welcome

First impressions are key, and the most successful innovators invested time and resources to make new volunteers welcome. Whilst this should be universal, it was important not to make assumptions – just because someone had more life experience didn't mean that they had no worries, did not need support or wouldn't value getting help to start their role well.

King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust introduced their volunteers to mentors to shadow for several shifts to ensure they felt welcomed and supported. *"This has increased the confidence of the new volunteers and helped reduce some of the nerves about working in such an intense environment. A mentoring model will be the way forward with integrating and supporting any new volunteers. The mentoring is proving to be a great development opportunity for our existing volunteers. It's empowering them with a real sense of ownership of the project."* – Volunteer Programme Lead, King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.



In focus: Compassionate Neighbours – sharing experiences not training



Developed and supported by St Joseph's Hospice, **Compassionate Neighbours** are local people who offer time, friendship and emotional support to those with a chronic or terminal illness experiencing loneliness or social isolation. Seven hospices across London and the South East adopted the Compassionate Neighbours model. New neighbours take part in an informal, interactive two-day course: the majority of the course focuses on sharing experiences and working with people of different backgrounds to reflect and model how to handle a variety of different potential situations. Together with peers, neighbours explore life, death, dying and grief and develop ways to feel comfortable with difficult conversations.

One hospice lead described training as: "... enabling people to harness their skills. So they're

not being taught anything. In fact, we're trying not to use the word 'training' because I think it misleads people. People think they're going to come and sit in a classroom and be presented and told what to do whereas this is more around in a circle, getting people to discuss things, getting people to bring their own experience to the table..."





Participate

To help make the experience of participating as impactful as possible for the project's mission, as well as inclusive for older adults, each organisation worked carefully on how approaches could draw from people's strengths and experiences. Many quickly learned that the people they hoped to attract had busy schedules, and that they shouldn't assume there was too much time to give. Whatever commitment people could offer, however, needed to be recognised and supported.

Organisations recommended:

- 2 Building on people's strengths
- 2 Considering the power of equal and reciprocal relationships
- 2 Making roles as flexible as possible
- 2 Working to ensure there are benefits for the people involved
- 2 Recognising achievements and keeping things social.

2 Building on people's strengths

"It took us a while to get our head round that we really aren't being micromanaged, and I think that is one of the beauties of the project. I love the fact that it is very hands off, and they kind of just put you together and the support is there and the meetings are there, but nobody is in the middle of it with you. I really think that's the strength of the project."

Compassionate Neighbour

Whilst everyone has assets, skills and talents to share, throughout our lives we obviously accumulate more experience. Many innovators wanted to tap into the greater experience or specific skills that older adults may bring. However, a number also learned that people may want to learn or develop new skills through their social action – or even have a break from the things they have experience of already.

- **Volunteering Matters' Grandmentors programme** often found that people with experience of working with young people were well prepared for the role. Karen, one of the Grandmentors, shared: *"I recently retired from education where I was a headteacher, which means I have a lot of experience working in schools, the social care sector and children's centres, looking after a range of age groups. This influenced my decision to become a Grandmentor, because I know the benefit and impact that a little bit of guidance can have; it can go a long way."*

- **VANEL's Blue Lights Brigade** programme also drew from people's knowledge and skills, utilising the experience and expertise of retiring and retired emergency service personnel. They start from people's skills, training and experience, but also aim to be responsive, listening to suggestions for community work or roles and supporting members to develop new ideas for action with others.
- **St John Ambulance** realised that in their Community Advocates programme, attracting people with particular skills was lower priority than attracting people with deep connections into communities and those who are able to relate to people from different backgrounds. Developing highly trained first aid volunteer roles was something St John Ambulance already knew how to do: they used this opportunity to develop more informal social action roles, where people could pledge to spread the message around first aid or provide basic information and resources to people in their community. *"The ask was straightforward, I work in a school and it would be easy to talk to people about first aid,"* one Community Champion said. By engaging in this way, St John Ambulance opened up trust and opportunities for people to volunteer further.
- Many innovations found that not everyone had confidence in what they have to offer, and for some structured support was important to help people see their strengths. **The Reader** recognised that some people may not immediately want to become a group leader; through the work, they realised that creating pathways between a variety of roles was important. For example, some people may go from being a participant in a group to helping out informally or being an advocate to leading a group and taking on an organiser role. They found that it was more appealing to volunteers to market roles as various tasks rather than a formal role responsible for everything.

Considering the power of equal and reciprocal relationships

A number of the innovations we backed didn't categorise their roles as classic volunteering. Instead, they were interested in helping peers share experiences, connect, make friends, help each other out, and support the creation of clubs.

Even in more formal volunteering roles, all of the organisations we worked with were conscious of the power dynamics between those seen to be giving and those seen to be receiving help, understanding that in the most effective models there are reciprocal benefits for everyone taking part. This was felt to be particularly significant where the work was intergenerational, or where one party had a stronger upfront understanding of their assets and gifts.

Volunteering Matters' Grandmentors Programme altered their approach to create 'soft matches', where potential mentees and mentors met to do an activity such as a bake-off or storytelling. This aimed to create more equal power dynamics between the care leaver and Grandmentor, enabling them to make an active choice about their relationship. And whilst for **Grandparents Plus'** Kinship Connected support groups having a lead volunteer helps coordinate the group, it is the equal contributions of all kinship carers that makes the model work.

2 Making roles as flexible as possible

Flexibility helps with recruitment and retention. Though not all roles can be flexible, projects found they were more successful in attracting people the more flexible they pushed themselves to be as they fit in with people's lives and interests.

- **FareShare** created opportunities for people no matter what time commitment they could give. They offer shifts during weekdays and at weekends which can fit the individual's own preferences. Maria has a few hours spare from being a carer so the flexibility offers her a great opportunity to do something for herself. *"I like to come here because I have seven children, five have disabilities and my sister tells me to get out and do something for the day. I have a couple of hours to spare so that's why I'm here, basically to get a break from my family [as a carer] so I come here and enjoy it."* – Maria, Volunteer, FareShare.

- **Barnsley Council's** partnership with **B:friend**, organising social clubs and matching neighbours who may be at risk of experiencing loneliness and isolation, allows people to

arrange visits that best suits their lives. They want this to become about friendship and connection, not a rigid volunteering experience.



In focus: VIY keeps things flexible

As well as making sure that joining a **VIY** project is as easy as possible, the team also tries to make each role and commitment as flexible as possible: people can get involved for half a day or be involved 5 days a week over many months. Part of this depends on the nature of the community project and what needs to be fixed, but VIY also wanted to ensure that current or retired tradespeople can give a minimum commitment to help get the types of skills they need. The paid lead mentor ensures that all other mentors are supervised and supported, and that people are assigned to different elements of a project based on their commitment. The organisation also found



VIY project

that small taster experiences frequently resulted in higher commitments over time when they started projects in a new area.

"VIY was a fabulous experience as far as I am concerned... I will definitely mentor with VIY again if they run any projects in the local area." – Graham, Volunteer Mentor.

Working to ensure there are benefits for the people involved

The projects saw many benefits for people involved who were making a contribution in later life, whether this was through formal volunteering or helping out in the community. They include:

<p>Increased wellbeing</p>	<p><i>"For me, it has helped. I didn't grieve in the way that I thought I should be grieving. I wasn't able to express myself. When I had done my training, I found it quite easy to open up... then there were other people that had been through that loss and that grief. I think we were able to share that together."</i> – Compassionate Neighbour</p>
<p>Keeping active</p>	<p><i>"It's fun, it's active, we all get stronger and we all leave the session feeling like we've not only done something really good for our bodies, we walk out feeling happier than when we walked in. It's just been an incredible opportunity and I think most people that have become a part of the project have really enjoyed it."</i> – Volunteer, Dance to Health</p>
<p>Increased confidence and skills</p>	<p><i>"Working with a team that was made of both young adults with no experience of manual work and experienced adults from VIY has improved my communication skills, and different ways to work with different age groups of differing abilities."</i> – Volunteer Mentor, VIY</p>
<p>Purpose and fulfillment</p>	<p><i>"From my point of view I get a lot out of it, and I've also gone from working a full 50 hours a week job into retirement, so it's nice to have something to keep your professional brain alive! For my mentee, I'd like to think that she can look back on this experience in the future and say that it's actually given her the confidence to make decisions herself."</i> – Grandmentor, Volunteering Matters</p>
<p>Satisfaction in a job well done</p>	<p><i>"It is always satisfying to fix something, but I love it when the person you are working with gets involved and learns something. Or when it really means something to them – getting a favourite gadget working again, or being enabled to do something important to them, like making healthy smoothies."</i> – Party Volunteer, The Restart Project</p>
<p>Feeling valued</p>	<p><i>"I want to inspire other people and prove that changes to your health can happen. I look at where I am now, and where I was then, and feel proud. My overall fitness and wellbeing have progressed from strength to strength. With community-led projects backed up by the council, people like me have somewhere to turn in our local areas."</i> – Gav, Community Health Champion, York</p>
<p>Meeting new people and staying connected</p>	<p><i>"I absolutely love it and look forward to coming. The people I work with and the people I meet have been phenomenal and I get so much out of it. At the end of the day I go home thinking how good it was and how much I enjoyed it."</i> – Volunteer, Eden Project - Deep Roots New Shoots</p>



In focus: Tempo Time Credits

Tempo is a charity that works in partnership with public, private and voluntary organisations to co-design and deliver Time Credits programmes across the UK. People earn Time Credits when they give their time with organisations and spend them on a wide range of activities of their choice or gift them to others. These activities are provided by their national network of partner organisations and include leisure, arts, local and national attractions and learning and skills.

Ruth, a Time Credits volunteer, spends hers with her family. *"They put an extra value on the time I give to charity and give me a way to thank my family for supporting me."*

Tempo develops networks of organisations where people can earn and spend Time Credits, training and supporting community organisations to use Time Credits and helping them to offer more accessible, diverse ways to get involved and give time, particularly to people who may not be their traditional volunteer base.

With a focus on engaging older people in social action, Tempo used Time Credits in seven areas of England, targeting those who were at risk of



isolation or were less likely to participate due to long term health conditions. Of those who volunteered with these Time Credits programmes, 45 per cent had never or rarely volunteered before and Tempo increased the percentage of older adults they engaged with across the organisation.

As a result of co-producing opportunities with civil society organisations, and by incentivising and recognising the contribution of volunteers, Tempo have successfully encouraged new people to get involved in their communities.



2 Recognising achievements and keeping things social

"I believe and feel that FareShare have got it right because they have Yvonne, who dedicates herself to caring for the volunteers. That is so important, you know, to make sure that we are fed, given travel expenses and I think you've got it right. It's a very good place to be.. it's something I'm really enjoying... we are thanked and valued."

Wendy, Volunteer, FareShare

The most successful organisations celebrated their work and achievements with their volunteers. They thanked them, encouraging an atmosphere of support and celebration.

They also recognised the social aspect of volunteering, providing opportunities to develop camaraderie, friendship and social connections that serve us all well throughout our lives.

- **Aesop's Dance to Health** programme celebrates the work everyone has contributed by having local group socials and celebrations and by holding a national get together. Dance to Health participants, volunteers, dance artists and partners connect for a day of sharing, reflecting and looking to the future, giving everyone the opportunity to connect and share stories, dance and have fun. Aesop now hope to make this an annual fixture.



Andy Barker

Aesop's Dance to Health national conference

- **Absolutely Cultured** is a cultural development organisation who instigated volunteer-led social action projects across Hull. The initiative brought together collective voices, expertise and talents to facilitate social, economic and cultural change by placing the arts and creativity at the heart of people's lives in their city.

They invited their army of more than 2000 City of Culture volunteers to a Christmas event to celebrate their achievements.

"Our volunteers continue to sing about our great city... [we wanted] to bring everyone together to celebrate and say thank you."

Head of Volunteering, Absolutely Cultured

This investment into celebrating volunteer achievements demonstrates the buy-in Absolutely Cultured have towards their future. As they noted: *"We're incredibly proud. Not only of what the volunteers have achieved to date but what the future holds."*

- **Compassionate Neighbours** ran various social gatherings encouraging both hospice staff and volunteers to reflect, learn and grow. They allowed time for Compassionate Neighbours to share their personal stories with one another as well as get creative in bringing ideas and suggestions for how the programme could grow.

One Compassionate Neighbour said *"the opportunity to get together and exchange ideas was the best thing about the day. The energy and enthusiasm was inspiring."*



Compassionate Neighbours gathering

Checklist: Participate

- How will you start from the strengths of people? How will you work to develop these strengths in ways that appeal to the individual?
- How might you design roles to be as flexible as possible? Are there ways to increase flexibility to provide a more appealing experience?
- How will you make sure your volunteers are benefitting from the experience?
- How do you meaningfully recognise and celebrate the achievements of volunteer contributions?
- How will you create a social experience for your volunteers? How might they build social connections through the experience?

Notes



Equal Arts, Henpower project



Renew

The most successful organisations had great ways of working with volunteers to improve practice. They used methods of listening, reflection and evaluation to understand whether their age-inclusive and age-friendly aims were coming to fruition, and whether this was supporting the organisation's mission.

Organisations also understood that it was important to enable volunteers to finish commitments well: as much as they may like to work with some volunteers forever, they should enable people to move on if that is what's right for them. Organisations recommended:

- 🕒 Listening, evaluating and improving practice
- 🕒 Enabling good endings.

🕒 Listening, evaluating and improving practice

"The social action work has successfully expanded the role of volunteers into scoping, research, stakeholder engagement, intervention, design and project leadership. This development has significantly informed the future direction of the organisation. Particularly how we bring the worlds of volunteering and arts and culture closer together has an impact in engagement levels with culture and the benefits that can bring to communities."

Project lead, [Absolutely Cultured](#)

Innovators built in learning and reflection to ensure they were listening to volunteers and the wider community. They created a safe space where all volunteers could feedback on their experiences, ideas and concerns to help improve how things work, and where appropriate help to take action on these suggestions. It was important to get feedback not only on the delivery of work, but also on how age-inclusive and age-friendly the whole experience was.

- Sometimes these processes were informal, picked up as part of everyday work and casual conversations; sometimes they were built into regular supervision or check ins. **Volunteering Matters' Grandmentors programme** had both regular individual supervision check-ins between staff members and Grandmentors, but also opportunities to feed into the design or improvement of elements of the programme.

- Other social action innovations developed more formal approaches through evaluation, workshops or design processes. **Neighbourhood Watch Network's Communities that Care** project worked closely with local members through a design and testing approach. Members then tested things in the community, bringing back feedback and advice on how to improve. By involving their volunteers, Neighbourhood Watch were able to build practical solutions that local members felt able to use.
- The **Compassionate Neighbours programme** held weekly coffee mornings where Neighbours could solve challenges and learn together and had opportunities to speak to staff members to feed in learning and ideas. They also had a formal independent evaluation that included a large-scale interview process for Neighbours that provided insights on how to ensure the approach was inclusive.

The most successful innovations recognised that providing opportunities for feedback and learning was important – but it was also essential for people to know this would be acted on.



In focus: Grandparents Plus and learning from kinship carers

Grandparents Plus gives a voice to kinship carers. Throughout the development of their **Kinship Connected** programme, they ensured they created time and routes to gather feedback from carers, listening to and representing them. They did this through:

- Designing a thorough evaluation to capture insights from kinship carers.
- Running workshops with peer support group leaders to understand what carers wanted to learn and talk about, and supporting them to plan changes and take them back to groups.
- Using insights from kinship carers' experiences to directly feedback to local authorities on why support was needed.
- Ensuring kinship carer voices were strong in all communications and media.
- Learning new ways to engage kinship carers in social action by accepting that their approach could feel daunting to many busy kinship carers. They designed a more supportive and light touch volunteering approach so all those new to groups felt supported and part of a community.

"There are plenty of willing participants within the groups who would like to volunteer their services as and when they have time, but may not feel able



to commit to a role on the committee due to their commitments as a kinship carer or ill health. By encouraging them to take on a peer support role, they can provide a valuable contribution to the group without feeling overwhelmed," one project lead said.

They reframed their volunteers within support groups as 'friends', which took away the formality and misconceptions around volunteering and dramatically increased engagement.

- Continuously engaging with insights from annual surveys capturing the wider views of kinship carers across the UK.
- They set up an Advisory Group made up of kinship carers from across the country that were consulted on key strategic issues on a quarterly basis. This feeds directly into their board of trustees as one of the members of the Advisory Group is also a trustee.

Enabling good endings

Although every organisation likes the idea that volunteers want to stay involved forever, having a plan for a good ending can be useful in two respects. Firstly, people have busy lives, and may be reluctant to sign up for something without understanding the exact nature of the commitment. Secondly, it enabled people to be treated well and all logistics handled smoothly. If dealt with effectively, former volunteers can become one of the organisation's assets, becoming ambassadors for the work.

- Offering flexibility in volunteering should also have clear processes to end well. **Coram Beanstalk's** reading volunteers and **King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust's** A&E volunteers both tested out more time-bound commitments, giving them a clearer understanding of what would be required; they could also stay in roles longer if desired.
- **The Eden Project's Deep Roots New Shoots Programme** had a number of older adults commit to volunteering who either had family in the area or spent time in Cornwall in the summer. The team were able to be clear

about the commitment they needed, and volunteers would be clear about when they would be in the area.

The most successful organisations also recognised that a good ending could help turn former volunteers into ambassadors for the work.

- **VANEL's Blue Lights Brigade** were able to use their network of retired service personnel to encourage those near retirement to join the community – even when some volunteers had secured further work or started a new career. Listening to and sharing feedback from those who have their own experience of the role and the organisation is a great way of spreading knowledge of your work and reaching out to future volunteers.

"The strongest voice and advocacy tool is the hensioners talking about the project better than anyone else."

CEO, Equal Arts

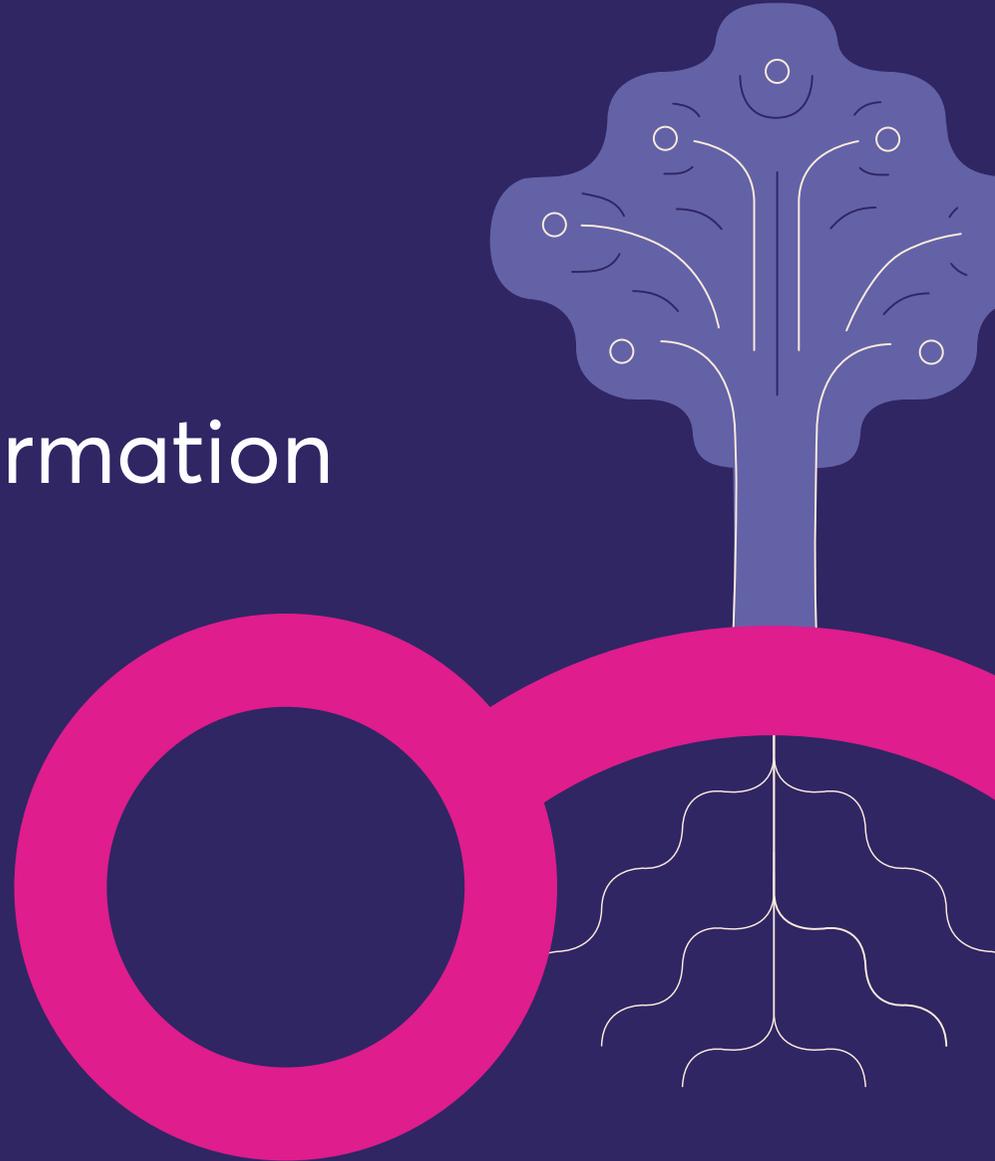
Checklist: Renew

- Do you have a process to ensure volunteers can end their commitment well?
- Do you check in with volunteers regularly so they don't feel under pressure to maintain their commitment?
- Have you thought of ways your volunteers can advocate for you to reach more people?
- How will you reflect to develop and improve more effective and age-friendly social action initiatives?

Notes

3

Resources and information



Taking forward plans to develop age-inclusive and age-friendly social action

The 36 age-inclusive initiatives we backed with grant funding were a diverse bunch, spanning different sectors, geographies, beneficiary groups and organisational sizes. But what they all had in common was a deliberate strategy to make their

social action initiatives more age-inclusive and age-friendly. They show us that all organisations can be more inclusive – and that this will not only enable greater age inclusivity, but diversity more generally, enhancing the overall volunteer experience.

This is by no means a strict blueprint. But the experiences of these social action innovations may provide key prompts to help you make your work more age-inclusive and age-friendly.



Overarching checklist

Prepare

- Are you clear on your aims and goals for being more age-inclusive and age-friendly?
- Have you identified your key audiences? How will you co-create the approach with your target audiences?
- How will you review your end-to-end organisational practice including culture, environment, approaches and tools?
- What practical, structural and emotional barriers might people face? How will you help people overcome them?
- Could your project aims be met through working intergenerationally? How might you bring people together to achieve greater impact?

Aware

- How have you tested your assumptions and avoided age-related stereotypes?
- How will you ensure your communications and marketing are age-inclusive?
- What new channels could help you connect with new audiences? What partnerships could help you reach out to new people? Could social media help you connect with new people?
- How might existing volunteers and people involved with your work act as ambassadors and advocates to reach new people?

Join

- How can you make joining as a volunteer as simple as possible?
- How might you remove barriers from the joining process, like long forms or in-person attendance?
- How will people be welcomed, inducted, trained and supported? How will this be inclusive?

Participate

- How will you start from the strengths of people? How will you work to develop these strengths in ways that appeal to the individual?
- How might you design roles to be as flexible as possible? Are there ways to increase flexibility to provide a more appealing experience?
- How will you make sure your volunteers are benefitting from the experience?
- How do you meaningfully recognise and celebrate the achievements of volunteer contributions?
- How will you create a social experience for your volunteers? How might they build social connections through the experience?

Renew

- Do you have a process to ensure volunteers can end their commitment well?
- Do you check in with volunteers regularly so they don't feel under pressure to maintain their commitment?
- Have you thought of ways your volunteers can advocate for you to reach more people?
- How will you reflect to develop and improve more effective and age-friendly social action initiatives?

Useful resources

Age of No Retirement – A campaign to create a world where our age does not define us

All Party Parliamentary Group on Social Integration – A cross-party group of parliamentarians aiming to drive forward conversations on policy solutions that break down barriers to integration and create opportunities for people from all walks of life to connect

Behavioural Insights Team – Generating and applying behavioural insights to inform policy, improve public services and deliver results for citizens and society

- **EAST Framework**
-

Centre for Ageing Better – Creating change in policy and practice informed by evidence and working with partners across England to improve employment, housing, health and communities

- **Age-friendly and inclusive volunteering review**
 - **Age-friendly and inclusive volunteering grant programme**
 - **The Stage of Ageing - adding life to our years**
-

Dance to Health volunteer evaluation - Internal report from the Dance to Health programme

DIY Toolkit – A toolkit on how to invent, adopt or adapt ideas for better results. It features 30 practical social innovation tools to support social innovation including:

- **Business Model Canvas**
 - **Experience Tour**
 - **Theory of Change**
 - **Question Ladder**
 - **Personas**
 - **Blueprint**
-

Encore – A nonprofit dedicated to bridging divides, connecting across generations and creating a better future together

FareShare – Volunteer opportunities with FareShare

Five Hours a Day – Report by Nesta on the impact of ageing on society and what that means for innovation

Jump – Various reports on measuring and valuing social impact including inclusivity in volunteering

NCVO – Championing the voluntary sector by connecting, representing and supporting voluntary organisations.

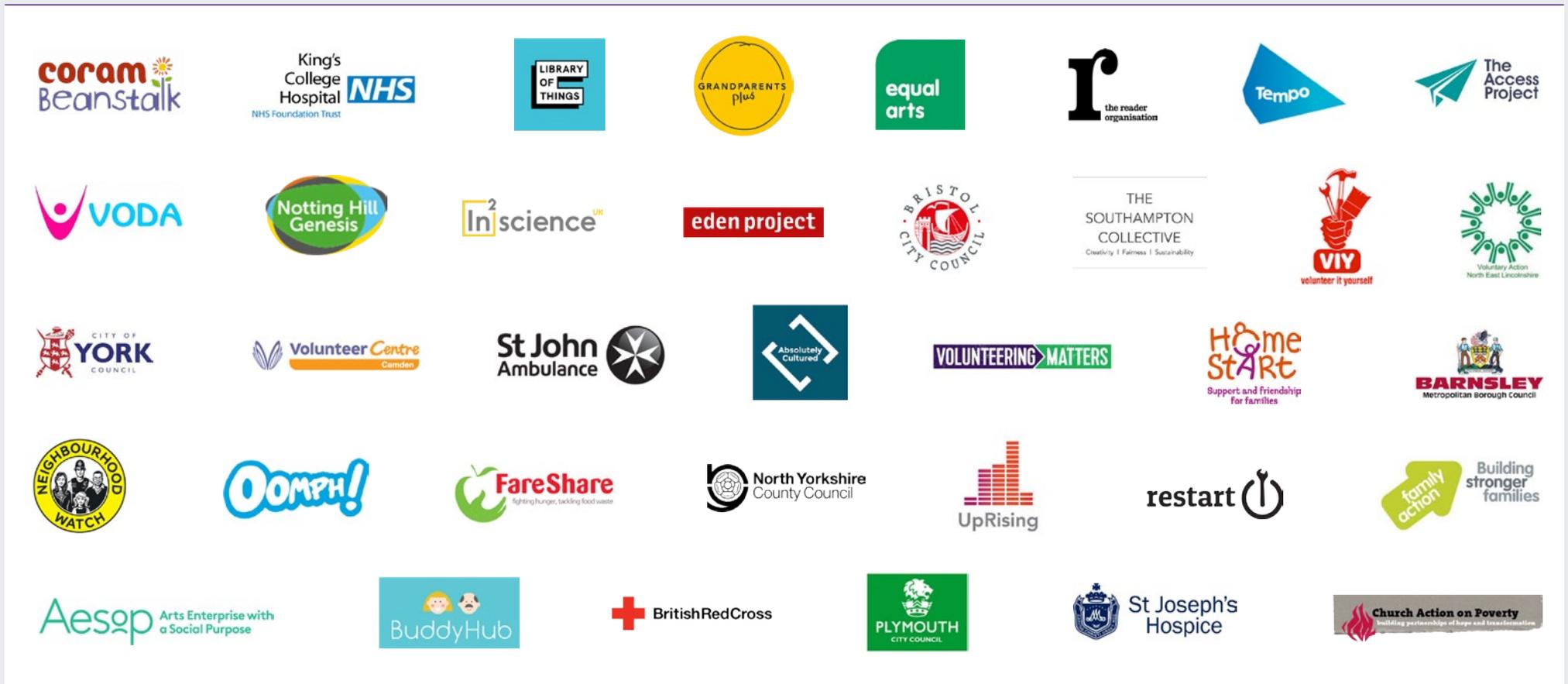
- **Tools and resources for the voluntary sector**
 - **A vast array of 'How-to' guides**
 - **Case studies from the community**
 - **Time Well Spent: a national survey on the volunteer experience**
-

The 100-Year Life – Living and working in an age of longevity

Wondering Allowed - Lessons from the Eden Project's Deep Roots New Shoots programme

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The Age of Inclusion: Lessons from social action innovations developing age-inclusive and age-friendly practice is one in a series of learning products which captures the learning around people-powered public services, what it looks like, and what it could help us achieve. It draws from over ten years of work

at Nesta on people-powered public services, but particularly from practical funds and experimentation from 2014–2020 as part of the Centre for Social Action Innovation Fund, in partnership with the Department for Digital Culture Media and Sport (DCMS). Other learning outputs from this series include:



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Nesta is an innovation foundation. For us, innovation means turning bold ideas into reality and changing lives for the better.

We use our expertise, skills and funding in areas where there are big challenges facing society.

Nesta is based in the UK and supported by a financial endowment. We work with partners around the globe to bring bold ideas to life to change the world for good.

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